

## Dungeon S 111

### Chapter 111 Reason For Hiring

Yun was extremely delighted that Jin had finally started to take the management of his own shop into his own hands. Before this incident, she had some doubt that Jin would not change. He said he would do things, but he would procrastinate or he would just follow things blindly anyway. No matter how much she tried, he kept staying in his comfort zone.

He had the potential to become a superpower in the next decade but how could a person possibly reach that level when his mind is trapped in a cage- A cage called indolence and apathy.

Yun knew she had to push him. Push him so hard that he could change. But how? Suddenly it hit her. How about showing him the regret of a person...The regret one feels from just mindlessly following the flow of events. And the only person she knew who would be able to pull it off was Ke Mi.

Yun started to form a plan. Even though it may have been unfair, she had to create a situation where he would not only understand Ke Mi regrets but also truly feel embarrassed about himself. She didn't care if he never realised how much effort she put in because she just wanted to help him, not get anything from it.

He might falsely believe that she would kill others for profit, even pushing him into slaughtering people if necessary. Maybe their relationship would have a crack in it from today onwards, but that was not too bad of a price to her. Fortunately, none of those mattered if Jin finally woke up.

"Dungeon Takeovers? What exactly is that about? Is that what they call completing a dungeon in this world?" Jin was curious about that.

"No, not really, it means that we would take control of the dungeon and take control it for its resources temporarily. It is similar to how a miner/mining company would find a vein of gold and claim it for himself. So we go in, whack those monsters and grab a bunch of resources that are just lying around." Yun replied as she sat on the table interface of the Dungeon Maker.

"Instead of grabbing a bunch of resources, why don't we mine those resources?" Jin thought of that idea when Yun gave the example of mining which intrigued him.

"What you do mean?" Yun did not get the drift from Jin.

"Remember how Zeru gave me those crystal seeds which I have not planted yet? I wonder if there is anything similar to it in those dungeons. Alternatively, we have the Dungeon Maker. Maybe we can create a mining bot that scans the area and mines the resources while we defend it and kill the monsters." Jin suddenly had many ideas beginning to pop up in his mind.

"Besides, you said the monsters would take some time to resurrect if they die so that means we can use that time to plant some mining bots in order to mine the resources." Jin mind started to go wild with idea after idea and Yun laughed.

"Okay, stop right there young man. Before you get overzealous with the whole new me," Yun calmed Jin down, "Just remember that Dungeon Takeovers are different and quite unique. If you managed to clear the dungeon entirely, the dungeon would actually give you a tribute of Matter, Magic and Souls for a

month. That was where the system took the idea from to craft such a ruthless variant. To the system, why a tribute when it can get a constant source of resource as long as people are vying for the dungeon's treasure. Maybe it's flawed if you look at it from another point of view but the system had already calculated that this was one of the highest efficiency means of gathering at the lowest cost possible."

"But most of the time, the dungeon would never be completed by one person because the dungeons here are long winded and demanding. Hence, a raid party is always recommended to do so and if a raid party completes it, it will be written on a wall of the dungeon at the entry so people would not be stupid to try it for a period of time since the tribute can only be given once a month. However, that is not a problem since there are so many dungeons around it doesn't really affect the adventurers."

"You did say vendors did that too. How do they work then?" Jin asked

"They send many raiding parties to many dungeons and the successful ones get decent pay. While it might not seem like much but high level raiding parties earn a lot of dungeon dollars." Yun said.

"So, if we find a good resource dungeon and enter it with my bellators and monsters along with me. Then clear it by defeating each and every monster, we can get a good haul?" Jin wanted to confirm.

"I thought you would only be bringing your bellators. I did not expect you to say you are going to bring your monsters in too." Yun was pleasantly surprised.

"Why not? I have yet to fully explore their offensive powers and abilities. Maybe this will be a good chance to learn about them and subsequently improve their dungeons too. Besides, they need to work to have their new home up and ready as soon as possible." Jin laughed as he suddenly thought of Ke Mi and felt like patting her head.

"So do you want to go now? There is one nearby for you to try if you want." Yun asked as she genuinely smiled at Jin.

Jin looked at his storage watch to check the time and refused. The watch was surprisingly useful. It showed the time of the Dungeon World as well as the time in his original world. It also showed how much time had elapsed to give him back a proper sense of time.

"It's nearly eight in the morning; I promised Zhen Qing that I would provide her ingredients for her black pepper buns. Anyways, I might do that Dungeon Takeover later, but not yet. Oh, by the way, Yun, are you able to procure those items on the list I gave you?" Jin asked Yun politely.

"Well, you did not reply to me when I asked you about why you want Zhen Qing as an employee considering there's a risk of her knowing the system's secret." Yun tested Jin once more.

"I think I like her. That influenced my decision and I am biased towards hiring her. But if you want a logical answer, I really feel that her buns are delicious. She might even have other tricks that she had not shown us. However, that one day was sufficient for me to understand how hardworking she is, how she preserved under the hot sun, standing for the whole day without rest apart from the toilet breaks, which was ironic since she didn't want to use our store's toilets." Jin replied as he listed her traits he had discovered whilst observing her.

"She even brought her reserved stocks just to fulfil her side of the bargain. I do not think she even had a proper food break. Not to mention, I noticed Zhen Qing was really happy serving the customers and I can occasionally see her smile despite the mask she wore for hygiene."

"Zhen Qing even declined to work further because she did not have enough supplies. From what I know about other street vendors, I am pretty sure they might have used scrupulous ways to get lousy quality food supplies at the fastest and cheapest possible way. However, Zhen Qing did not. She insisted on using her own ingredients and I respect her profession as a cook more than a simple street vendor. That's why I want to hire her." Jin finally gave his analysis.

"No bad points during this observation?" Yun questioned.

"Does me being a shameless stalker during work count?" Jin laughed bitterly as he spoke the truth. He had made excuses to leave his bar counter just to glance at Zhen Qing.

"And the obvious advances to keep her to the stall which she felt a little suspicious about and she may or may not be creeped out about? Yea I agree, that's a bad point too." Yun teased Jin.

"Was it really that obvious?" Jin blushed

"Yes, Mr Oblivious." Yun rolled her eyes and pressed a few buttons on the table interface she was sitting at.

"The system and I have long since created a kitchen instance since we thought you might have become interested in cooking after eating the tonkatsu curry rice, but it seems our prediction was off. We might as well we give Zhen Qing the special rights to the kitchen instance since she would probably need the time dilation to prepare her items. However, remember to tell her to rest. Time dilation for commoners might be straining on their bodies compared to us cultivators." A special access card appeared on the table of the dungeon maker and Yun passed it to Jin.

"The access card gives her the privilege to enter the dungeon at will. I have also reduced the time dilation of the kitchen instance to the minimum so it extends only 2 hours for every one hour in the real world. I hope you know what you are doing Jin."

"I do. I will try and find a suitable cultivation technique for her...that is if she is okay with learning how to cultivate. But right now, during the time she is in the kitchen instance, I will try to create an improved mobile stall for her." Jin added and Yun gave him the thumbs up before they left the dungeon maker instance.

Moments after they arrived back at the store, the doorbell at the side rang. "What impeccable timing." Yun squeezed Jin's shoulder and gently pushed him to the side door.

## **Chapter 112 An Urgent Plea**

Jin got to the door and noticed that Zhen Qing got bigger...larger in size? "BOSS JIN I NEEDED YOUR HELP!"

It was not Zhen Qing as he had initially thought, but instead, it was Xiong Da, the cultivator who used the Hungry Hippo Style that rang his bell this early in the morning. It was only then that Jin saw a slight silhouette of a lady riding the motorcycle behind Xiong Da.

"What is the problem?" Jin decided to handle Xiong Da first since he had always been a regular customer at his store. It would be disrespectful to shoo him away even though it was not opening hours yet.

"Thank goodness you are early, I was thinking that I might have to wait until afternoon for your presence." Xiong Da was sweating really badly.

"What's with the urgency?" Jin hoped to find out the reason quickly so he could talk to Zhen Qing. However, Zhen Qing also noticed that Jin had a customer barging in so she decided to park her motorcycle in the same garden spot she did yesterday and waited for Jin to finish.

"Do you remember how I told you that about a guy who challenged me to a duel and I lost?" Xiong Da hoped that Jin remembered the reason he decided to buy Jin's dungeons and the verbal agreement that had transpired between the two of them.

Jin nodded his head. How could he forget? He was the first regular customer Jin had ever had and that embarrassing duel was the reason why Xiong Da was training so desperately hard with the help of Instructor Milk.

"I happened to bump into my crush again, Ruo Ying, and I noticed that there was some bruising on her face under her makeup. I even noticed some bruises under her sleeves too." Xiong Da's rage was bursting out of him and his angry chi could be felt by Jin.

"Aren't you a lawyer? You can now sue him for abuse or assault, can't you?" Jin was curious about why Xiong Da had not pressed for a case.

