

Gourmet 191

Chapter 191: Only For Afforestation

"You said this tree is called the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree?" Bu Fang gazed at Ni Yan, and asked.

"Surely you aren't unaware of the name of this tree, right?" Ni Yan's lovely eyes widened, an air of astonishment across her face. Her dedicated cherry lips pursed, red and shiny, extremely adorable.

"You don't even know what this tree is called, then why are you growing it in your store?"

Bu Fang curled his lips, "I only wanted to enhance the afforestation of the store."

Bu Fang seemed composed, but Ni Yan was speechless, thinking, "Do you know how valuable is the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree? Enhancing the store's afforestation... way to go my dear owner." Perhaps only someone as peculiar as Bu Fang would plant a Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree without ulterior motives, for reasons none other than improving the store's afforestation.

"I have a Three Stripes Path-Understanding Fruit, could there be any relations between the two?" Bu Fang asked in confusion. This was the first time he learned of the sapling's name.

The old man from yesterday... even though he also seemed to know the name of this tree, by the looks of the old man, his intentions were not pure, and maybe he even wanted to have this sapling.

This goddamned... this was his store's afforestation!

"This tree is called the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree. The fruits it bears are naturally called the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Fruit. It is not comparable to the Three Stripes Path-Understanding Fruit, as they are simply not on the same level," Ni Yan muttered.

"The Three Stripes Path-Understanding Fruit can at most increase the probability of a sixth grade Battle-Emperor reaching seventh grade Battle-Saint. But the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Fruit

can enhance the probability of a seventh grade Battle-Saint reaching eight grade War-God... There is a world of difference between their values."

Bu Fang was startled. In this sense, this sapling seemed quite out of the ordinary.

"If anyone catches news that there is a Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree growing in your store, not after long, your store will be surrounded by a hoard of frenzied, manic seventh grade Battle-Saints," Ni Yan explained.

"Oh, not a problem," Bu Fang coolly replied.

Ni Yan was taken back. "Where is your self-assuredness coming from? We're talking about a swamp of seventh grade Battle-Saints... not a crowd of first grade warriors! Dear brother, can we take this seriously?"

Having learned of this tree's name, Bu Fang no longer enquired Ni Yan. Under the latter's bewildered gaze, he immediately turned around to head back to the kitchen.

Ni Yan was rather speechless. Perhaps Bu Fang really felt like he had nothing to fear, but a hoard of seventh grade Battle-Saints... Just envisioning this scene gave her the chills.

Reluctant to part with the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree, Ni Yan gave it another glance before returning to her seat. Not after long, a meaty fragrance emanated from the kitchen, out of which a plate of plump, fragrant Red Braised Meat was brought out.

When it came to food, any of Ni Yan's lingering attachment to the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree was tossed into the winds. What was left in her eyes was the glossy, flushed Red Braised Meat.

She poured a cup of Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine. Eating meat while drinking wine, now this was the life.

The only blemish in an otherwise flawless moment was that the Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine could not surpass the old drunkard's Dragon's Breath. If the wine could be switched to Dragon's Breath, then that would truly be perfection.

Just as Ni Yan and the others were enjoying their gourmet delicacies, the sound of footsteps echoed from the alleyway.

Xiao Meng held his body erect as he approached the store and strode in with wide steps.

"Uncle Xiao." Ouyang Xiaoyi perkily greeted him. Her eyes betrayed a sense of confusion. Why would Xiao Meng come here? He really was a rare guest.

"Where is Owner Bu?" Xiao Meng nodded at Xiaoyi and then asked.

Ouyang Xiaoyi pointed at the kitchen. Xiao Meng did not speak another word, found a seat next to the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree, and examined it from a close proximity.

"Uncle Xiao, what would you like to eat?" Xiaoyi asked.

"A jar of the Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine." Xiao Meng's gaze was still fixated on the Path-Understanding Tree as he carelessly blurted out an order.

"Uncle Xiao... Today's three jars of Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine have been sold out."

"Huh?" Xiao Meng was stumped, then slowly lifted up his head, glanced at Ouyang Xiaoyi, then peered at Ni Yan, who was drinking wine and eating meat from afar. His pupils suddenly shrank.

Members of the Celestial Arcanum Sect were there already?!

Xiao Meng took in a deep breath and ordered the Rainbow-Colored Water Dumpling.

Ni Yan felt as if someone was observing her and promptly lifted her head to give Xiao Meng a glance, but wasn't bothered by him and thus went back to devouring her gourmet delicacies.

"This is the second seventh grade Battle-Saint..." Xiao Meng thought quietly in his heart. "The Third Elder of the Celestial Arcanum Sect, a strong warrior within the seventh grade Battle-Saint echelon, in addition to the Ghost Chef Wang Ding, similarly a hard match among the seventh grade Battle-Saints. At present, the number of seventh grade Battle-Saints in the Imperial City is steadily growing. "

Bu Fang walked out of the kitchen carrying a plate of Rainbow-Colored Water Dumplings. Xiao Meng merely cast a deep glance at Bu Fang, but did not utter a single word. He did not ask about the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree.

Once done with his meal, Xiao Meng left in a haste.

Ni Yan, on the other hand, would not leave Bu Fang alone. She took out her dish for advice seeking, yet the results were not surprising, as she got harshly criticized by Bu Fang.

Once Bu Fang turned on the switch for critiquing, he became extremely chatty. Words kept on jumping out of his mouth as he meticulously listed out every single fault on the dish.

Ni Yan ultimately took away her food container in a huff and left with Tang Yin.

Bu Fang watched as their shadows left, and then calmly stood by the entrance. He let out a short breath as he gazed at the whirling snow falling from above.

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Time was passing in a flash.

The temperature of the Imperial City was rising, less snowflakes drifted in the air, and on some days one could even feel the warmth of the sun.

The wailing wind also became much more gentle. Even though it still felt like cuts through the skin when it breezed by, it wasn't half as bad as during the late winter times.

The Imperial City didn't change much during this month, except for the number of guards in the city, which increased, especially those in armor.

There was a horde of strange faces entering the Imperial City, many of whom came from different parts of the Light Wind Empire. Each of them had a strong level of true energy, and most were fifth grade Battle-Kings or sixth grade Battle-Emperors...

This surge of warriors induced the Imperial City to enhance its defensive measures. As the head of Imperial City security force, Xiao Meng felt deeply anxious.

Xiao Yue, the study.

Xiao Yue leaned by the door frame and played with the sharp sword in his hands. He said in a hoarse voice to Xiao Meng, who sat at the desk reading a confidential report: "Given reliable information, the Elder of the Liu family from Yuzhou city has arrived at the Imperial City last night. Apparently, he battled with the Thirteen Thieves from Mozhou city right outside of the Imperial City..."

"The Elder of the Liu Family, the seventh grade Battle-Saint who has one foot in the grave?" Xiao Meng put down the confidential report, rubbed his eyes, and lightly remarked.

"Em, correct, the Thirteen Thieves have passable cultivation levels. But once they joined hands, they could repress the Elder of the Liu Family." Xiao Yue softly flicked the long sword in his hands, it produced a light crispy sound that echoed through the entire study.

"With one foot in the grave, his conditions are no longer comparable to the times of his peak. The Elder of the Liu Family now is perhaps only slightly stronger than a typical sixth grade Battle-Emperor. It is then quite normal that he was repressed by the Thirteen Thieves. Anything else suspicious?" Xiao Meng asked.

"The Elder of the Void Sword Pavilion is back... This is news that I recently received, not yet verified, but it has a high chance of being accurate," Xiao Yue announced solemnly.

The Elder of the Void Sword Pavilion... Xiao Meng meditated for a while. This was a classic seventh grade Battle-Saint. He shook heaven and earth at a young age, but later seemed to have demonized whilst undergoing cultivation. Everyone thought he had already fallen, so it was unbelievable that he reentered the picture now. This Elder of the Void Sword Pavilion was one of the few remaining Battle-Saint elders who did not belong to the Celestial Arcanum Sect.

"Including this elder, it should be the fifteenth Battle-Saints that we know of?"

Xiao Yue smacked his lips. Seventh grade Battle-Saints... seemed rare when they rested in seclusion, but once they popped up there were so many of them. It was as if all of the seventh grade Battle-Saints in the Light Wind empire had gathered together.

In the Imperial City nowadays... one wouldn't dare to be too arrogant toward anyone whilst walking down the streets, because it was likely that person just might be a sixth grade Battle-Emperor.

