

Realms In The Firmament

Chapter 12: Lifting a stone to drop it on ones own foot

Guan Wan-Shan comprehendingly said, "You are right. Of course I know that it is a great honor to be given this proposition by the master dan-maker... Hmm, look, can we figure out something... to do it diversified and indirectly. What do you think?"

Ye Xiao frowned, "How diversified? How indirectly?"

"The diversified and indirect way is actually not that complicated. We can pay you some money for the dan beads first, and then you use the money to attend the auction or just purchase the treasures... Isn't this an easy way for both of us to achieve our goals?"

Ye Xiao squinted at him and replied significantly, "What if we fail to get the treasures in the auction?"

Guan Wan-Shan smiled bitterly, "Brother Feng, it seems you are well aware of the auctions... Alas, it is not all that easy these days. However, the treasures may be held on to tightly by different groups and the government has announced that some of them should be handed in, but since we can stand mighty in the capital, we surely have our secretive means... Otherwise, how can such a great amount of treasures from all over the world be gathered together?"

Saying those words, Guan Wan-Shan gave an impression of being proud.

Ye Xiao was slightly shocked and answered, "Since you say so, I can only trust you. But you know clearly about the quality of these dan beads from the master dan-maker and their value. Are there really that many treasures present over here? Besides, even if you manage to take out enough treasures this time; what about next time; or even the third time? I don't think you want this deal to be one-off, right?!"

All the while he was continuously racking his brains, "How many objects in total could there be regarded as treasures in this world? Could this salesroom actually possess such resources?"

"I think that perhaps your opinion is slightly inaccurate. Stalactite and Starlight are of course treasures. Well, then ginseng and ganoderma [1]... are also treasures, aren't they? Guan Wan-Shan said with confidence.

"Urh..." Ye Xiao couldn't help but to stare speechlessly at this old man.

If some 10-year old ginseng could be considered a treasure... then the treasures in this world would be really uncountable...

However, Ye Xiao didn't expect getting a lot of top-level treasures all at once, just the more the better, and so, he agreed with Guan Wan-Shan, "What you are saying is reasonable. As for these dan beads... What price can you make for them?"

Guan Wan-Shan smiled bitterly and said after muttering for a while, "For some ordinary Pei-Yuan Dan beads, we usually spend no more than 25 hundred silver bars for each... and then we sell them on the auctions. Anyway, although the dan beads you bring are also simple Pei-Yuan Dan, it has the sky-top quality! Of course they couldn't be mentioned in the same breath, so... Look, 25 thousand bars, for each, what do you think?"

"Are these dan beads really that valuable?!" Ye Xiao was shocked and shouted out in his mind.

But his face only showed a serious frown, and answered with an unassailable tone, "100 thousand silver bars, each!"

Difficulty was clearly shown on Guan Wan-Shan's face, "Brother Feng, for these Pei-Yuan Dan beads that were produced by your master dan-maker, which has reached the legendary grade 10, it is indeed worthy of 100 thousand silver bars. As a matter of fact, it could very well be even worth more... But, because these dan beads are really so precious, we will not sell them at the auction; instead, we will keep them... Heh heh, in our present financial situation, 1500 thousand silver bars... is quite beyond our budget..."

Ye Xiao was impervious, "Lack of money? Well then you could buy less. Just take five of them. As for the other ten, you can sell them at the auction for me. No matter how much they are sold for, it all belongs to me."

Guan Wan-Shan was stunned, "This guy really has a rigorous way of doing things."

In customary cases of auctions, if one thing was not unique and even had over ten identical pieces, the final bid price would be reduced badly. After all when there were many identical treasures, the relation between demand and supply changed. For instance, an upper-level dan bead may be sold for a sky-high price, but if there were ten identical upper-level dan bead at the same time, no matter how precious they were, the price would decrease badly for sure.

What Ye Xiao suggested — one for 100 thousand silver bars and fifteen for 1500 thousand silver bars was totally inconsistent with the trade principle in auctions!

However, there were always exceptions; the supreme dan beads Ye Xiao had brought, was actually such an exception. Pei-Yuan Dan with sky-high quality had reached the limit of dan-making in the world. Even if there were more than 15 pieces, the price would never decrease even a bit — it would get higher instead!

If the dan beads were truly on sale at the auction, the price would definitely go higher than 100 thousand silver bars. If Guan Wan-Shan wanted to buy them after the auction, it would be simply impossible with a budget of a mere 100 thousand bars of silver per dan bead. It was his luck that he could get five in advance now!

“Fine, that’s it then.” Guan Wan-Shan gnashed and promised.

He knew clearly whoever could take out these supreme dan beads was no ordinary person. He believed that as long as this guy was satisfied, there would be more opportunities like this in the future.

But if he wasn’t satisfied, he wouldn’t get another opportunity.

When Ye Xiao walked into the salesroom, he only had a few grams of silver on him. Yet when he left the salesroom, he got a note for 500 thousand silver bars!