"Ever since I knew about this last night, I told her I would bring him to the police but she could only hold her tears back. Ruo Ying said that her father had gambled all that wretched guy's money away hence she could not even hope to run. That guy even made her father sign a screwed up contract saying that he had to pay all the money back with interest. That bastard even told him that he would be holding Ruo Ying a little while longer as a guarantee. There was no chance Ruo Ying's father could call the cops or employ a lawyer because that was written in the contract." Xiong Da clenched his fists even harder.

"Surely, you can find some loopholes in that contract..." Jin was beginning to wonder if Xiong Da was really a lawyer.

"Oh, there lots when I had the chance to take a look at it. But I decided to meet him next week and settle our old score. After I win, I will crush him into minced meat while making sure he is not eligible for resurrection. No...that's not good enough...I will also gift him a mountain of debts too so he can pay for his actions!" Xiong Da got so riled up that Jin saw his Hippo silhouettes out screaming.

Zhen Qing was shocked and thought that the fat guy wanted to beat up Jin and wanted to call the police immediately. However, she noticed Jin was still standing at the side door relaxed and decided to hold her phone close to her just in case.

"Ah, seems like you reached Grade 2 Peak." Jin was amazed by the dedication of Xiong Da.

"But are you sure that Ruo Yong girl that you mentioned will still be in love with you? Perhaps she just wanted you to get her out of the predicament she was in. Maybe she was just trying her luck and just wanted to use you like the same way that...what's that guy's name?"

"Lan Ji Ao" Xiong Da spit his saliva at the side of the walkway upon saying his name. Jin then folded his arm and cleared his throat to show his discontent.

"Ah sorry. Boss Jin." Xiong Da then realised he was at Boss Jin's doorstep.

"Anyways yea, she might actually use you just like how Ji Ao used her. Or perhaps, this was an elaborate plan for Ji Ao to humiliate you even more and show Ruo Ying who was the boss." Jin queried Xiong Da but it seemed that it was a waste of effort.

"I know, I have thought of all the possibilities. However, she was the only one that really understood me when I was in contact with her previously. Also, she did try to send some messages to me during the past month but she rarely instigated long conversations because her phone was being monitored by Ji Ao. Besides, even if she does not like me anymore, I would still like to help her. But in order for me to help her, I need your help. Please Boss, help me!" Xiong Da went to his knees and prostrated.

Zhen Qing was befuddled by what had transpired. First, the fat guy seemed to be threatening Jin and right after Jin folded his arms, he began prostrating in front of Jin. Who was this Jin exactly? No matter what, it looked like Zhen Qing was right to be put up a defensive front for now. Last night, she was thinking that maybe her prayers had been answered after all these years of hard work but now she did not know if this was the right opportunity for her or not.

"So how did you want me to help you exactly?" Jin noticed Zhen Qing's awkward expression from afar and decided to support Xiong Da up. The moment Xiong Da stood up, he took out a cheque for 50 Thousand Yuan and shoved it into Jin's camp.

"This is the deposit. Train me like I am in a special forces hell boot camp. All I ask is that I eat good food during breaks. I am willing to sleep on the floor of the shop if I have to!" Xiong Da's resolution was very obvious. He did not care about anything but his desire to save the girl he liked...and delicious food.

In some way, Jin felt quite shameful that he was not as resolute as Xiong Da. It took Yun a massive amount of effort to get Jin to open his eyes and let him stand on his two feet and here Xiong Da was overflowing with determination, wanting to change at all cost all by himself. Even if there was no 50 thousand Yuan to entice him, Jin had already been inspired by Xiong Da and pumped up to work doubly hard for him. But, with that cheque of 50 thousand yuan, he could also convert the money into dungeon dollars for his monster's home so it was a good bonus.

"Alright, I might be able to help you but just hold on to that cheque until I can confirm it for you." Jin returned the cheque to Xiong Da and returned to the store. He pretended to check his phone for something but he was actually messaging Zeru about whether he could assist Xiong Da.

"I will not take another disciple." Zeru adamantly refused to assist Xiong Da.

"Nono, I am not asking you to train him as your disciple but as an instructor," Jin remembered Yun said offensive classes like Zeru could not be used as an instructor on the fields since it would make the battle too easy. Speaking of instructors, only a few used Milk as their instructor and no one took Peppers but it

could be the notion of AI's being useless in battles. None of the customers knew that Milk and Peppers were not just AI instructors.

"Oh! Okay, sure, but I thought the system would not allow offensive classes as instructors?" Zeru asked. "For that part, I respect the system's opinion because I too feel it would be too easy for cultivators if you joined them for the battle. Hence, I am not asking you to join him in the dungeons. Instead, you will be training him in Panda Muscles." Jin typed furiously on his phone's screen pad.

"Understood, I shall wait for him over there." Zeru's portrait immediately disappeared, indicating that he had teleported himself to Panda Muscles.

"So, Boss. Is it okay? If 50 thousand Yuan is not enough, I can give you more. To me, money is not an issue at all." Xiong Da opened his suitcase to take out his chequebook and wrote a blank cheque for Jin. "Name your price!" Xiong Da seemed to be sweating as he passed that blank cheque to Jin but he was determined to go all out for Ruo Ying.

Meanwhile, Jin tore the blank cheque into pieces right in front of him and took the 50 thousand yuan cheque from his suit pocket instead. "This will be enough for now." Jin beckoned Xiong Da to come into the store

Jin also beckoned to Zhen Qing, albeit with a gentler expression, but all Zhen Qing could do was nod her head and entered the store with Xiong Da.

### **Chapter 113 Short Sightedness**

"Xiong Da, let me settle some internal shop matters before I get to you. Is that fine with you?" Jin asked Xiong Da politely.

"Sure, Boss. Your job comes first." Xiong Da entered and he realised it had been a long time since he last stepped into Jin's store that it had the same empty atmosphere he had first experienced a few weeks ago.

"If you did not notice, this is Zhen Qing. She is undergoing a certain trial to see if she is fit to be my employee and whether she is agreeable with the working conditions." Jin introduced Zhen Qing to Xiong Da since both of them came into the store before opening hours.

"Oh hi there, I remember you. Your black pepper buns were fantastic and no offence, but they can't match the quality of Boss Jin's." Xiong Da finally noticed the pretty girl that had entered the store after him.

"Haha Xiong Da, you are too spoiled by the simple dishes that are served here." Jin chuckled.

"Seriously, if you have more food variety, I will personally buy an apartment or even a house just to eat your food on a daily basis." Xiong Da praised Jin.

"Zhen Qing, This is Xiong Da, my first regular customer since the shop's opening." Jin introduced Xiong Da to her.

"I..uh Thank you. I will try harder." Zhen Qing started to realise she was wrong to suspect Xiong Da of any malicious intent against Jin. The way they were reacting at the doorstep could possibly just be their unique way of bonding between friends.

"Hmm Xiong Da, instead of waiting, go to the third floor. There is a Muscular Panda Jade Statue there. Place your phone against the statue and it will work the same way as the underground stores. I might have someone waiting for you there right now." Jin suddenly saw a notification on his phone and decided to ask Xiong Da to meet with Shifu Zeru while he took care of Zhen Qing's ingredient matters.

"Oh? I thought the third floor was just the video playback rooms." Xiong Da remembered the level that not a lot of people frequented.

"I have changed it quite a bit, you will understand once you have taken a look. I will check on you in a bit." Jin inserted the cheque into the Panda Port and the Port surprisingly accepted it and credited Jin's account with 50 thousand Yuan. "You never cease to amaze me at how flexible you take money in." Jin thought to himself.

"Okay Boss, See you later then." Xiong Da went up the stairs while Jin finally gave Zhen Qing his full attention. After conversing with Yun, Jin understood that if he wanted Zhen Qing to trust him, he should act more like a boss with a reasonable and logical mindset. If he was too generous, Zhen Qing might think that Jin was up to no good. If he was too stingy, Zhen Qing might not work for him at all.

Jin would need to have the right ratio of carrot and stick to gain Zhen Qing's trust. Sure, he might have an interest in her and assumed that she probably had the right characteristic and attitude for the employee he was looking for. However, if she did not improve in terms of skills and increase her dish repertoire within these two weeks, Jin would decide not to employ her since she would not be worthy of the risk Jin was taking to hire her.

"Zhen Qing, follow me. Tap this black card here to enter." Jin used his phone and tapped it against the Panda Port and Zhen Qing quickly followed. When she was safely teleported, she realised she was not in the store anymore but in a different area.

It was a spacious looking kitchen but just like any of Jin's instances, it was not a normal kitchen. In fact, it was a kitchen equipped with so many appliances and kitchen equipment that a novice cook would be overwhelmed by the sheer amount.

There were multiple large ovens, stainless steel cookware, knives, a few dozen refrigerators and even a freezer room that kept the recently killed animals fresh. "There are too many items to take note of in this kitchen..." Zhen Qing was flabbergasted and could not imagine that Jin would have so many items. If a master chef ever saw this, he would have scolded Jin for not using the kitchen at all.