The rich dandies of the Imperial City have learned their lessons after suffering a few losses, and have decided to stay indoors these days.

"Alright, you can continue the investigation. Whenever there is news of a seventh grade Battle-Saints, notify me immediately," Xiao Meng said to Xiao Yue, then stood up and emitted a long sigh.

Xiao Yue nodded his head. The tip of his foot tapped the floor, and suddenly, with a flash of the sword, he disappeared from sight.

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In a luxurious manor within the Imperial City, the Ghost Chef Wang Ding sat by the table, on which there were a few plates of appetizers and a jar of wine he made himself. He poured a cup and drank to himself.

After the Ghost Chef drained the wine in the cup, the deep wrinkles on his face trembled.

"It's been a month, the strong forces of energy within the Imperial City have multiplied... just as this old fellow had expected. Once the news of the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree was out, not one seventh grade Battle-Saint could keep their cool. It is still unclear how much time is needed for the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree to grow, but it should be soon. If that store is able to accelerate the growth of the Path-Understanding Tree, then it won't be long before it is ripe."

Slowly pouring another cup of wine for himself, the Ghost Chef peered at the opaque wine nectar, and his lips curled.

"The fish has arrived, but the water isn't muddy enough yet."

Chapter 192: Battle-Saints Scattered About

Outside of the Imperial City, a crowd slowly approached. The sounds of horse-drawn carriage wheels rolling by echoed in the air.

Among this troop, strong waves of energy rose and fell, as everyone was greatly spirited and vigorous, with their eyes nearly emitting beams of light.

Among this assembly was a gigantic prisoner's cage, within which there were three figures captive...

If Bu Fang was present for this particular moment, he would have definitely recognized the silhouettes of these three figures, since they were too unusual. Unlike normal humans, the lower halves of these three figures were slithering like snakes.

"Brother Ah Ni, is this the Imperial City of the Light Wind Empire?" A timid voice arose within the cage.

The serpent-man covered in wounds lightly twisted his torso, and instantly grimaced in pain as he took in a chilled breath.

"From the conversations of these guys, it seems like this is it..." Ah Ni's burly upper body was covered with scars and bruises. He had a weak breath, but still forced his face into a smile as he responded.

Yu Fu nodded. She peered at her father Yu Feng, who laid next to her with his eyes tightly shut, and couldn't help but emit a sigh.

"Even though with added speed it would only take half a month to get from the serpent-men tribe to the Imperial City of the Light Wind Empire, that is only in theory. Uncle Yu Feng knew long ago that half a month was simply not enough, thus sealed off the spirit essence within his body, and went into dormancy. Uncle Yu Feng is fine, don't worry Yu Fu." Ah Ni comforted her.

Yu Fu nodded. She naturally knew the purpose of her father entering the dormant state.

Ah Ni straightened his body, gazed through the bars of the cage and witnessed the towering city walls and enormous city gates of the the Imperial City.

"It really is more majestic than our tribe... it is almost incomparable. The creative capacity of humans is unbelievable."

Just as Ah Ni was immersed in revelation, the cage was ferociously smacked, and it emitted a thundering vibration.

"Away with the chitter chatter, keep it down." A peevish voice arose from outside of the cage.

Ah Ni's face flushed red, and his hands formed a throbbing fist, but then relaxed after a bit.

The three of them had left the Illusory Spirit Swamp and met this group of people once they entered the boundaries of the Light Wind Empire. Ah Ni was dauntless at first, since he had a cultivation level of sixth grade Battle-Emperor, and had nothing to fear. But...within this small assembly of people, there was actually a seventh grade Battle-Saint.

At that moment, Ah Ni was stupefied. In the face of a seventh grade Battle-Saint, he was naturally repressed. Uncle Yu Feng was also in dormancy, and thus the three of them were imprisoned within the cage, and escorted under supervision to the Imperial City.

But Ah Ni was actually grateful deep down, as the destination of this crowd was the Imperial City. If it were any other place, it really would have messed things up for Uncle Yu Feng.

Boom Boom Bang!

The surface of the grounds trembled. Ah Ni's pupils shrank as he peered to the left and caught sight of a gigantic spirit beast galloping by.

It was a fiery red lion, with its ferocious buckteeth were as sharp as razor-edged swords.

"Seventh grade spirit beast... Fire Lion!" Ah Ni's pupils shrank.

The group that had imprisoned them also broke out into conversation.

The Fire Lion roared. Its growl was thunderous, and spurred restlessness and fear among the spirit beast horses of this group of people.

"Arrived at the Imperial City of the Light Wind Empire at last. If it weren't for Lil' Fire larking constantly, we would've gotten here much early if we hurried up." A helpless voice rang behind the Fire Lion, and a delicate red-gowned figure revealed himself.

The sound of heavy footsteps faded. The Fire Lion, with the red-gowned man on its back, disappeared within the Imperial City.

This was a terrifying combination, a seventh grade Battle-Saint with a seventh grade spirit beast, it was frightening... Could it be that Battle-Saints were scattered about the Imperial City of the Light Wind Empire?

Ah Ni was flabbergasted inside.

"Fellows from the Imperial Beast Hall of the Third Godly Temple of the Wildlands? Certainly menacing enough..." A hoarse, scratchy mutter resonated. Ah Ni could detect that this was the seventh grade Battle-Saint among the group who had injured him. His name was something like Tian Xuzi, and his skills with the sword were astonishing. Merely one lash of his sword's spirit smothered Ah Ni into losing his wind.

A falcon's bellow reverberated sonorously from above. The crowd consciously lifted their heads, and felt as if the skies were completely blanketed.

A larger-than-life falcon fluttered its wings and glided in the air. The shadow of a figure leaped off from the back of the falcon and landed amongst the assembly, once again stirring agitation within this group's spirit beast horses.

It was a young maiden with a slim figure, and her hair pulled back into a slick ponytail. She was dressed in a warrior's robe, and a longbow lay behind her shoulders.

The maiden gazed at her surroundings in perplexity, as if she had lost her sense of direction. After a while she finally remembered something and waved at the gigantic falcon hovering overhead, "Brother Diao, go have fun up there, I'll call you when I'm ready to leave."

With a blaring bawl, the falcon's eyes suddenly rolled. Its wings flapped, and with the howling of the fierce winds, it shot straight for the clouds.

The maiden smiled bashfully, flickered a glance at the crowd behind her, gave them a light nod, and skipped toward the Imperial City.

Ah Ni was afraid to even emit a breath. "God damn it... another seventh grade spirit beast, another seventh grade Battle-Saint... and why were they all so freakin' young?" This Imperial City was truly formidable!

"Seventh grade spirit beast, the Wind-Thunder Spirit Falcon... This maiden's background, is not that simple." The hoarse voice rang again. Ah Ni could hear the tremble in his voice... evidently, this old man was also intimidated.

"Brother Ah Ni, we are at the Imperial City. Could I wake up father now?" Yu Fu asked.

Ah Ni was slightly distracted, and the corners of his mouth twitched. "Damn it... they've got a seventh grade Battle-Saint here as well." The seventh grade Battle-Saints he had seen today were more than Ah Ni had encountered in the past dozen years.

Indeed goes the saying, it's such a big world, and one should explore it... or else how could one realize how insignificant and negligible they were?

"Wake him... or else we won't be able to escape from this group," Ah Ni said with a bitter smile.

Yu Fu's eyes slightly sparkled. Then she took out a spirit herb, tore it into pieces, and stuffed it into the serpent-man Yu Feng's mouth.

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"Reporting! General, another crowd of numerous seventh grade Battle-Saints has entered the Imperial City..."

"Reporting! General Xiao, a seventh grade Battle-Saint entered the Imperial City riding a seventh grade spirit beast..."

"Reporting! General Xiao, at the gate of the Imperial City, there is an alien species Battle-Saint fighting with a human Battle-Saint..."

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Xiao Meng's head almost exploded just by listening to the soldiers' reports and he couldn't help but pat his cheeks. In a month's time, the number of Battle-Saints in the Imperial City had reached an unprecedented level that made Xiao Meng's heart tremble.

He had no idea where all of these Battle-Saints popped up from.

"Your Majesty, oh Your Majesty... Your humble servant does not feel so confident." Xiao Meng smiled bitterly. For the sake of the Imperial City's order and stability, Ji Chengxue had even paid a visit to the imperial mausoleum and invited back eunuch Lian Fu. However, even with two Battle-Saints on duty, it still felt unsettling.