He had become a multimillionaire by simply walking in, dumping some ‘low quality’ dan beads, and leaving the building!

Guan Wan-Shan had amiably offered him a Skyline VIP Card, yet he had rejected it without hesitation.

“I will come back here for more business, however, I do not wish to be tied down here by such a simple card. Do I require a card to prove my status around here?”

Looking at Ye Xiao’s back, Guan Wan-Shan looked grave.

“... ‘don’t want to be tied up’... He really doesn’t want it?!” Guan Wan-Shan was shocked.

“He really is a smart guy.” As a sharp-sighted man, how could he not realise what Ye Xiao had truly meant?

He didn’t want a VIP plate, because he was a freewheeling and unfettered man.

A VIP card might be a symbol of one’s status and showed his value, but it was also a binding — once Ye Xiao got a card like this, the next time he wished to attend a salesroom, he’d be obligated to come back to this salesroom.

That was an invisible constraint.

Apparently Ye Xiao didn’t like that.

From within the shadows a figure suddenly quietly approached Master Guan, "Master, do we need to tail this guy?"

"No." Guan Wan-Shan showed a serious face, "This guy... he is absolutely someone we can not mess around with. If we displease him, even if we kill him, we will lose the connection with the supreme dan-maker and face serious retributions... Inform the head office first and we'll deal with him later."

"Yes, master... Well, about the auction..."

"Delay!" Guan Wan-Shan waved his hand and replied firmly, "There were a few herbs that were enough to be the main selling points. But now, compared to these supreme dan beads, they are far from enough. Make an announcement now. The auction will be delayed by ten days. Inform the head office about these supreme dan beads and ask them for a plan. We will follow their lead."

"Yes, master."

Ye Xiao had left the salesroom and made his way through a couple of back alleys before he returned to one of the larger streets. He had regained the appearance of a young handsome lord. His appearance, demeanor, stature and temperament... were all changed.

The tall, strong and ugly Feng Zhi-Ling was gone.

"The auction is tomorrow..." Ye Xiao was thinking, "With these 500 thousand silver bars, I can at least buy some treasures, right? Besides, I saw the jade ruyi... I need to make sure Zuo Wu-Ji gets it. Otherwise if he retracts the deal..."

Ye Xiao was expecting the auction to proceed smoothly, but he was unaware of the actions of master Guan who had delayed the auction.

And he, who wanted the auction to be smooth the most, was actually the main culprit for the delay...

Nothing happened on his way home. Ye Xiao practiced some martial arts after he got home, before he started reading. After all, he had understood this mortal world through the memories of the departed Ye Xiao but they were imperfect. It would be better for him to read more about this mortal world, so he would have an easier time settling in.

When the night was about to come, the guard appeared in front of Ye Xiao and informed him, "Lord Lan and Lord Zuo have come together. They are here to meet you, my lord."

"Why did they come together?" Ye Xiao was surprised.

“Fxxk! Fxxk fxxk fxxk...” Zuo Wu-Ji hadn’t entered the room yet, but his shouts were already clearly resounding inside the mansion.

Lan Lang-Lang’s voice also came with a depressed tone, “The Ling-Bao Salesroom is playing us apparently...”

“What happened? Why are you both so angry?” Ye Xiao looked at both of them while frowning with confusion.

“I don’t want to talk about it!” Zuo Wu-Ji sighed deeply, and then sat on the chair, “The bloody auction is delayed! Fxxk...”

For Zuo Wu-Ji, who wished for nothing more than to restore his reputation in his family by regaining the possession of a jade ruyi, every minute felt like a year!

He had finally gotten his hand on enough money to buy the jade ruyi and all he had to do was bid on the jade ruyi at the auction... But the auction had actually been delayed!

When he heard about the delay, he had nearly spit out blood, because the miserable life he was living recently had to continue for at least another ten days!

“I don’t want to live anymore... I can’t live with it anymore...” Zuo Wu-Ji was crying without shedding any tears.

“Delay? Why is it delayed?” Ye Xiao opened his eye wide.

It was no good news for him either. The sooner the auction was held, the earlier he’d get some treasures. Which in turn could let him learn more about the sphere in his mind and the space within it and cultivate to a higher realm sooner.

“There is a goddamn moron!” Lan Lang-Lang sighed, “At this important moment, he actually took out a few supreme dan beads... With such precious items, how could the salesroom not delay the auction to make advertisements for the beads? Several days are absolutely not enough to advertise it! Ten days is actually rushed, if we think of the situation... Gosh, what a shame. I have heard that a cool-steel sword is on sale at the auction. I was planning to get it as soon as possible. Now I need to wait for another ten days. Fxxk that bloody moron...”

“Urh...Just because of some supreme dan beads... It is delayed?” Ye Xiao was slack-jawed.

Isn’t it like lifting a stone to drop it on one’s own foot?

[1] Ganoderma: A genus of polypore mushrooms that grow on wood, and they include about 80 species, many from tropical regions.