"This is a kitchen service instance. Eh... a sort of separate reality if I put it simple terms. I specialise in dimensional spaces so creating this was not an issue. What you see here is all real and not an illusion. If you have any questions, just ask. I understand it might be a little hard for a commoner who has not experienced cultivation to understand" Jin explained.

Zhen Qing was quite surprised that Jin found out she was just a commoner. Was it that obvious to a cultivator? In any case, Zhen Qing shook her head. She had previously read up a little on dungeon suppliers and dimensional spaces in the previous night so she understood a little.

"If I am not mistaken..." Jin was looking around the kitchen and finally found a tablet screen. Zhen Qing noticed he was tapping furiously on it and then a female voice was heard. "Welcome Ms Zhen Qing. I am the AI for this magnificent kitchen. If you need directions for a certain food stock or the location for any equipment, just ask and I shall direct you to it."

"Wow, this kitchen is equipped with an AI voice?" Zhen Qing thought she had to memorise every single part of the kitchen to fully utilise it, but clearly, this was no longer the case. With an AI helping her and assuming the AI is capable, everything would be much easier. However, she doubted the AI could help her much.

"If you think that the AI is useless, how about this? Let me show you." Jin read Zhen Qing's doubtful face and grinned. "AI, tell me where to find the chicken eggs and the kitchen equipment needed for creating a fried egg," Jin spoke aloud.

"Yes, Mister Jin. Would you like to use any specific chicken eggs? What kind of pan would you like to use? If you have no preference, I have highlighted the areas where you can find the items you have requested." Once the AI was done talking, certain parts of the kitchen were illuminated by a green LED.

Jin and Zhen Qing walked to the fridge and opened the compartment that was illuminated in green. They found the eggs and Zhen Qing noticed that the eggs were stored at an optimal temperature. She went to open another compartment and it was vegetables and noticed the temperature that it was kept at was slightly different. They later checked the other compartments in the kitchen and Zhen Qing realised that the equipment the AI suggested was all that was needed to make a good fried egg.

In short, Zhen Qing found out that this kitchen was not just a simple nightmare for a novice chef like her. It was also the ideal kitchen for a master chef with a perfectionist complex.

"You will find all the ingredients you can think of in this kitchen, and more. I have made sure most of the ingredients could be found right here with some additional stuff. The AI here can assist you if you need help. If there are some additional appliances that you need which are not available here, just tell me or the AI. I believe it will also relay the message to me if you cannot find me." Jin explained to Zhen Qing.

"Also, keep that black access card for these two weeks," Jin added.

"Wait, Jin. Eh I mean, Boss Jin. I could not possibly accept this. Just give me some ingredients and I will make do at my mobile stall." Zhen Qing replied. Upon listening to Zhen Qing's request, Jin politely refused.

"No, I cannot allow you to do that. There is a reason why my food items are a notch above the rest. The secret food supplier I receive my food from also used this kitchen and the ingredients here we have in stock. If you want to improve your black pepper pork bun, I suggest you try using the ingredients here." Jin lied to Zhen Qing while not revealing any expression.

"Also, you asked me to procure these ingredients and they are not cheap. Hence, use them optimally by preparing the ingredients here. Increase your current price to thrice the amount or else it would be an insult to the quality of these ingredients, I will hold my end of the bargain by not taking any profit during this two week trial," Jin added.



"I will be blunt to inform you that there will be changes to the mobile store that you have been operating at. It should be finished earliest by the time you are done with preparing your items. If not the latest would be tomorrow afternoon. Of course, nothing will be done to your current one. I am building an entirely new street stall." Jin informed Zhen Qing on what he was going to do.

"Why would you do all this? There is not to your benefit at all." Zhen Qing asked with a bewildered facial expression.

"By the end of the two weeks, if you like this place, I will hire you and we can discuss the terms and conditions. If you do well and create more customers, the long-term benefits for me are huge, as I can receive money from your side in the future as well. However, if you did not like the place, you can leave with the profit you made and note that I might not offer such generous terms to you again. Besides, this trial will also help me determine whether a street stall can help distract those cultivators that are waiting for their turns to enter the dungeon."

"In short, yes it might not be a benefit to me currently, but if it succeeds the way I think it will, the short term loss would be worth it," Jin said in confidence.

Zhen Qing could finally understand where Jin was coming from. If she failed, he could just scrap the idea. On the other hand, if she passed, he would have more customers indirectly and profit from them in the future. If she passed but did not wish to continue, he could find a better chef to take her place. It made sense that he was being generous. He was looking forward into the future.

At this point, Zhen Qing was a little embarrassed about how short sighted she was. Perhaps, it was because of all the running from the police and taking small opportunities whenever she could to sell more items that she did not see the overall big picture that Jin had in mind.

"Okay, I will do it." Zhen Qing nodded.

"Alright fantastic. The time dilation here is 2 hours to 1 hour in reality. So you have about roughly 6 hours to prepare your ingredients." Jin explained a little more about the time dilation to Zhen Qing and she added it to the multitude of things listed down in her mind.

"Looks like this is really the opportunity for me to break through in life." Zhen Qing finally giggled to herself as she saw Jin leaving the kitchen to her. "Time to start to see if those ingredients can really improve my black pepper pork bun."

## **Chapter 114 Aesthetics**

Jin left Zhen Qing to do her work in the kitchen and he believed that the system disguising as a sentient AI would only help her when necessary. Jin now had a few things to do. One was to take a look at Xiong Da and perhaps participate in the training for a while since he had yet to do his daily morning training.

The second thing he needed to sort out was the street stall improvement that Jin had told Zhen Qing about. There was nothing wrong with the current mobile stall that Zhen Qing was using, it was just that

Jin could improve the seating area surrounding the street stall, modernise the street stall so it would look more eye catching while not losing the traditional look that his store had portrayed.

Speaking of his store, it was about time he put up the store house sign and perhaps redecorate the shop a little to suit the panda theme to the place was rocking. "I have about 10 Thousand and 300 hundred Yuan in my earnings account right now courtesy of Xiong Da as well as roughly 4000 dungeon dollars.

With the exchange rate of 100 Yuan to 1 Dungeon dollar, I would have about an additional of 1000 dungeon dollars if I convert everything. Hmm. That is not a really good idea at all. I should only convert the Yuan when I really need it." Jin was looking at his phone's calculator and found there was an exchange button that showed him the conversion rates and the total amount of money he would receive.

"Judging from what I have previously built from the Dungeon maker, I guess I will set the improvement for the street stall and the store's internal renovation a budget of 500 Dungeon Dollars. That should be more than sufficient." Jin realised that he could not be a lazy boss like he used to be. Back then, the financing of the store was all supported by the system, and he did not have to worry a single thing. All he did was serve the customers when need be and continue his daily life as per normal.

Now he had to keep a tight watch on the amount of money he had. Sure, the upgrades to the mobile stall and the internal decorations may not be worth the amount of dungeon dollars he was spending since they were only for aesthetics rather than for function.

However, the image of the shop, especially in the era where the look and feel of the products would determine the success, was equally as important as what the shop could actually do. Sensory or even subliminal effects would be essential competitive tools against other dungeon suppliers.

Jin already noticed the effect the system created when using Pandas in the shop. It made both male and female customers coming in feel relaxed and comfortable, compared to other dungeon suppliers, whose atmospheres were all about anger, rage, fights and power. The dungeon supplier "King's Monster" had figments of various monsters all around their shop.

Jin also remembered the feeling he experienced when he was on the third floor of his store. He noticed that a lot of his customers did not dare to enter because they could feel the tranquillity of the area and felt like they were disrupting the peace. However, Jin still did not understand the rationale of a tranquil gallery when the statues would teleport them to a place of excitement.

"This is just my conjecture but I think the system wants the customers to know and experience something incredibly unique in this day and age. I think the system wants our customers to know that there can be a place of tranquillity even within our fast-paced world of chaos. Besides, this could also allow the customer to transition properly into something different." Yun came from out of nowhere and poured herself a coffee to drink. Jin then realised Yun had disappeared when Xiong Da and Zhen Qing came into the store. Perhaps, she did not want the others to misunderstand her relationship with Jin.

"If you have not noticed, the Zen gallery kind of gives you the 'Alright, let's try again. I can do this.' kind of vibe?" Yun added a few pieces of sugar cubes and some milk.

"I realised too. Still, that third floor needs more promotion and more service instances." Jin replied back.

"Well, its either you make more money or you do more missions," Yun commented as she sipped her coffee.

"Enough missions for now. I have yet to complete the Baby Panda mission and a few other things are still lined up on my plate. Getting more missions will just complicate things." Jin shook his head.

"Maybe the system might give you a helping hand once in a while you know? It would not harm you to check periodically." Yun smiled at Jin, which incidentally gave Jin a sense of apprehension.

"Yeah, I will check it later." Jin had enough with the system making his life miserable a moment and Yun chuckled at his reply.

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Xiong Da entered Panda Muscles as Jin instructed to him and found that he was surrounded by various gym equipment in a warehouse that was void of people.