The waters of the Imperial City, was getting muddier and muddier.

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Bu Fang opened shop, placed the Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs before Blacky, and retreated to the kitchen. Today he felt unnerved inside, because given his calculations, with a month's time, the spirit wine within the cabinet should be done brewing.

A spirit wine brewed with three kinds of seventh grade spirit herbs. Even he himself couldn't help but stir in anticipation.

However, he was not in a hurry and continued practicing his cutting and carving skills. After such a long period of practice, his cutting and carving abilities have improved immensely.

After Bu Fang finished practicing his cutting and carving, the sounds of footsteps echoed from the doors. Fatty Jin and his heavyset troops had arrived as usual.

A day's business began once again. After Fatty Jin was the cheerful Ouyang Xiaoyi, as well as Juan'Er, who hasn't appeared in ages, holding a food container.

Luo Sanniang followed the two figures and buoyantly walked toward the store.

"Owner Bu, long time no see. Juan'Er and I are back again! This time, Juan'Er's Egg Tarts are bound to conquer your heart!" Luo Sanniang shouted loudly once she stepped through the doors, extremely assured.

Bu Fang slowly sauntered out of the kitchen, coolly glanced at this woman, and didn't say anything.

Fatty Jin and his crowd finished their meals and bid farewell to Bu Fang, who gently nodded his head to them in return.

Once they had left, Bu Fang finally turned to Juan'Er and said: "This is your last chance. Are you sure your Egg Tarts have reached my level of standards and expectations?"

Juan'Er clutched her food container. Her babydoll face exhibited a trace of resolution and confidence as her head nodded fiercely.

Ouyang Xiaoyi and Luo Sanniang all hovered around in curiosity.

Luo Sanniang had tried Juan'Er Egg Tarts herself and was absolutely subdued by them. Luo Sanniang was sure that if even these Egg Tarts couldn't reach Bu Fang's expectations, then it was Owner Bu who was messing with them!

Juan'Er slowly lifted the lid of the container, revealing the golden yellow toned Egg Tarts within. She carefully took them out and placed them in front of Bu Fang.

A rich creamy aroma suffused, lifting up Bu Fang's eyes.

Thump Thump Thump.

Just as Bu Fang was about to give the Egg Tarts a try, a wave of clamorous footsteps, along with a condescending sneer, echoed from the alleyway.

"The Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree is in this cornered little store? A trash of a store like this, I can smash it into bits with just one hand..."

Chapter 193: Whitey, Strip Him and Throw Him Out

Zhao Musheng, with a large cape draped over his shoulders, set his foot on the Imperial City's bedrock stones. He held his head high and the corners of his lips curled up.

Having left the Imperial City for so many months, he was nostalgic for the air here. After all, he had stayed in this Imperial City for so long, to the point where he almost believed he was originally from here.

The bustle and hustle on the streets remained the same, but in comparison to before, the security enforcement of the Imperial City increased. There were soldiers in armors patrolling everywhere.

On the streets of the Imperial City, there were more people oddly dressed and those with strong forces of energy. Zhang Musheng knew that these people were there for the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree. Once this news leaked, it attracted not just seventh grade Battle-Saints, but also sixth grade Battle-Emperors and fifth grade Battle-Kings, who lost their minds over this temptation and heedlessly charged into the Imperial City of the Light Wind Empire.

Zhao Musheng held only one attitude toward all of this: the more the better, and to muddy the waters of the Imperial City as much as possible. Or else how would some be able to grope fishes out of murky waters or act on opportunities remotely?

Suddenly, Zhao Musheng stopped his steps, and his gaze landed on the three shadows far away.

Those nearby looked strangely at the three silhouettes, completely shocked and extremely curious.

"Serpent-men tribe..." Zhao Musheng muttered, rather intrigued. The serpent-men tribe was situated in the Illusory Spirit Swamp. It was a long journey from the Illusory Spirit Swamp to here, so why did these serpent-men bother coming and making fools of themselves? Was it also for the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree?

Among these three serpent-men, two appeared fairly wretched, with weak forces of energy, and blood all over their bodies. The scale on their lower halves were also gushed open in many places. It was an awfully hideous sight.

The serpent-woman supported the other two, and panic was written all across her face as she stood helplessly on the street.

This was kind of fascinating... Zhao Musheng's lips curled, and he marched straight to the three serpent-men.

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That unruly and wild, conceited and ignorant declaration reverberated within the small alleyway and hit Bu Fang's ears. Everybody in the store was dumbfounded.

Able to smash the store into bits with just one hand... Who on earth was this guy, daring to be so formidable?

Luo Sanniang smacked her lips in bewilderment. She had witnessed the frightfulness of Bu Fang's store. The person emboldened to voice such nonsense, how powerful could he be?

Bu Fang heard this claim, but was only slightly taken back, and then continued to pick up Juan'Er's Egg Tarts.

The top of the Egg Tarts were rich and creamy, and a waft of fragrance assailed one's nostrils. Its fluffy appearance was incredibly adorable. Just in terms of its external looks, it had reached Bu Fang's expectations.

"Owner Bu... someone is here to make trouble, aren't you going to do something about it?" Luo Sanniang peered at Bu Fang, who looked like he intended to continue tasting this Egg Tart, and couldn't help but remind him.

Even though she felt like the crowd outside filled with wild talks were a silly bunch, wasn't it rather disrespectful for Owner Bu to completely ignore them...

The sound of footsteps echoed, and numerous shadows blocked the store's entrance.

Those figures wore identical uniforms, and the amount of energy on their bodies was extremely powerful. The leader was a man carrying a big knife. His visage was filled with ferocity.

"Hey oh, this is a damn little store... Whoever is in charge, come out!" The ferocious man shouted out aggressively.

Afterwards... the interior of the store retained its peaceful tranquility. Nobody bothered taking notice of this man.

It felt like a heap of crows smashed into his head as they flew by, such the awkwardness.

This man's brows instantly scrunched. His big knife chopped at the floor, emitting sparks as the metal hit the ground.

"Damn it! Are you deaf? I am the seventh bandit of the Thirteen Bandits of Mozhou. If you have your senses, then get your ass out here. Or else I'll turn your little store into a pile of rubbles." The man yelled loudly.

A light breeze blew past, but there was still no response.

Oh, just the big black dog lying by the front of the store slightly stirred. He licked his extended paws, flicked the man a look, and returned to his previous position.

"Outrageous! Have you no respect for me, the seventh master!" The seventh master glared with his eyes, raised the knife, and strode into the store.

Behind him, a group of sycophants followed along with an air of arrogance. There was a rich life ahead following the seventh master. This was their experience so far.

Bu Fang took a bite of the Egg Tart, and its soft texture provoked his taste buds. The rich creamy aroma, along with the Egg Tart, flooded his mouth. As he continued chewing, the fragrance burst forth.

"Where is the shop owner? Damn it! How dare you ignore me!"

The seventh master bulged his eyes, stepped into the store, and bellowed as he breathed heavily.

Everyone in the store glanced at him in astonishment, blinking their eyes. The atmosphere was somewhat awkward.

Bu Fang took another bite of the Egg Tart, and nodded as he ate it. He was obliged to admit that the Egg Tart Juan'Er made this time had truly reached his expectations. After all, it took a month's time of studying and making, which fully indicated Juan'Er's passion in making Egg Tarts.

Taking in a light breath, Bu directed his gaze at Juan'Er, and calmly said: "The taste is not bad. Even though there are still many flaws, it has satisfied my expectations at last. In a bit, I will teach you all of the important steps in making Egg Tarts."

"Hey... the pretty face boy blabbering away! Are you not freaking aware that I am here?" The seventh master waved his knife, brought about a fierce wave of wind, and pointed directly at Bu Fang.

Each of the Thirteen Bandits of Mozhou had mighty levels of cultivation and had achieved the highest standing of sixth level Battle-Emperor. At the Mo province, they were notorious for being the tyrannous regional overlords. This time, the band of three brothers made their advance on the Imperial City, precisely for the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree.

If they could obtain the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree, the degree of difficulty for the thirteen brothers to reach seventh level Battle-Saint would easily shrink. At that point, with thirteen Battle-Saints, the Mo province would reach supremacy, and could even look down on the entire Light Wind Empire.

Bu Fang put down the Egg Tart in his hands and his glance concentrated on the knife-waving seventh master.

"If you want to order food, check the menu behind you," Bu Fang said with a deadpan face.