"Mister Xiong Da?" Xiong Da heard his name and turned to look, only to find that it was a red panda receptionist. He did not know that Jin had now made all the service instance receptionists excluding the Emerald Mountain Hot Spring Instance red pandas. "Yes, I am Xiong Da." He replied to the innocent looking red panda.

"Your instructor is waiting for you at the other end of the warehouse. Just follow the illuminated path which I am about to show you now and you will find him. Your instructor also said to reach there in 2 minutes or he will not teach you anything. The distance you need to cover is 800 metres."

"800 metres in 2 minutes?!" Xiong Da's jaw dropped. Commoners' average timing was roughly 3 -4 minutes. He knew some cultivators could definitely do better than that but his cultivation style was focused on power not speed. So, in terms of speed, he was no different from a commoner and all he could do was rely on his stamina and willpower.

"I am starting the timer in 5...4.." The Red Panda ignored Xiong Da's expression and started to count down. Xiong Da wanted to curse under his breath but he guessed this was what he needed to defeat Lan Ji Ao.

"2...1...go!" The Red Panda pressed a button on her counter and a starting pistol shot was fired off, which made Xiong Da frantically run while following the green arrows on the floor that was illuminated just for him to follow.

Xiong Da did not pace himself in any way and started sprinting the moment he started. He could not think of anything since it was too quick for him to process anything. Fortunately, he knew how much he had to push himself as the arrows not only showed the direction he had to move within this enormous warehouse, numbers were also illuminated to indicate the distance he had already run.

However, in 400 metres, he was already gasping for air, but Xiong Da knew he needed to push himself forward. If he stopped here, the instructor that was waiting for him would refuse to help him. Hence, Xiong Da gritted his teeth and told himself to not think and move forward.

While waiting for Xiong Da to arrive in two minutes, Zeru was reading up on Xiong Da's personal profile created by the system, since every action Xiong Da had carried out and every word he said was recorded

by the system. The system then compiled everything for Yun and Jin in case they need to use it to improve customer satisfaction.

For example, Yun would personally 'whisper' information about a certain customer that returned to play at Jin's store. This would make that particular customer feel more appreciated and would he/she would then be more inclined to return to Jin store a third time. However, Yun would only be able to relay this information. How Jin used it would be a separate matter.

As Zeru was a little old fashioned, the system had created physical books for him to peruse. The moment Zeru agreed to 'take care' of Xiong Da, he started to read up on Xiong Da's profile. Milk also came by and told him what she had taught Xiong Da but obviously, she was just pushing him to be competent at his current skills and suggested to him which skills were more useful.

"Well, at the very least, this guy is now motivated enough to want something." Zeru closed his book and checked the timer when he heard rapid breathing come from the side of the ring arena that Zeru was in.

"You are 4 seconds late. I do not wish to teach you anything." Zeru folded his arms as he stood in front of Xiong Da with menacing authority.

"Sir! I have no excuses, Sir! But please give me a chance to prove myself." Xiong Da was trying his best to get those words out of his mouth.

"What chance? You squandered your chance when you were late by 4 seconds. You could have run immediately before the timer started and that would have given you a 5 second head start. In a fight, you have to use everything at your disposal to win." Zeru tried to test Xiong Da's resolve.

Xiong Da then stared intensely at Zeru. "Lawbreakers. I dislike them. Scrap that! I detest them! Why must I lower myself to their level just to win a fight? Why can't I be righteous in an unlawful fight? I do not wish to fight dirty like that bastard Ji Ao!" Xiong Da shouted.

"So you want to win with overwhelming power and not with trickery?" Zeru asked.

"Yes, so that I can be that selfish knight that protects his one and only princess in his heart!" Xiong Da shouted as he started to get up.

"Now I see your resolve." Zeru extended his hand and Xiong Da grabbed it to climb up into the ring arena. Xiong Da then realised that he was not supporting himself properly because he was still weak from the 800m sprint and therefore, he nearly fell.

However, Zeru held on Xiong Da well enough to prevent the fall with only one hand, which made Xiong Da feel astonished! He weighed over 300 kilograms but the master instructor in front of him stood steadfastly and supported him with ease.

"What are you blanking out for?" Zeru's question snapped Xiong Da back into attention and he quickly got into the ring arena.

"Spar with me, give me all you got and in the meantime, entertain me with your current situation. Every single detail." Zeru gestured Xiong Da to come at him and Xiong Da did.

"Oh, I have a brain full of details and I hope I am more than just entertaining." With his weapon in his hands, Xiong Da charged towards Zeru with no regards to his life.

"I do not think you should think that highly about yourself." Zeru chuckled as he faced Xiong Da with no weapons.

## **Chapter 115 Hungry Hippo Style**

As Zeru was assessing Xiong Da, he noticed the hungry hippo style that he was cultivating did not seem to be the same hippo style he remembered from years ago. "Student Xiong Da, where did learn your cultivation style?" Zeru gently pushed the warclub away no matter how hard Xiong Da tried to hit him with it.

"From my family...the Wa Family." Xiong Da gasped his breath as he replied back.

"Wa Family? Hmmm... Would you by any chance know of a person called Wa Kao Wei?" Zeru took the initiative and attacked, which Xiong Da barely defended. He was nearly knocked out of the ring arena if not for the ropes around surrounding it.

"Kao Wei? That's my grandfather. Cough cough." Xiong Da began to think that this instructor that Jin introduced was not an AI but a real person instead. "How could an AI be so talkative and even know things that are personal?" Xiong Da thought to himself.

"Ah, your expression gave away your thinking, student Xiong Da. Boss Jin told me to find out more about you so we could put together a detailed plan. If you are thinking along the lines of me being a human, I am sad to say that I am not but just an advanced AI." Zeru utilised a low sweep and caught Xiong Da off guard again.

"Damn it, Boss Jin! If your AI is this clever, why have you not taken over the world yet?" Xiong Da complained as he fell to the ground.

"I happened to remember that the Wa Family had a history of using the Hippo style but they never stated what kind of Hippo they were cultivating as. However, several hidden records showed that Wa Kao Wei practised the Hotshot Hippo style. That was why I was curious about your cultivation being the Hungry Hippo style instead." Zeru was basing it off his personal memory but he could not lie well and Xiong Da also felt like something was off. He had seen enough liars to catch one.

"Did Boss Jin dig into my history?" Xiong Da was quite annoyed. No one really knew that his cultivation was different from his family's except for a select few.

"Yes, I did dig into your history." Jin came in at the right moment and assisted Zeru in order to not expose the lie of him actually being human. "If not, how would I know whether you were lying or not?"

"Boss! Why would I be of interest to you? Besides, those are confidential secrets. How could you even find out about all this?" Xiong Da queried suspiciously.

"To be honest with you, at first, I did not think it was possible to link you to the infamous Wa Kao Wei. However, I took an interest in reading the diaries of my military grandfather after he passed away. He used to talk about a cultivator named Wa Kao Wei being notorious in the streets. The Hotshot Hippo

cultivator." All the practice of white lying during opening hours had prepared him to create a plausible half-truth.

The truth was that Zeru had told everything to Jin telepathically and what he said was indeed true. Meanwhile, Jin used the cover of his grandfather's diaries since they were from the same generation and the world was still considered big for them. Xiong Da began to find Jin's explanation to be slightly plausible.

"So Instructor Zeru, after assessing him, what is your conclusion?" Jin asked.

"He cannot fight for nuts. He said he learnt stuff from the goblin and zombie fights but when he tried to apply them against me in a fight, it did not transfer over well enough." Zeru's honest opinion scarred Xiong Da's weak heart. "Besides, this Hungry Hippo style is not really for fighting. It seems menacing but its bite is nothing compared to the bark it makes."

"That was the easiest way to shoo my bullies off during school and university without wasting too much time on cultivation. That way I could spend more time on food and studies." Xiong Da explained to them that he applied some modifications to the cultivation style that he had initially obtained from his family.

"This is troublesome. You not only modified your cultivation, but you have also advanced in that particular cultivation of yours." Zeru started to crack his head open trying to think of a way to help him.

"Why is that really bad?" Jin asked since he did not have much knowledge of other cultivation styles.

"A modified cultivation is usually good if someone knows what they are doing, but usually you need years of experience to properly modify a cultivation. Xiong Da modified his cultivation for the sole benefit of early easy cultivation at the start, but he had not realised that it would then not be easy for him to cultivate in the future. Also, if I am not mistaken, like a hungry hippo, this cultivation style needs a lot of spiritual force for it to level up. The only good advantage it has is that if he really does level up, he will become a very strong powerhouse and a force to be reckoned with." Zeru offered his analysis.

"So what Xiong Da needs is to fight in more dungeons? Since our dungeons can give him some spiritual force if he defeats them." Jin said as they figured out a plan to help Xiong Da.

"Alternatively, I can teach him the ways of the Hotshot Hippo style, but if we did it that way, he would have to unlearn everything and that would need more than one week's worth of time." Zeru offered.

"Either way, it will not be easy for Xiong Da. Perhaps we can look into the person that Xiong Da hates?" Jin looked at Xiong Da for any answers.

"Lan Ji Ao? I have plenty of things on him." Xiong Da grinned widely as he started to list the things verbally.

"He is a cultivator of the Crazy Crocodile Style and he dual wields Sais as his main weapon. The last time we fought, he just used his overwhelming strength to defeat me so I was not able to see any tricks I could use to win against him. However, he did duel with other cultivators before and I had my private investigator spy on those battles. He was really dirty when he knew he could not win." Xiong Da explained as he sat in the corner of the ring arena and gave them his information about Ji Ao.

"He did things like calling extra hands to come in and beat the person up or pretending to be weak and pitiful then pull out a hidden dagger from his sleeve and throw that dagger into his opponent's throat. He will use everything and anything to defeat the opponent. It's despicable!" Xiong Da raged on.

"Well, he is not wrong to use any methods he can to win the fight. It is just that his public image will go down the drain and people would come to despise him." Zeru said.

"Unfortunately, I agree with Zeru. This is how some people fight. However, that does not mean you do not have any hope. You still have a week to go." Jin pat on Xiong Da's shoulder.

"What can I do? If I am not mistaken he is at the very least a Grade 3 cultivator and he might be training towards Grade 3 Peak too." Xiong Da was worried. He might be powerful with his pen and the law at his back but he was not well versed in his cultivation.

"We will think up something. Besides, don't think I didn't notice that you took the initiative to rest when you should not have. Go give me 50 push ups now." Zeru commanded and Xiong Da immediately acknowledged. He looked at Jin and nodded his head.

"Fine, I guess I have to think up something too." Jin thought but on the outside, he smiled to them in confidence. After which, Zeru trained Xiong Da on a rigorous physical training routine that Jin joined in for the first hour before he left Xiong Da to the mercy of Zeru.

"Next item on the agenda: the mobile stall and store sign." Jin wiped his sweat off and proceeded to the first floor, only to hear doorbell ringing once more.

## **Chapter 116 Coupon Booklet Submission**

"Good morning Jin." Si Fang, the owner of Lele Cafe, greeted Jin at his doorstep. "Boss Si Fang, what is the matter?"

"I was opening my store for the morning and coincidentally saw you talking with one of your customers. I became inclined to pay you a visit." Si Fang tried to be polite but Jin knew what he was here for.

"Ah, the coupon booklet? I was about to give it to you in the afternoon since I did not know what time you are available. Give me a moment." Jin took the coupon booklet out of his storage watch and passed it to Si Fang.

"Thanks, Jin! And here I was thinking that you had totally forgotten about it so I was about to remind you." Si Fang received the coupon booklet and started to browse it. He was pleasantly surprised to see that despite it being a prototype, it was all printed neatly in an appealing format. Si Fang had originally thought that he would need to send it to the print stores again.

"This is amazing! The new cover page of the coupon booklet is so eye catching and flashy! Your coupons seem more than reasonable...in fact, the deals practically make it like a freebie. Are you sure you will not end up in debt by the end of this month?"

"I have my ways to recover my losses. If this month coupon booklet can help the Tiangong shopping district, then it will have served its purpose well." Jin replied.

"This is better than anything we have ever made! I will show it to the rest of the committee members but in my opinion, I feel that your version will get the approval quite quickly. Initially, I was expecting snippets or draft coupons and we would have to discuss how to format and design the booklet. I guess I worried for nothing." Si Fang gave a thumbs up and continued to praise Jin.

"It is nothing much, I just happened to know someone who is capable of making beautiful designs. However, I do not think I will be able to participate in other monthly coupon booklets. In fact, this will most likely be my first and last time." Jin broke the news to Si Fang early.

"Why? Are you moving out or something?" Si Fang assumed the worst since he knew this shopping district was not exactly the best place to attract customers despite it being near to a business district as well as the Huawei Tech campuses.

"No, I anticipate I will be busy with certain matters that require my personal attention in the future..." Jin portrayed it vaguely but Si Fang got the idea. Besides, Jin was not exactly a part of the Tiangong shopping district in the first place, so he was not obligated to be a part of the coupon booklet.

Si Fang wanted Jin's store in the booklet because he saw potential Jin could bring. Perhaps Si Fang thought that if he could help Jin scratch his back, Jin would likewise do the same for him in the future.

"I understand, but if you wish to join in the future, just tell us. I should be able to pull some strings." Si Fang thanked Jin and told him that he would visit again to announce the results of the approval process.

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After tens of minutes of taking stock of the ingredients required for her Black Pepper Pork Bun recipe, Zhen Qing laid all the ingredients she needed on a wide kitchen counter. She was already shocked by the quality of meat the moment she took the pork belly out of the freezer. Zhen Qing did not even need to taste it. Just from the rich colour of the pork meat, the odour and the meat texture, she was easily able to tell that what Jin procured for her was no ordinary pork belly meat.

She tried asking the kitchen AI and to her surprise, the AI answered that the slabs of pork belly meat came from the British Berkshire Pig, which was prized for their juiciness, flavour and tenderness. The pork's high fat content made it ideal for high temperature cooking. Even with her limited and out-dated cooking knowledge, she knew that this pig was considered rare and hard to breed.

Even if the Kitchen AI made a mistake, the physical properties of the slab of pork belly made her feel embarrassed she was using such an expensive meat for her simplistic bun. No wonder Jin said that he wanted her to increase the price of the black pepper pork bun.

However, the quality of the ingredient was one thing, but the skills of the cook mattered too. If Zhen Qing was not able to bring out the intrinsic flavour of the British Berkshire Pig, it would be a failure and a waste of such expensive pork. It had been a long time since Zhen Qing encountered a cooking obstacle rather than a more physical one, such as running from the inspectors or meeting rowdy gangsters.

Subsequently, Zhen Qing found that the pork belly meat was not the only exquisite item in the pantry. The rice wine was fermented for many years, the oyster sauce was organically made without any added



MSG. Even the sea salt that she requested was taken from at least a few hundred metres deep in the sea. The more she heard from the Kitchen AI, the more amazed and confused she became.

Why did Jin want to hire her when his ingredients were top notch? Even a normal hotel chef would have better qualifications and experience than her when it came to handling this kind of food. Or was it that Jin managed to find out that Zhen Qing was once qualified to be a chef champion for an international cooking contest until scandals hit her hard? She suddenly shook her head vigorously.

"Impossible, I have dyed my hair regularly and changed my identity. He would never have been able to find out about that." Zhen Qing tossed that thought away.

"I will give it a try first and see if the current recipe works on the new ingredients." Zhen Qing did not have any confidence at the moment when it came to preparing a large number of ingredients the way she had always did. She decided to try a batch of black pepper pork buns to see if the richness of taste clashed with her original recipe.

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"Why are you moving so slowly? Faster!" Zeru knocked Xiong Da's thigh as he saw Xiong Da did not squat low enough when he was doing a series of jumping squats. In less than 40 minutes, Zeru had already made Xiong Da perform 5 sets of 50 push ups, an 8 second 100 metre sprint, 50 sit ups and 50 squats.

"This is too tough..." Xiong Da complained but every time he did that, he noticed that an onigiri was taken away from the tray that Jin had placed in front of Zeru and him as refreshments.

"That will be one less onigiri for you." Zeru smiled as he feasted on the rice onigiri, making Xiong Da cry as he continued to do his squats.

"Aren't you an AI instructor? How do you even eat the onigiri?" Xiong Da complained once more.

"Maybe I am AI. Maybe I am real. Who knows, and honestly, who cares? What really matters is that you complete your training." Zeru laughed loudly as he enjoyed the scrumptious onigiri.

"Why am I doing such simple training? Don't you have more exciting ones?" Xiong Da tried to change the subject.

"Sure, How about 60 squats instead of 50? Will that be exciting enough for you?" Zeru folded his arms and mentally counted the number of times Xiong Da had squat. "In any case, this exercise routine touches on many major movement patterns and it's more natural than many other methods I have. Also, I do not know how much your overly large body can handle, so this will incur less injury in the long run." Zeru started to explain.

"What is most important is that you are working on your strength and cardio so that you will be able to last longer in a fight. Since you say Ji Ao fights dirty and uses a pair of Sais, I am assuming he is leaning more towards agility than strength. Even the Crazy Crocodile style is based on agility. You might have the power from Hungry Hippo, but if you do not have the stamina to withstand his speedy attacks, you will fail too." Zeru gave a proper explanation about why he chose to do this particular exercise routine for Xiong Da.

"Now that you know the reason, give me 5 more sets before I let you eat whatever onigiri remains."  
Zeru knocked on Xiong Da's thigh once more and all Xiong Da could do was to bear with the pain.

### **Chapter 117 Modified Black Pepper Pork Buns**

To Zhen Qing's amazement, the first batch of black pepper pork buns was ready to be sampled not long after she used the kitchen's oven instead of the usual clay oven she had.