The seventh master's face froze, and then he quickly burst into laughter. He looked at Bu Fang as if he was staring at an idiot.

"Have you brat been freaking scared out of your wits? Do I look like I'm here to eat in your store? Haha! I'm here for the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree! Don't freaking act dumb with me." The seventh master glowered, with malice written all over this face.

Behind Bu Fang, Juan'Er was shocked by this grotesqueness. Her face was white as a sheet.

Luo Sanniang twitched her mouth, consoled Juan'Er, and silently cursed this seventh master, "what an idiot..."

Bu Fang's complexion exposed an utmost bafflement. As the month passed, this was the first time he had witnessed someone standing so aggressively in front of him and demanded that he handed over the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree... It seemed like the storm quietly brewing in the past month was finally about to erupt.

But... Bu Fang checked out this seventh master with a glance, and discovered that he was merely a sixth level Battle-Emperor. What happened to the so called Battle-Saints?

"If you're not ordering food, then get the hell out."

Bu Fang couldn't be bothered to say more, and turned around to head back to the kitchen as he coolly replied.

Get the hell out if he was not ordering food? Hey oh? Who would have thought this pretty-faced boy was so blatantly insolent. It had been years since anyone dared speak to him, the seventh master, with such a tone. A few days ago, old man Liu accidentally offended the thirteen brothers, and got beaten the crap out of him. This pretty-faced boy... was he seeking death?

The seventh master's ferocious face trembled. He marched forward and extended his meaty hands toward Bu Fang.

He really couldn't ease the anger within without giving those who were even cockier than him a good beating.

"How dare you be so pompous before me, the seventh master. You're looking for trouble!"

Luo Sanniang, seeing that the seventh master was actually going to make a move, stared daggers and decided to strike. But before she even had an instant to summon her true energy, she felt a fierce gust of wind howling by.

Bang!

The seventh master's paw was blocked by a gigantic robotic lump.

Bu Fang came to a halt, and did not turn his head as he calmly said: "Whitey, strip him and throw him out."

Whitey protruded its chubby belly and its robotic eyes flashed with a red light as it robotically stated: "Troublemaker, you will be stripped as an example to others."

The seventh master's mouth twitched. What the hell was that? What was this robotic lump?

"Strip your ass! Get the hell over here!"

The seventh master scowled, his face filled with barbarity as he waved the huge knife in his hand, aiming it mercilessly at Whitey's round robotic head.

Ping! A crispy sound of collision rumbled in the store...

The seventh master's shuddered and his face blanched as he blinked his eyes. The fierce barbarity on his face instantly eroded.

The huge knife that slashed at the robotic lump's head was bent out of shape. A huge chunk was missing from the knife's blade...

Whitey's round head remained adorable, and there wasn't even a scratch.

"Troublemaker, you will be stripped as an example to others," Whitey robotically said as the red beams from its eyes blinded the seventh master.

Chapter 194: Simple and Unpretentious Stripping

The seventh master's ferocious face trembled and his mouth opened up in shock, wide enough to fit a huge tomato.

His knife, the one that he crafted out of precious, energy-loaded metal, actually... bent?!

How tough was the puppet before his eyes? With a swing of the knife... a huge chunk went missing, and more importantly, it was bent out of shape!

The red beam that flashed across his face unnerved him, but he quickly recovered, growling and grimacing at Whitey. With a loud clang, he threw the large knife in his hands aside.

"Damn it! Aren't you badass! Aren't you tough!" With a rip, the seventh master tore apart his shirt, revealing his bulky muscles, which were covered in dragon-like blue veins. Countless streaks of scars, like centipedes crawling about, made a ghastly sight.

"I stood on the tip of knives as I fought for my life in the barbaric lands of Mozhou. Would I fear a robotic lump like you?!" The seventh master slammed a fist onto his chest, emitting a loud, muffled thud, as he bellowed at Whitey.

Boom!

As he howled, true energy burst out of the seventh master's body. His true energy was fierce, as if wild winds were roaring, brewing a storm that circled around him.

"Go to hell!"

The seventh master boomed. His entire body shook as he lifted a fist and aimed at Whitey, who continued standing still. This punch felt terrifyingly powerful, and even the air sounded like it was being ripped apart.

This was a punch that concentrated all of the seventh master's spirit energy. One should not be fooled by its simple appearance; it had much deeper implications. This punch contained a type of martial technique, in which there were traces of true energy circulating and at work. Once the punch landed, it would create a dreadful explosion!

This was the special martial technique of the Thirteen Bandits of Mozhou, Exploding Punch.

Luo Sanniang could feel the force and pressure from this punch, and her face instantly changed. For her, this punch exuded an unparalleled strength, being simply terrifying. It must be noted that she was a sixth grade Battle-Emperor herself, yet here was a being from the same echelon that presented a blow to her confidence to resist...

Whitey's robotic eyes continued to twinkle, its red beam flickering away.

Facing this punch, it actually stood still.

"Die!!!" The seventh master's face twisted into a ferocious look. His fist ripped through the air and smashed down mercilessly.

Boom!!

With a loud pound, the seventh master's punch fell on Whitey's plump belly without any reservation.

The belly sank in, and the seventh master's lips lightly curled up as he uttered a single word, "Explode!"

Bang!!

A earsplitting noise shook the eardrums of everyone nearby, making their hearts beat faster. It was an explosion comparable to that of thunder storms, causing their entire bodies to tremble.

The seventh master took two steps back and laughed uncontrollably.

"Damn it! A metallic lump acting all badass in front of the seventh master. Today, you'll learn what the seventh master is made of!"

Bu Fang reached the entrance of the kitchen, heard the ear-piercing laughing, and knitted his brows into a frown. He flickered a glance at the guffawing seventh master, and coolly said: "Whitey, stop playing around and throw him out directly. It bothers my eyes just to look at him."

The sound of machinery whirred as Whitey's robotic head slightly tipped downward, the red beam from its mechanic eyes targeted the seventh master.

Whitey's sunken belly also gradually recovered under the gaze of the seventh master.

Bang!

Suddenly, Whitey's palm landed on the seventh master, who instantly felt a huge pressure. His entire body knelt onto the ground, his knees in a splitting pain as he grimaced and scowled.

"Rip!!"

The crispy sound of clothes being torn apart rang. The seventh master felt a cool breeze traveling through his lower body, and a terrible force smashing onto his body.

Spoosh Spoosh!

The seventh master flashed across in a graceful arch and landed in the floor of the alleyway, but his clothes were nowhere to be found.

Spitting out a mouthful of blood, the seventh master was excruciatingly enraged. He covered his nether regions, which continued feeling a cool breeze. As the cold wind whistled by, he felt a balls-jerking melancholy...

The seventh master's minions gaped, dumb as wooden chickens at the naked seventh master flying across their heads and landing meters away. Completely frightened, they envisioned ten thousand big black dogs charging towards them.

Rip! Rip!

"Troublemaker, you will be stripped as an example to others."

Whitey announced robotically, grabbing each of the minions with no effort. As their clothes swirled in the air, this group of people all drew graceful archs in the air and landed onto the icy cold alleyway. Each of them covered their nether regions, trembling as they stood up, with their faces mixed with grief and indignation.

Juan'Er turned crimson as she covered her eyes and emitted a sharp breath.

Ouyang Xiaoyi also covered her eyes, yet her fingers were open. She opened her eyes wide as she stared excitedly.

Luo Sanniang was even more direct, smacking and licking her lips as her eyes narrowed into a squint.

The seventh master felt a choking pain in his chest, why... didn't anything happen to the metal lump after being hit by his Exploding Punch? That was unreasonable!

Whitey's robotic eyes swept over them and it took a step forward.

The seventh master and his crowd instantly jumped up with fright. Covering up his nether regions, he shouted, "You... aren't you a bold one! Just you wait! Once my twelve brothers come, your little store will be smashed into pieces!"

The seventh master talked tough but then turned around to flee. It was simply humiliating. The renowned seventh master of the Thirteen Bandits of Mozhou was actually stripped and was streaking on the streets... Now this was a story that would garner some laughs.

Luo Sanniang leaned on Whitey's plump body, and tsked as she studied the seventh master's shaking pale buttocks as he darted away.

Pang Pang!

"Good one Whitey, your sister, I, likes this kind of simple and unpretentious stripping." Luo Sanniang smacked Whitey's body and laughed.