"This particular kitchen dimensional space instance is used to quicken the pace of a chef cultivator. I believe Boss Jin had said that the instance reduced the effects of time dilation in order not to damage your body since you have not cultivated. However, the kitchen instance has also utilised the cultivation magic of time compression and this can be seen in almost all the kitchen appliances." the Kitchen Ai spoke nonchalantly about it.

"Is that why my black pepper pork buns are ready in 10 minutes?" Zhen Qing took the buns out and the aroma they emitted was already extremely different from the usual black pepper buns.

"Of course, the time compression can also be further increased but that might have some negative effects and may lead to certain unknown side effects, which are complicated for an amateur to deal with, hence we went for the fastest safe alternative of time compression for the kitchen appliances to save time." The kitchen AI spoke.

"Whatever you did, it sure is a time saver." Being a commoner, Zhen Qing did not know that being cultivation brought so much convenience. If she had known, she would have taken some time to cultivate when she was young... the only problem was that she did not have the time in the first place.

All she could remember doing was working in various part time jobs so that she could attend her dream school. She slogged through sleepless nights to try to attain the cooking school's scholarship so that she did not have to rely on her useless father.

"Focus!" Zhen Qing awoke from her thoughts as she blew the newly made bun in an effort to cool it down quicker for her to eat.

One bite.

That was all it took to make her feel like she was in a food paradise. The British Berkshire pork belly blended perfectly with the other simple yet exquisite ingredients, which in turn enriched the flavour of the bun to another level of greatness.

However, it was not the richness that concerned her when she ate it, as she realised she could taste the lack of confidence she had on herself when the end product.

Zhen Qing then remembered her mentor's teaching. "The recipe has no soul. You as the cook must not only bring the technical skills into the dish, but also the soul of the food needs to be crafted through your hands and feelings."

Zhen Qing looked at the time. Roughly an hour had passed and she figured it would take another half an hour or so for experimenting. At most, another hour. Hence, she would still have at least another four hours to prepare the rest of the ingredients.

This time round, she thought of modifying the recipe a little by adding a few herbs so that the richness of the pork belly did not overpower the rest of the ingredients. She tried her luck by asking the kitchen AI for a few bundles of sage and rosemary and the Kitchen was indeed stocked with it.

When Zhen Qing found the bundle of herbs, the fresh smell it exuded made her envy how well stocked this kitchen was. She quickly took a few bundles and tried to replace the spring onions with some sage and a hint of rosemary. Of course, she decided to make a variation of them, since she had forgotten much of her out-dated cooking knowledge.

"I guess this is really a good chance to go back and hit the cooking books once in a while." Zhen Qing asked herself whether this was really a good chance to go back to being a chef. Of course, she might do it with her new identity instead of her old one.

In less than half an hour, the experimental pork buns were ready and Zhen Qing tried asking whether the kitchen had a clay oven, similar to a tandoori oven so that it could improve the baking process too.

"Yes, the kitchen is equipped with a modern tandoori oven that has a time compression module attached to it. However, we will recommend you to personally supervise the process because it does not have a timer like the modern oven," The Kitchen AI replied to Zhen Qing concerning her queries.

"However, the kitchen will observe how and when you pick those baked buns out. Through repeated motions, the kitchen believes it will be able to serve you better by telling you when it's about time to take them out."

"You are able to do that? Wow! That is astonishing!" Zhen Qing was once again dazzled by the learning capability of the Kitchen AI. Jin was actually hiding something this amazing from the world. Was he some sort of cultivation technology whiz or was she just this unknowledgeable of the real world?

Zhen Qing prepared the tandoori oven with charcoal provided by the kitchen and she realised that even the stick-like white charcoal was not normal. "Is this Binchotan?" Zhen Qing was able to recognise the unique charcoal shape and the Kitchen AI acknowledged. "Yes, it is Binchotan, which is also known as white charcoal, a type of high quality charcoal from ubame oak that originates from the Wakayama Prefecture in Japan."

"I remember that this kind of charcoal burns longer and hotter despite using no chemical or toxic products associated with it so there aren't any unpleasant odours to it...Not to mention the price tag to it is...Oh my gosh, I am afraid of failing Boss Jin now." Zhen Qing smiled bitterly.

As the modern tandoori oven heated up, the kitchen's ventilation was able to push out most of the smoke. "I really wish I had this kind of ventilation as well..." Zhen Qing spoke to herself as she saw that the oven was more or less ready in a minute. She skilfully placed the buns into the oven and within a minute, she already saw changes taking place inside the oven.

Zhen Qing had been making black pepper pork buns for months so she knew what was the right colour the bun needed to be for it to be the perfect time to take it out of the time compressed tandoori oven.

Even the slightest change of smell in the baking process would prompt her to take action. In short, this time compressed tandoori oven was a test on her ability of observation but she performed splendidly. All the experimental buns were baked to perfection. The look of the tandoori oven baked buns already gave Zhen Qing the impression that it had far surpassed the buns that were left in the modern oven since she had more control over the baking process.

Now for the tasting process! She cleaned her palate with some lemon water before trying each and every one of the buns. Since the first bite into the bun, she realised that the crispy crust and the mix of herbs, along with the British Berkshire pork belly, was simply out of this world. Each bun had its own unique taste, which was satisfying too, but eventually, she decided to go with a mix of sage and spring onions as the vegetable stuffing with the pork.

"Oh, this is sooo good." Zhen Qing closed her eyes and enjoyed that moment of bliss. It had been a long time since she had challenged herself that much in cooking and she began to relish in the joy of cooking once again. Not only that, she finally got back the 'soul' of the food, which her teacher constantly drilled her about.

"Now to prepare the batches of buns for the entire day!" Zhen Qing was all fired up. She rolled up her sleeves and started to prepare a similar amount of unbaked buns based on yesterday's sales.

#### Chapter 118 Store Sign

It was two hours before the store opened at 12 pm and Jin had a lot of things he wanted to do. He had the store aesthetics to decide, the mobile stall to build, Xiong Da's training plan to create and the trip to Shenzhen Provincial Zoo to take a photo with the Panda Baby.

"I shall deal with the store sign first and after that will be the construction of the mobile stall." Jin thought to himself as he stepped into the Dungeon Maker Instance again.

Jin had initially thought about his store name when he was younger. He wanted the name to be something impactful and perhaps cringy like Monsterevolt but since the system made him adopt the panda theme, he decided to work around that theme instead.

"The app is called Pandamonium, maybe I should follow that naming sense?" Jin thought to himself and tried a variation of names.

"Pandmonia, Pandatorium, Pandamonsters, Pandamonium Plaza, Pandastic Dungeons...Or maybe Pungeons. Urgh, the last one was horrible." Jin thought to himself and felt that Pandamonium was sufficient.

"Actually... no. I feel like I ask the shop customers to decide, but at the same time, if I let the customers choose it, it does not feel as if the shop belongs to me. Maybe I should give more thought to this..." Jin felt a little pressured since he was spending more time on the store sign than intended, and he felt he should work on the mobile stall design sooner rather than later.

So Jin decided to allocate probably another 10 more minutes to thinking about the shop name as he browsed the web for news or images on his phone.

"ooh, the game Dungeons and Dragons is releasing another expansion at year's end." Dungeons and Dragons was one of the most anticipated game franchises that many people followed intensely due to its revolutionary gameplay style. Jin loved the game franchise a lot when he was a student.

"Wait...Dungeons?" Jin suddenly had a sudden inspiration and tried writing the store name down. Pandas and Dragons?...No...Dungeons and Pandas...!

"Sounds simple, cringy and eye catching enough." Jin laughed to himself. Even though Jin wished to use Pandamonium, he felt that he should try to be innovative rather than just using the name the system provided.

Perhaps there was still some mistrust between the system and him. Maybe this was Jin's naive way of rebelling against the system after what it made him go through.

But whatever it was, Jin would continue to utilise the system for his own benefit as much as the system utilised him for its own purposes.

Jin opened the Dungeon Maker interface and started to create a large sign. He purposely used Moso Bamboo as the integral material since it was a high quality bamboo that was not only strong and durable, but paid patronage to the panda theme of the shop. He happened to chance upon it when he was searching on Qiandu. Though Jin was only going by recommendations from the search engine, he did ask Yun, who happened to appear in front of him, for her and the system's opinion. All she did was approve of the recommendation, saying that it was indeed one of the superior choices she would potentially use.

Although Jin did not have the expertise, skill, or patience needed to write Chinese calligraphy, anything was possible with the power of Dungeon Maker...as long as Jin could pay the price quoted by the Maker.

Upon request by Jin, the Dungeon Maker immediately provided tens of calligraphy examples with the words Dungeons and Pandas on it, all of which were fantastic. However, he felt like something was missing.

"It is because this is made by the system via your request and uses the least amount of money. Hence, there is no chi energy and no spiritual force on your signboard. Compared to the work it has done on the third floor, this is like a child scribbles on a piece of paper instead of a beautifully written signage." Yun commented as she noticed that Jin was quite upset with the choice he made.

"So you are saying I have to pay more for the sign if I want the system to imbue spiritual energy into the signage?" Jin clarified with Yun and she nodded as a reply.