Whitey's robotic eyes turned and fell onto Luo Sanniang, whose heart instantly skipped a beat. She immediately backed away, as this was not a joke... The metal lump was the kind that resorted to stripping in the face of troubles.

Whitely quickly retreated to the kitchen and didn't make another appearance. It was Bu Fang who eventually came out, carrying a porcelain plate that held four richly aromatic golden Egg Tarts.

"Alright, let's talk specifics about the Egg Tarts." Bu Fang's face was serene, as if nothing had just happened, and he said calmly.

...

"Tsk ts! Could this be a serpent-man? That is fascinating!"

"This serpent lady looks pretty cute, should I escort her home... hehehe!"

"What are the serpent-men doing here in the human's Imperial City? Judging by their wounded figures... these must be serpent-men with a story."

...

On the streets of the Imperial City, Yu Fu supported her father and Ah Ni with a panic-stricken expression. Serpent-man Yu Feng summon a great amount of energy earlier and recovered his Battle-Saint cultivation level. However, after battling with the Battle-Saint elder that imprisoned them, he was heavily wounded and was knocked into unconsciousness once more.

Being encircled by a crowd of curious faces, Yu Fu's heart was filled with alarm and terror.

She had arrived at the Imperial City, but did not know where Senior Bu's store was located. She wanted to ask someone for help, but didn't dare opening her mouth. The gazes of everyone nearby were filled with ill intentions.

Suddenly, the crowd split apart, an elder slowly sauntered in and glanced at her warmly.

It was as if everything near Yu Fu's ears quieted down. She could only see the figure's mouths opening and closing, yet she couldn't help but feel settled and calmed. Her entire body, as if completely out of control, followed the person's footsteps and left the crowd.

They gradually disappeared into the sea of people.

...

The Imperial City's Luxury Inn.

Blood still dripping from the corners of his mouth, the seventh master ran like the wind and charged through the doors, effectively startling the burly fellows drinking wine and eating meat in the inn.

"Oh gosh! Wasn't the pale piece of ass that just darted by good ol' seven? He... has developed quite a peculiar taste, playing with streaking now?" A husky man with a full beard hollered with gaping eyes.

Everyone else's face held odd looks, yet they couldn't help but all burst into laughter. Ol' seven streaking, now that was an interesting turn of events.

After the seventh master helped himself to some clothes and walked out of his room with a sullen face, the chortling gradually faded away. The crowd looked at him solemnly.

The seventh master gritted his teeth as he recounted what had happened to him earlier. Those in the crowd widened their eyes as they listened, until someone finally couldn't take it anymore, slamming the table as he stood up.

"Damn it! Dare to mess with my brother, watch me peel off its metal skin!"

The Thirteen Bandits of Mozhou broke into a uproar and decided to charge to Fang Fang's Little Store for revenge.

"Listen to me and halt!"

However, just as they reached the doorstep, a stern rebuke terrified them into stopping. One by one, they shifted their gaze to the refined man who strolled out of his room.

This was the elder and also the strongest of the Thirteen Bandits of Mozhou. He had gotten half of his foot stepped into the echelon of seventh grade Battle-Saint.

"As of now, there are superior warriors hidden in the Imperial City. The number of seventh grade Battle-Saints makes one's hair stand on end, yet none has lifted a finger on the store. Why are you morons charging there with such great fanfare? You want to push yourselves into the spotlight and become the butt of the joke? Are you half-witted idiots?!"

Chapter 195: The Spirit Wine... Is Ready for Unsealing

"Brother, ol' seven suffered such a big loss. Shouldn't we go seek revenge?" A full-bearded, thickset man sounded unwilling to take their defeat lying down. The beard on his face twitched uncontrollably out of anger.

"Go seek revenge? Do you know why no seventh grade battle-saint has attempted seizing the Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree by force yet?" Hu Yifeng flickered a glance at this crowd of brothers and sneered as he asked.

The crowd was instantly dazed. That was precisely what they couldn't understand. It was merely a small store, and the owner only had the cultivation level of a fifth grade Battle-King. He was no different than an ant in their eyes. Surely an army of seventh grade Battle-Saints wasn't afraid of a fifth grade Battle-King, right?

That was the biggest joke in the universe.

"After arriving at the Imperial City, I personally ordered someone to conduct a background check on the store. This small, seemingly insignificant store is not as simple as it appears to the eye..." Hu Yifeng took in a breath as he explained. Even though he couldn't be sure of the accuracy of such intelligence, better safe than sorry.

"The intelligence reported a mechanic puppet that can repress seventh grade Battle-Saints. There is also allegedly a so-called supreme beast lying by the entrance. The supreme beast part is likely a rumor. However, even if it isn't a supreme beast, it is at least a seventh grade spirit beast. That counts for two seventh grade Battle-Saints acting as guards. Do you have the guts to trespass a store like that?"

Hu Yifeng asked gravely as he tirelessly shared information on the store. Those in the crowd immediately gaped with widened eyes.

The seventh master shivered, damn it... no wonder, that mechanic puppet was not a common metal lump! It could repress seventh grade Battle-Saints... it was freakin' out of this world!

"So, it's already a miracle that ol' seven made it back alive." Hu Yifeng remarked.

"Boss, but if we just call it a day, ol'seven, I, cannot be reconciled!" The seventh master clenched his teeth as he muttered. Reliving the moments of being stripped naked and recalling the balls-jerking melancholy, he felt blood shooting up his head, waiting to burst out.

Hands behind his back, Hu Yifeng walked around the room and narrowed his eyes as he calmly said: "Revenge will naturally be carried out, but we cannot be hasty... we must wait for a suitable opportunity."

...

"Oh my gosh! How terrifying... what is this monstrous beast!"

"Mama mia! There's a lion! A man-eating lion!"

"This is a spirit beast lion? How burly..."

A gigantic Fire Lion sauntered about the streets of the Imperial City, almost scorching every stone brick that was hit by its feet. The Fire Lion ran his sharp eyes over the lowly humans nearby.

With a lion's roar, he scared the wits out of numerous people, causing them to tremble in fear.

On the Fire Lion's back sat a red-robed man who chuckled as he patted the Fire Lion's head, trying to calm him down.

"Knock it off, don't frighten others." The man's voice was gentle. His eyes radiated with a sense of curiosity as he checked out the bustling Imperial City, feeling exceptionally exuberant.

Suddenly, a burly figure strolled by from afar, appearing in front of him.

The red-robed man's pupils shrank slightly as he solemnly fixed his eyes on this burly figure. He smiled lightly as he nodded his head. This muscular man emitted an alarmingly strong force of energy, he was clearly a fierce seventh grade Battle-Saint.

"Your lordship's spirit beast is magnificent. But in the Imperial City, spirit beasts are prohibited from walking on the streets. We hope for your lordship's cooperation." Xiao Meng peered gravely at the man and beast before his eyes, his heart thudding inside.

A seventh grade Fire Lion, and a seventh grade Battle-Saint. This combination was truly unnerving.

"I am Mu Lingfeng, from... the Wildlands. I have long heard of the Imperial City's General Xiao Meng as well as your vigor and strength. Today I can say such reputation is certainly not an exaggeration." The red-robed man, Mu Lingfeng, grinned as he said.

He leaped off of the Fire Lion and gently patted its head. A magic array platter carved out of phenomenal quality jade suddenly appeared in his hands. With a flash, the Fire Lion transformed into a beam of light and entered the magic array platter.

Xiao Meng's pupils shrank once more as he took in a chilled breath. From the Wildlands and having deep knowledge of imperial beasts, could this be someone from the dreaded group of powerful forces?!

If even those people were getting involved... it truly painted a daunting future!

"This way please, your lordship. I have already arranged premier housing for your lordship," Xiao Meng said.

Mu Lingfeng flickered a meditative glance at Xiao Meng, yet did not reject the offer as he followed him unhurriedly.

...

"Miss, this jade hairpin is definitely a fine quality good. Look at the color of the material, how sparkling and crystal clear it is. It is not overpriced at one gold coin!"

On the street, a seller fixed his eyes on the gawky young maiden dressed in a warrior robe as he went on promoting his products. His acute senses told him this young lady was definitely a clear target, easy to cheat given her simple-minded appearance.

"One gold coin?" The girl hesitated, sized up the jade hairpin with her eyes, and looked dazed.

The material of the jade hairpin was very plain, made up of assorted bits of jade. Could it be it had other special properties?

"Miss, I'm working with a small business here. Don't be fooled by the jade hairpin's ordinary looks as it has extremely unusual effects. Once you wear it, you'll feel serene and concentrated, an aid to your cultivation. Just one glance tells me you practice martial arts. That makes this jade hairpin even more suitable for you." The seller coaxed as his eyes tossed and turned.

Under this persuasion the maiden was rather bedazzled. The more she looked at the jade hairpin, the more she saw the so-called magical effects of the jade hairpin fed to her by the seller. Could it be this jade hairpin was really a spirit tool of some sort?

Thinking she really came across a treasure, the maiden merrily reached for her wallet, ready to pay up.

"Hey, lassie, it's been years since we last met, yet you are still so dorky and adorable."

Just as the maiden was about to fish out a gold coin, a pale, jade lotus-like arm hung over her neck. A breathtakingly beautiful face appeared next to her and smilingly remarked.

"Sister Ni Yan! What are you doing here?" The maiden studied the person who glided to her side, and instantly lit up as she exclaimed.

Ni Yan gently rubbed the lassie's head, grabbed the jade hairpin from her hands, and turned to the seller with curled lips: "Why don't you repeat what you just said?"

The seller didn't expect a phenomenally beautiful woman to suddenly appear out of nowhere. His eyes tossed and turned, ready to say something, only to see a distortion occurring in the woman's hands. The jade hairpin was actually melting at a speed visible to the naked eye.

Mama mia! The seller almost peed his pants, this woman... was a monster!

"This piece of garbage isn't even worth a copper coin, yet you have the guts to ask for a gold coin. Are you not afraid to have your teeth all knocked out?" Ni Yan coldly grumbled.

The seller felt bitter inside, but did not dare to let out a breath.

Ni Yan was bored with the cowardliness of the seller, then proceeded to leave with the maiden.

"Ye Ziling, ah Ye Ziling. Why would your master allow you to come out alone? You're the type who would get sold unknowingly and end up helping the human trafficker count money!" Ni Yan flickered a glance at the maiden next to her, who was biting into a spirit fruit, and uttered.

"I'm not afraid, he can't beat me in a fight." Ye Ziling blinked her eyes and responded with a full mouth.

"That's right, even though you're dense, you don't have a low cultivation." Ni Yan muttered, "Come on, let me take you, little foodie, to feast on gourmet delicacies."

Ye Ziling's eyes instantly brightened once she heard about delicious food, and her face enlivened with excitement.

"Master told me to seek for good fortunes in the Imperial City. Sister Ni Yan, do you know where is the good fortune?" Ye Ziling followed Ni Yan and asked in a perplexed tone.

"Who knows where it is. Who cares. If it is good fortune, then once the time comes, you'll naturally find it." Ni Yan twitched her mouth. The Supreme Elder also sent her out to find the good fortune, but who the hell knew what that meant.

The Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree? Maybe that was it...

Outside the gates of the Imperial City, the shadows of three figures had arrived.

Wu Yunbai gazed at the majestic and towering city walls of the Light Wind Empire, squinted her eyes, and then descended from her horse. She led her spirit horse towards the Imperial City.

After a month's journey, she finally made it to the Imperial City from White Cloud Villa.

"Smelly brat... I hope you still remember the Ice Soul Monarch Lotus reserved for this lady." Wu Yunbai murmured, and then entered the city smoothly.

...

Having sent off a mirthful Juan'Er and a swamped Ouyang Xiaoyi, today's business hours finally came to an end.

Bu Fang stretched and then closed the shutters.

The Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree in the earthen-yellow flower pot had already reached a meter in height. Bu Fang could constantly feel a peculiar sense of energy waves emerging from the tree.

Given Ouyang Xiaoyi's explanation, this wave was the enlightening morality emitted by the Path-Understanding Tree and could help enhance once's speed of cultivation and probability of obtaining enlightenment.

During her break time, Ouyang Xiaoyi would sit by this sapling to undergo cultivation.

Even though Bu Fang could feel the waves, they had no effects on his own cultivation level. That was because his cultivation level was not dependent on such training but determined by business revenues in the form of crystals.

However, Bu Fang was still dead clear on the value of this Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree. He returned to the kitchen, scooped up a bowl of spirit energy clear spring water, and poured it into the flower pot.

"The store's afforestation is not luxuriant enough. Drink up, and show more green." Bu Fang looked at the Path-Understanding Tree and gently said.

Retreating into the kitchen, Bu Fang practiced his cutting techniques, and then arrived before the kitchen cabinet in a composed manner.

He felt very much agitated inside. Not for any other reason, but because today was the day to taste the spirit wine brewed with three kinds of seven grade spirit herbs.

The moment he opened the kitchen cabinet, the vigorous scent of the ocean drifted about.

This was the environment set within the kitchen cabinet. Bu Fang could nearly taste the salty ocean winds.

Waving his hands around, Bu Fang thinned out the strong scent, and then landed his eyes on the gigantic jar resting soundlessly in the kitchen cabinet.

The wine jar didn't look any different from how it was last month, but Bu Fang knew that dramatic changes took place inside.

Arms around the wine jar, Bu Fang concentrated his energy, only to find that the wine jar had gained a considerable amount of weight. For a moment there, he could not lift it up.

With his brows scrunched, Bu Fang refocused with a pumped energy core, finally hoisting the wine jar out of the kitchen cabinet and placing it on the floor.

The wine jar was securely sealed with a mud cap, so tight that no wind travel through. This meant that not even a waft of the wine's scent seeped through, but this only deepened the degree of curiosity in Bu Fang's heart.

In a jumpy state of mind, Bu fang placed his hands on the mud cap, and applied a bit of pressure. With a light "bang", the mud cap was unsealed.

Chapter 196: A Wine Fragrance that Engulfed Half of the Imperial City

Bu Fang cracked open the mud cap with a light pop and was instantly hit with a burst of wine fragrance surging out of the wine jar. The aroma, as if taken the shape of enshrouding mist, gushed up Bu Fang's nose and made his taste buds tingle.

This was a remarkably rich fruit wine aroma, with a splash of sweet astringency. However, such touch of sweet astringency did not affect the fragrance of the wine one bit. Instead, the aroma became even more alluring and intoxicating.

Bu Fang opened his eyes wide, and couldn't help but swallow a mouthful of saliva in a "gulp". Afterwards, he inched his nose closer and inhaled deeply. The wine fragrance crawled up his nose like a tiny serpent and travelled through his limbs, making him all the more exhilarated.

"Such wonderful aroma! Such wonderful wine!"

Bu Fang gasped in admiration, but his countenance remained largely unchanged. That was because he utilized the "Wine within Wine, Jar within Jar" brewing method, meaning this was not yet the final end product.

Even though the wine fragrance was, at this point, quite impressive, it was merely on par with the Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine. To completely surpass it, or even compare with the "Dragon's Breath" described by Ni Yan, there was still a noticeable distance.

Bu Fang was not in a hurry. He fetched three smaller wine jars, and used a bamboo tube to scoop out the wine nectar from the bigger jar and into the smaller jars.

The bamboo tube was dipped into the wine jar. With a gentle scoop, the wine nectar rippled like a river stream. Its fragrance, having subsided for a long time, suddenly burst forth, adding a sense of indulgence to Bu Fang's expression.

This time, the wine nectar was not clear as spring water, but presented a hue of pale yellow. The yellowness was simple and unpretentious—not the type of muddy yellow caused by a mix of impure substances, but a yellowness that was crystalized and untainted in tone.

The wine nectar from the original jar was distributed into three smaller wine jars. What was left in the bigger jar was remaining residues. Bu Fang took out a filter and poured in the leftover wine nectar, eventually filling up another half of a jar.

Having done all of this, Bu Fang felt a burning flame in his heart once more.

With a layer of true energy wrapped around his palm, Bu Fang carefully extended his hand into the wine jar. He grabbed one of the jars, which turned out to be scalding hot. In that moment, he shivered inside.

"This should be the jar with wine brewed with the Phoenix Blood Herb." Bu Fang's heart tingled. He applied force and removed the small wine jar.

The small wine jar looked smooth and slippery on the outside. If it weren't for the true energy coated over Bu Fang's palm, he would have had a hard time taking it out of the large wine jar.

The moment he pulled out the wine jar, Bu Fang was taken back, as the wine jar in his hands completely transformed. The surface of the wine jar picked up a fiery blaze of redness yet kept a crystal clear tone. Its material seemed to have totally transfigured.