"Alternatively, you could do the calligraphy yourself and imbue the spiritual force into it free of charge. However, no matter what you do, I will say that it is important to have high energy chi emanating out of your signage. That way, in the future when you serve higher grade customers, they will respect you." Yun explained the reason for having a good signage board.

"Why don't I just update my sign regularly?" Jin casually asked. He thought that all he needed to do was upgrade the sign every time he went up in grade.

"You can do that too, but what if a random high grade cultivator enters your store and they notice that the signage is devoid of chi energy?" Yun commented.

"Wait wait, what do you mean by emanating chi energy? Do you mean my signage needs to give off chi energy?" Jin was a little confused by Yun's explanation.

"You do know that in grandmaster-level paintings, all you need to do is input a little bit of chi energy for you to feel the deep impressions of the painters and the visualisation of the painting coming to life. This is the same for your signage. While I might have phrased it a little incorrectly previously, my point still stands on how your signage would need to impress your new customers when they insert some chi energy into it. This is in order to see if your dungeon store is something worthy enough for them to enter, so take it as first impressions do matter." Yun tried her best to explain something new to Jin.

"That was also the reason why I did not immediately ask you for the store's name. Although you did not ask for it either..." Yun seemed a little annoyed when she finished her sentence.

"But since we are at it, the system has placed a new mission for you that relates to your signboard." Yun signalled Jin to check and Jin obliged as he took his phone out to view the new mission. If what Yun said was true, the mission should be difficult since getting a high-end signage would be extremely expensive.

"Complete a Dungeon Takeover? That's it? Sounds too good to be true." Jin became very suspicious when he saw the reward was in fact a Grade 19 calligraphed Signage which Jin could choose at will.

"Take it as an apology from the system for what it made you go through. The system and I were doing that for your sake even though you could say that it was quite heavy handed." Yun subtly tried to apologise to Jin.

"I would still choose a fairly difficult yet still suitable dungeon even if you gave me the choice since I do not have the time to constantly go on takeovers if I have to handle the shop while still trying to gather as much resources as possible." Jin was equally clumsy in his reply as he tried to accept the system's apology.

"Then that settles for the signage, now let's move onto the mobile stall design." Jin saved all the things he had searched for and began work on the mobile stall, beginning from a brand new template in the dungeon maker.

## Chapter 119 The Caravan Store

Zhen Qing finally finished preparing the required amount of pork buns for the day. She had prepared a little more than yesterday just in case the same thing happened and she sold out all her usual stock again.

However, she did spend a total of 6 hours in the Kitchen instance and the moment she came out of it, all she felt was a wave of great fatigue hitting her hard.

Then she saw Jin passing her a cup of coffee. "Do you drink coffee?" Jin asked and all she could do was nod her head.

The black ivory coffee was extremely enticing and Zhen Qing did not hesitate to take a sip out of it. Even from just the first sip, she felt an elephant trumpeting its nose within her and she instantly discovered that a sort of energy was coursing through her body, revitalising her.

Within seconds of the next sip, the surge of energy stabilised and radiated out from her body.

Zhen Qing's complexion was totally different from before.

"What kind of coffee drink is this? I felt so much energy bursting into me!" Zhen Qing felt that if she drank the whole cup of black ivory coffee, she might be able to last the whole day of work.

"It's a high grade coffee that has some spiritual force within it..." At this point in time, Jin finally found the inspiration regarding how to help Xiong Da. However, Jin placed it at the back of his mind for the moment and concentrated back on Zhen Qing for now.

"So, I think that because your dantian chi point had not been cultivated, you are rather sensitive... uhhh... that's not a good way to put it... Ah! Got it! You are more receptive to any spiritual force you received." Jin explained the reason why she suddenly felt that surge of energy pulsing through her body. However, Jin told her that if she had cultivated, she would experience even less fatigue. All Zhen Qing could do was to nod her head.

Regardless, Zhen Qing informed Jin that she had already created a modified black pepper bun and was ready to start work. While she was eager to see the expression on Jin's face when she told him about it, Zhen Qing was rather sad that she was not able to bring the modern Tandoori oven out from the kitchen instance.

"Come with me." Jin beckoned her to follow him the moment he heard the exciting news of the modified black pepper pork buns. He kept track of the developments of Zhen Qing's cooking through the system logs when he was in the dungeon maker making the new Mobile stall, but he felt even more excited hearing it from Zhen Qing instead.

Zhen Qing followed Jin outside to the park. Lo and behold, a brand new street stall on wheels was installed right next to the small park.

It was not a simple looking street stall, and instead it looked like a mini caravan that had a traditional storehouse theme similar to Jin's shop. The caravan blended really well with the surrounding garden. It even had a large panda figure lying on top of the caravan's 'roof' like the sleeping Buddha but with food surrounding it.

Even the chairs and tables were rearranged by Jin to make the small garden park appear like a separate stall itself.

"This is amazing! How did you even bring this here on such a short notice?" Zhen Qing could not believe her eyes when she saw the new mini shop caravan. When she heard that Jin was making a mobile street stall, she assumed it would just be an improvement to her simple, run down, mobile stall. She did not expect it to be this fanciful.

"Trade Secret....oh alright. I have been planning this for some time and all I needed was the right person to start the whole thing." Jin lied through his teeth. He had been preparing this speech in his mind for quite some time so that every word could be said with confidence.

"Then Boss Jin, I could not possibly keep the profits then, the ingredients are fantastic...the caravan looks beautiful...I really cannot do this for free. Please, take some of the commission back." Zhen Qing really felt guilty that she would be taking all the money she earn all to herself.

"Then, in that case, you are officially hired...that is if you wish to work here full-time. It was a sort of test to see whether or not you had the kind of attitude I look for in an employee." Jin smiled widely but in his mind, he was actually happy to get some of the profits even though he was still willing to give two weeks worth of profit to her. The reason was him being biased to Zhen Qing. However, the amount of dungeon dollars he spent on that caravan was hefty. It would be beneficial if he received some money from whatever sources he could find.

The cost for the stand was close to the budget of 500 dungeon dollars, which was supposed to be used for the signage and the mobile stall. However, since the system was going to give the signage as a reward, he figured he could splurge a little more on the caravan.

What was more important about the caravan was not its looks, but its features. Zhen Qing immediately saw the the modern tandoori oven in the caravan.

"My supplier..for these kinds of appliances had managed to integrate the time compression features into the kitchen appliances here as well."Jin was thinking about how to lie to Zhen Qing while making it believable for her.

He realised that not allowing the people he knew know about the system was getting harder and harder. However, he needed help to get better food so it was worth a try lying to Zhen Qing and hoping that he might have a chance to properly explain the system to her in the future.

"However! This is a prototype! The interior of the caravan simulates the workings of a dimensional space. Therefore, what you see in here is really a trade secret. Do not leak this out to other people!" Jin warned Zhen Qing and she furiously nodded her head

"As this is a prototype, the time compression is slightly slower compared to the one you experienced in the Kitchen instance in order to not create any possible side effects to the real world." Jin noted the kitchen appliances to her.

"This way, you can actually access the kitchen instance storage from here." Jin opened a cabinet under the counter in the caravan, and it showed the prepared ingredients that Zhen Qing had created in the kitchen instance.

"This is just so fabulous!" Zhen Qing started to look around the whole caravan and saw the potential that was in it. She was really considering being under Jin's employment indefinitely when she saw at the potential this small caravan could bring.

"One additional feature this prototype has is the Kitchen AI that you are already familiar with. It will assist you whenever need be," Jin passed her a wireless earpiece and when she wore it, the kitchen AI was able to communicate with her.

"The earpiece should be able to last the entire day before it needs to be put into a charger pod." Jin pointed Zhen Qing to where the charger pod was kept in the caravan and she mentally made a note about it. However, it was actually a facade and the earpiece did not even need any charging to begin with. It was just to make it plausible for Zhen Qing.

"Is there any contracts I have to sign to be under your employment or is it a fixed part time rate?" Zhen Qing questioned Jin when she was looking through how equipped the caravan was. The fantastic



equipment, the high quality food and the ability to do almost whatever she wanted was a dream for any chef...or an ex-chef.

"We can properly discuss the terms and conditions either at the end of the day or the end of two weeks as we previously agreed upon. I apologise that such a test was given to you to test your personality." Jin bowed his head a little to apologise.

"If we do the two week trial, I will take at least 45% of the profits for myself and we can later negotiate from there. Alternatively, you can discuss about it in the evening." Jin explained to her.

"Let's take the two weeks trial...but if I wish to change my mind and decide to discuss earlier?" Zhen Qing tried her luck and wanted to pretend she was a little hard to get.

"We will see about that." Jin learnt enough in life to notice when a girl was trying to be difficult. He wanted to acknowledge and agree to Zhen Qing's request but he decided not to. He knew that if he backed down now, he would not be able to maintain his image as a boss with his own ideals.

That would make Zhen Qing hold the upper hand if she tried to negotiate the contract. If Jin had unlimited funds, he would just do as he pleased, but right now, every Yuan mattered.