Through the translucent external coating, one could basically see the insides of the wine jar. The wine nectar within presented a flame-like redness, with a hazy bed of air hovering above. Bu Fang felt quite awed inside and placed the small wine jar onto the table. As a beam of light shone down, a gleam of redness radiated, all magnificent and enchanting.

Bu Fang tsked in exclamation, and continued covering his palm with true energy. He extended his hand, seized a bone-chilling, ice-cold wine jar, and took it out.

The wine jar has transfigured into a pale blue color, as if made of ice crystals. It emitted a hint of winter chills.

Without a question, this was the jar with wine brewed by the Ice Soul Monarch Lotus.

With the third reach, Bu Fang finally took out the last wine jar. This was the jar with wine brewed by the Three Stripes Path-Understanding Fruit.

The surface of this wine jar did not undergo as much dramatic changes like the last two. The three stripes of cloud shaped moires on the outside merely appeared fuller, as if clouds truly floated about, thick and undissipated.

The three wine jars resting on the table looked unique in their own ways, each a dazzling feast for the eyes.

Bu Fang dispersed the true energy in his hands, squinted at the three wine jars, and curled the corner of his lips. Now this was something.

He picked up the flame red wine jar. Its mud cap bulged, as if about to break open.

Bu Fang took in a breath lightly, and cracked open the mud cap.

"Bang!" With a loud rumble, the mud cap shot to the sky. A pounding phoenix's wail blared from the wine jar.

An outline of a fiery red phoenix spread its wings and leaped out.

In blazing flames, the silhouette twirled in the air and transformed into a vigorous blast of wine fragrance before exploding.

Bu Fang sniffed this wine aroma, and instantly felt his entire body trembling. Every particle within him buzzed dynamically. His eyes sparkled as the true energy within his body was traveling at a faster speed.

"A flame-like, rich wine fragrance! A burning sensation!"

Bu Fang thought in his heart, and then shifted his gaze to the interior of the wine jar. Without the time acceleration property of the kitchen cabinet, to reach this level of aroma, the jar of wine would have required three years of brewing. The scent spurted out, stirring one's heart.

The wine fragrance of this jar alone was rich and intense enough to diffuse and hover over the entire store. In fact, it even spread to the alleyway, pervading the air around.

Blacky, who was previously lying down, was also shaken by the wine aroma and immediately lifted up its doggy head. His eyes blinked and peered toward the inside of Bu Fang's store.

The wine nectar in the wine jar presented a fiery shade of red. Its fragrance resembled a scorching flame. With a light shake of the jar, one could faintly hear the wail of a Fire Phoenix.

Bu Fang then directed his gaze to the wine jar that looked as if it was made of ice crystals. With the mud cap unsealed, the fragrance of a wine brewed for three years also burst forth and gathered above the wine jar. It transfigured into a blooming, ice-blue lotus flower.

The aroma of this jar of wine was not burning hot, but ice cold instead. Bu Fang felt as if his entire nose was frozen by the chills, and slightly scrunched his brows.

With a gentle tap on the wine jar, the ice blue wine nectar instantly rippled. It formed waves after waves, reverberating a light, crispy echo.

Bu Fang licked his lips and then targeted the last jar, which was made of the Three Stripes Path-Understanding Fruit. Unscrewing the mud cap, its effects were plain, and nothing special took place.

Bu Fang was stupefied, and pulled himself closer to observe. Suddenly, the first stripe of cloud-shaped moire scattered. As if a violent jolt of the heart, an intensely rich wine fragrance gushed out, almost knocking Bu Fang to the floor.

The wine aroma was incomparably strong, spreading everywhere. It poured out of the store and even stormed out of the small alleyway, adding an intoxicated complexion to countless people standing nearby. With a sniff, they blushed and trembled in tipsiness.

Bu Fang felt dizzy, and was still shaking from being blasted by the alcohol's strength. The second stripe of cloud-shaped moire also charged forth, forcing Bu Fang to take another step back.

As if a soundless ripple effect, the wine fragrance disseminated once more, nearly engulfing the Immortal Phoenix Restaurant.

Ni Yan, who brought Ye Ziling to feast on gourmet delicacies in the Immortal Phoenix Restaurant, suddenly froze. Her petite, delicate nose twitched vigorously and her eyes sparkled as if they were stars shining in the dark night sky.

"This wine aroma... where is it from? How could it be this rich!"

In a flash, Ni Yan immediately left the Immortal Phoenix Restaurant with Ye Ziling. Her nose continued to jerk, in search of the origin of this wine fragrance.

Once the third stripe of cloud-shaped moire of the Three Stripes Path-Understanding Fruit also spurted out, Bu Fang's store became a sea of wine fragrance. One sniff of the aroma made Bu Fang's complexion flush with rosiness, as if he had drunk a cup of strong wine himself.

Bu Fang circulated his true energy to suppress the tipsiness within. His eyes uncontrollably flashed with astonishment.

Who would have thought that a wine nectar brewed with these three ingredients and under such special methods would have such unexpected effects...

But... this wine nectar was still not the ultimate end product.

Bu Fang took out a jade jar and with a solemn face, poured into it half a jar of the yellow toned wine nectar from the original larger jar. Afterwards, he respectively poured in half a jar of the flame red wine jar, the ice blue wine jar, and then the Three Stripes Path-Understanding Fruit's wine jar.

He used the jade jar to mix together these three kinds of wine nectar.

The insides of the jade jar gleamed with brilliance, shaking lightly.

Bu Fang's eyes lit up. He sealed the jar with a lid, and then concentrated the true energy on his hands.

With the slam of a hand, the wine jar instantly elevated to mid-air, tossing and turning as it continued buzzing with sound.

Dong!!

The jade jar landed fiercely on the table and emitted a loud rumble. Bu Fang's forehead was covered with fine drops of sweat, his eyes burning with flames.

This wine... was finally finished.

The lid was carefully lifted from the jade jar, yet nothing spectacular or odd occurred. However, the scent was richer than ever as it streamed out, tens of thousands times stronger than those of the previous four wine aromas.

The flooding wine fragrance was vast and mighty, as if turbulent ocean waves tumbling.

In that instant, Bu Fang was utterly immersed and lost within it.

The wine aroma rolled up like flaps of the sea, its tempestuous waves rising higher and higher. With the store as the core, it continued expanding outwards.

Ni Yan's face suddenly changed colors as she pulled Ye Ziling along. Her complexion flushed with rosiness as her entire body trembled and shivered. This wine fragrance... had changed again! It had become increasingly marvelous!

The wave-like wine fragrance permeated in all four directions. With the little store as the center, half of the Imperial City had been engulfed!

Chapter 197: Amalgamation of Fire and Ice, Like Walking On Air

Half of the imperial city was enveloped by the aroma of the wine. It was an extremely strong and bewitching aroma. With a wavelike motion, it silently spread out in a grand manner.

Somewhere close to the alleyway, both Ni Yan and Ye Ziling took a deep breath and their faces became bright red. When they turned toward each other, they saw the disbelief in each other's eyes.

"How could this wine be so fragrant?" Ni Yan muttered as she sped up and headed straight toward the location of the aroma's source.

...

Inside a luxurious inn within the imperial city, the Thirteen Bandits of Mozhou were merrily toasting each other. As they continued to drink away, their laughter incessantly resounded within the inn.

The interior of the inn was bustling with activity and was overflowing with the fragrance of food and wine.

Suddenly, an invisible wave, accompanied with an indescribable aroma, surged past the inn.

Clatter!

A loud clatter rang out. The thirteen bandits were all stunned. The wine jars in their hands dropped onto the ground and splattered wine all over the floor.

However, none of them was paying any attention to the spilled wine. They were subconsciously sniffing the air while narrowing their eyes. Their faces were filled with bliss as saliva dripped from the corners of their mouths.

"It... smells so good! Is this the aroma of a wine? It's simply irresistible... Brothers, let's go and find this wine!"

As the thirteen bandits recovered from their surprise, they were immediately filled with excitement. The wine's aroma was simply too enticing. As martial art practitioners, they were all wine lovers and the aroma of the wine had lured out the wine bugs in their stomachs.

With a shout, the thirteen bandits all charged out of the inn and headed in the direction where the aroma came from.

...

Xiao Meng was sitting in his study in the Xiao Manor. As a gust of cold wind blew in through the window, the flame of the candle swayed for a moment. He put down the ink brush in his hand and slightly rubbed his eyes with a frown...