Zhen Qing realised she might have pushed too hard on a golden opportunity to be back on the tracks of being a chef again. Hence, she agreed and started to prepare her things in the caravan.

It was then, Jin also placed a large sign right beside the caravan. "Rules to follow, or you will be blacklisted from buying a dungeon or food."

He realised on the previous day that there were still a number of people behaving fairly unhygienic and he was confident that being banned from buying the food and dungeons would definitely deter them from spoiling the garden. This was all despite him knowing that the system took care of the cleanliness of the garden anyway.

However, if he could set some rules, Jin felt that maybe...just maybe... he might be able to change the mindset of the people in the long run.

The rules were simple. Finish your food. No Spitting in the garden. Throw your waste away. Place your dirty tray in the allocated area of the caravan stall. Throw your waste into the trash bin.

Currently, what Zhen Qing sold was only the black pepper buns, so there were no trays to be used. However, Jin wished to expand the idea and perhaps it into a service restaurant instance that served not just a select amount of food, but a list of dishes.

In order to do that, he wished for Zhen Qing to get used to his 'prototypes' and instances. Furthermore, he wished to get her a suitable cultivation technique so that she might work more efficiently in the service instances. He was equally worried though, that she might get poached in the future or would not wish to work for him.

"One thing at a time." Jin thought to himself as he saw Zhen Qing humming away preparing the kitchen in the caravan.

"Yes...one thing at a time." he stared at her with an intense tugging sensation in his heart before he proceeded to open his store for business.

## Chapter 120 Panda Packaging

"Eh Yue Han, want to go Boss Jin's store for lunch? I still have some Panda Credits to spend and I also have to check out the underground stores. Perhaps I should play in a dungeon too. Want to follow?" Bu Dong asked Yue Han right after school.

"Sure! Why not? I am starving and I have to save some money for the new upcoming Dungeons and Dragons expansion." Yue Han agreed to Bu Dong.

"Dude, that expansion will not even be here until the end of the year. You probably have sufficient money to play a dungeon too." Bu Dong felt that Yue Han did not want to go play in Boss Jin's dungeons after the zombie horror Yue Han had previously experienced.

"I will consider, and if not, I can always just observe your playthrough by the bar counters." Yue Han reluctantly agreed even though he did not like the experience he had with the zombie dungeon instance. That was because if he did not improve constantly, he might eventually end up pulling Bu Dong down in the future. Or if you looked at it the other way, Bu Dong might advance his cultivation so fast that Yue Han would not be able to catch up with him.

"Hmm, whatever suits you." Bu Dong did not worry too much about it. He knew that if he played alone, the difficulty in Jin's dungeon would be modified a little.

Both Bu Ding and Yue Han took their time to travel to Jin's place, thinking that once they reached Boss Jin's area, the lunch crowd would have already dispersed.

They were wrong.

In fact, they were surprised once again by Jin's new addition to his store. "I swear that Boss Jin has more tricks under his sleeves than a performing magician." Yue Han casually said.

Both of them saw a brand new caravan parked just beside the garden with lots of people buying something that smelled oh so delicious. They too were able to smell it and they were half expecting the aroma to be coming from Jin's store. However, what they did not expect was that Jin had created a mini food store right outside his dungeon store

They also found that the entire garden park had been rearranged, making it easier for people to wait for their turn while having their snack time.

"Hey, Bu Dong, let's try that first." Yue Han went ahead of Bu Dong in order to buy the buns.

"Panda Credits or real cash?" Zheng Qing asked politely when it was Bu Dong's and Yue Han's turn to order their buns.

"Panda Credits." Bu Dong placed his phone near a QR code at the cash counter and the panda Credits were immediately deducted. At that point in time, the two high school students could not bear the incredible smell from the surrounding people that had already begun to savour their snack.

It was then that Zheng Qing turned to focus on the cooking of the buns. Even with the help of the advanced kitchen appliances, Zhen Qing had to focus properly to get the buns as they were being baked at incredible speeds.

The customers did not care about the process as much as the chef. All they cared about was if the black pepper buns could be served immediately.

With a slight burn mark and a slight change of smell, Zhen Qing was able to discern that the buns were ready to be taken out. Her nimble hands brought the buns out of the modern tandoori oven and onto the kitchen counter.

Zhen Qing then proceeds to package the buns nicely. Previously, all she used was a basic brown paper bag to let the customers have something to hold the hot bun. However, with the caravan's resources, Zhen Qing now inserted the new baked black pepper pork buns into a brand new kind of packaging.

A customised panda looking packaging.

There was a pair of panda ears poking out of the high quality paper packaging and the design for the overall package gave one a feeling of a panda lazily looking at you.

When Zhen Qing inserted the buns into the panda packaging, which inflated it, the look of the lazy panda became more prominent, making it seem like a fat and lazy panda.

She then passed the buns to both Bu Dong and Yue Han and some serviettes along with it. "Careful, it's still hot." Zhen Qing smiled so graciously at them that even the high school kids became smitten due to her.

With the new kitchen appliances and the caravan's modern ventilation, Zhen Qing finally did not need to wear a mask to cover her mouth. Although she still continued that habit of putting on a mask when she was preparing her ingredients since hygiene was an important aspect to her.

The two boys held onto their panda buns with caution and blew some of the steam, hoping it would cool faster. However, Yue Han was not able to wait any longer so he quickly took a bite.

The look on his face was priceless.

"So juicy! So hmmm!" Yue Han could not stop chewing on the black pepper pork bun. The dough was baked to the perfect point that gave it a slight crisp. Not too hard, not too soft. The sesame seeds provided the bun with a very slight crunchy taste that complimented the bun really well.

The meat stuffing could be described using the word heavenly. Yue Han could not believe that such a heavenly tasting meat existed. He would not be surprised if this meat was from some high grade animals or maybe even monsters.

Yue Han did not care that much though since the meat was already melting in his mouth. Bu Dong had the exact same reaction as Yue Han and they finally realised everyone besides them was also appreciating the new food item.

"Is this your speciality, Lady Boss?" Bu Dong could not help but ask.

"Lady Boss? I would not dare!" Zhen Qing thought to herself thinking how ridiculous that would be. Jin was her sole benefactor, maybe even miracle maker right now. How could she dare to be so close towards her benefactor?

"Nono, I am just an employee. But yes, this is my speciality." Zhen Qing's voice was a beautiful melody to the customers. If she was not in a relationship with Jin then perhaps the guys present might have a chance.

"Is all the other food in the store made by you too?" Yue Han asked but Zhen Qing gave him a curious look before she realised what he was saying.

"Eh, I think Boss Jin has a separate supply from me." Zhen Qing answered honestly and vaguely since she did not know.

"Well, this bun tasted really good, I can bet you that Jin hired you to replace his other supplier." Yue Han deduced this but all Zhen Qing did was smile before continuing to serve another customer who came by.

Once they were done, the two high school students went ahead into Jin's store. "Ah, Bu Dong and Yue Han, welcome back." Jin smiled at them and they greeted Jin warmly in return.

"Boss, are there any new dungeons?" Bu Dong asked.

"You have not been here a while so almost all of the dungeons will be new for you. The goblin and Zither Mistress dungeons have been revamped to suit the new scenario dungeons. They have become similar to the zombie instance dungeon. However, I have also kept the old battle style for those who just want to fight monsters and not worry about the plot. This is also the case for the zombie and bank heist instances." Jin explained to his regular customers the services he now sold.

While Jin was previously fiddling around with the caravan design in the dungeon maker, he was also thinking about how he could squeeze ..no maximise the potential of each dungeon.

Hence, Jin added back the previous battle system...with a slight twist. He dubbed the new mode Arena Battles. This meant it was similar to that 2D street fighting games but unlike those games, the cultivators were allowed to choose what monsters they wanted to fight against.

The battle could be based on the themes dungeons, like choosing a goblin arena battle or a Zither mistress arena battle. The cultivators could also choose to battle individual monsters if they liked... but there was a catch. The cultivators could purchase the training arena battle ticket and choose specific opponents from various dungeons to fight against if they had fought with them before. The key phrase there was 'if they had fought them before.

Most of the monsters were locked apart from basic ones in the dungeon-themed battles. If the cultivators wanted to unlock the monsters, they needed to purchase a random battle arena battle ticket to test their skills and pit them against monsters they have never fought before. After fighting the new monsters, despite the result, the cultivator would be able to choose that monster to fight in the arena.

In order to not let arena battles gain too much popularity and overtake the scenario dungeons Jin had put a lot of time and resources into, the themed arena battles were priced only 40 yuan cheaper than the same current theme dungeons instances.

"Specific training arena battles are dependent on the number of monsters you choose to fight. The more you choose, the more expensive it will be, but on the other hand, if you choose enough monsters, you can receive a slight discount too." Jin said to the customers as they were previewing their options even further.

Bu Dong felt quite energised by the black pepper buns and so was looking at the menu intensely. "I'm in the mood for...." He gave a grin that Yue Han felt it was trouble.