As a bewitching wine aroma drifted into the room like a lover's caress, Xiao Meng's entire body shuddered for a moment. He opened his eyes and was filled with a sudden thirst for wine.

"What an aroma! Such a fragrance doesn't seem like something that exists in the mortal realm!"

Xiao Meng took a breath as if he wanted to inhale all of the aroma in the air. He then stood up and grabbed a thick overcoat with images of cranes sewn on it off the chair. After putting on the overcoat, he headed in the direction where the aroma came from.

...

Xiao Yue was sitting cross-legged in his room, while whitish sword energy surrounded him. As the sword energy violently surged, it unceasingly converged above his head. From time to time, the sword energy would interchange between a small sword and innumerable rays of sword energy.

Suddenly, the sword energy around Xiao Yue all dissipated with a poof. As he opened his eyes, he could not help but lick his parched lips.

"A wine... that's even more fragrant than the Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine! Oh my heavens!"

Xiao Yue's raspy voice was filled with indescribable astonishment.

As Xiao Yue inhaled the aroma in the air, he was unable to focus on cultivating anymore. With a single leap, he threw open the door with a hand gesture and flew out of the room while stepping on his sword.

"If there's such a fine wine around, how could I, Xiao Yue, be left out! Hahaha!"

...

Inside the Ouyang manor, thunder-like snoring was resounding within the room belonging to the three barbarians of Ouyang. The three brothers had a habit of sleeping together in the same room. Every night, it was as if there was a thunderstorm inside. In fact, none of the guards needed to stand guard there at night because the snoring was basically repelling burglars on its own.

Suddenly, the snoring that should have lasted for the entire night stopped and was soon replaced by the sound of lips smacking together. The eyes of the three brothers were wide open. Their nostrils expanded as they furiously inhaled the aroma in the air. Their current behavior resembled that of a dog that had just detected the smell of meat.

Bang bang bang!

The three brothers got up from their beds in complete sync with each other and put on their clothes. Saliva dripped from the corners of their mouth as they sniffed the air once more. Then, they stormed out of the room and ran straight toward the location of the aroma's source.

This night was a sleepless night for many people.

With half of the imperial city shrouded in the rich aroma, all of the wine lovers gave chase after the extremely enticing aroma.

...

As Bu Fang wiped off the beads of sweat on his forehead, a smile appeared on his lips. He looked at the liquid inside the jade jar and suddenly let out a sigh of relief.

The four different kinds of liquid were all filled with spirit energy. In order to perfectly blend them together, it was not just a matter of stirring the mixture. He first needed to use his true energy to harmonize them.

This was not just a qualitative improvement from a quantitative change but a sort of inherent improvement.

The fragrance emanating from the jade wine jar was extremely tempting. Bu Fang was feeling a little drunk just from smelling the aroma alone. It could be imagined just how intense the wine was.

There was simply no comparison between the aroma of the Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine with the fragrance of this wine. It was like the difference between a firefly and the moon.

Of course, this was just the difference between their aroma. The actual difference in taste was not that drastic. However, the difference in the spirit energy between the two wines was even larger.

Grabbing a green jade porcelain cup, Bu Fang filled it to the brim with wine. After blending the four liquids together, the color of the wine melded together into a faint green color. The puff of vapor lingering above the cup made the wine appear extremely ethereal, like the immortal's wine served in the celestial palace.

Picking up the cup of wine, Bu Fang could not help but lick his lips as he looked at the liquid inside. He had to forcefully suppress the urge to immediately drink the wine.

A fine wine needed to be slowly savored. Bu Fang knew the logic behind "more haste, less speed" as well.

Bu Fang carefully brought the cup to his lips and softly took a sip of the wine.

The moment when the wine passed through his lips, a cool and refreshing feeling immediately spread in his mouth. As the liquid ran down his throat, it erupted like a volcano and a burning feeling coursed through his body.

Bu Fang's eyes widened. He felt as if all of the pores throughout his entire body had expanded.

As the wine entered his stomach, Bu Fang felt as if an entire ocean had surged up and completely engulfed him. The spirit energy surged violently within his stomach like an explosion. After three times in a row, Bu Fang could not help but let out a burp.

The refreshing feeling that instantly coursed through his body caused Bu Fang to narrow his eyes and slightly bare his teeth.

"How refreshing! What a fine wine!"

Without saying, this was definitely a fine wine. It was a wine that not even the Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine could compare with. No matter the taste or the aroma, it was the superior wine all-around.

After taking another sip, the invigorating feeling of coldness mixed with scorching heat gave Bu Fang an urge to exhale steam from his nostrils.

"Amalgamation of fire and ice, it almost feels like I am walking on air!" Bu Fang praised before taking another sip. In three sips, the green jade porcelain cup was completely emptied.

Slightly shaking his head, Bu Fang was feeling slightly tipsy. He only drunk a single cup of the wine and yet he was already getting drunk... The new wine's intensity was truly terrifying.

Bu Fang used his true energy to disperse the alcohol in his body and managed to sober up a little. As he ran his tongue across his lips, he stared into the jade jar with eyes burning with desire.

According to his estimation, he could probably only brew three jars of this wine in total. If he was going to put the wine on sale, he would most definitely not sell them on a per jar basis.

After all, the intensity of the wine was too strong. Even Bu Fang was almost knocked out after drinking a single cup.

After mixing part of the remaining liquid, he concocted two more jars of wine.

The rest of the liquid was then poured into Whitey's stomach. In response, Whitey only scratched its bald head while its eyes flashed for a moment.

...

"This is... I knew the aroma was coming from Owner Bu's place! I was wondering who within the imperial city could have produced such an aromatic wine... Who else other than Owner Bu could have done this!"

Ni Yan followed after the aroma of the wine and arrived before an alleyway. When she saw the familiar alleyway entrance, a sudden realization dawned on her and a sweet smile appeared on her peerless face. However, the smile soon disappeared and was replaced with a frown.

"Hmm... Owner Bu's store isn't open for business during the night. Doesn't that mean I will have to wait until tomorrow morning?!"

Just when Ni Yan was hesitating, a series of footsteps echoed in the empty street.

Ni Yan turned around in surprise and saw a group of people heading in her direction. The corners of her mouth twitched for a moment... This line-up was a little terrifying.

The thirteen bandits were at the very front. As they ran, they were vigorously sniffing the aroma in the air.

Right after the thirteen bandits was a bunch of elders. The aura emanating from these elders were extremely powerful as well. Some of them were even seventh grade Battle-Saints.

A man dressed in red was sniffing the air while running with his hands held behind his back.

An white-bearded elder carrying a longsword on his back was walking toward the store with large strides as well.

Saliva was drooling from the corners of the three barbarians of Ouyang's mouths as they walked toward the store with heavy strides, while General Ouyang Zongheng and the elderly Ouyang Qi were following behind them...

The drunkards of the Ouyang family were all present.

A light flashed past and Xiao Yue arrived on his sword. Xiao Meng, who was following after the aroma of the wine, came as well.

This was a terrifying line-up. As the group of people arrived before the alleyway entrance, they looked at each other with odd expressions on their faces.

Xiao Meng was feeling even more dumbfounded. Like he had expected, the aroma was indeed Bu Fang's handiwork. Other than Fang Fang's Little Store, he could not imagine where else the aroma could have come from.

The seventh master's complexion had turned ashen pale. This was a place that gave him unforgettable bad memories.

The group of people looked each other in the eye and started nodding toward each other as a show of friendliness. None of them said anything since they were all feeling embarrassed. After all, they were all people with high social status and yet they were chasing after the aroma of a wine in the middle of the night. Furthermore, they even ran into each other. It would be a lie to say that they were not embarrassed.

As they continued forward and stepped into the alleyway, they soon saw the tightly shut entrance of the store. The rich aroma was steadily drifting out from inside.

Everyone was astonished. It was said that the aroma of a fine wine could travel for ten miles. However, the aroma coming from the store was practically... enveloping a radius of hundreds of miles!

"What an aroma, this old man can't stand this anymore. I shall go ahead and have a taste first. My fellow friends, please feel free to take your time."

The white-bearded elder with a longsword on his back was the first to lose his patience. With a laugh, he started walking toward the store with quick strides.

"The grandmaster of the Void Sword Pavillion, Tian Xuze!" Xiao Yue's pupils constricted for a moment. This was an expert in the path of the sword, a seventh grade Battle-Saint!

However, Xiao Yue's expression soon became odd and a derisive smirk appeared on his lips as he looked at Tian Xuze's back figure.

Chapter 198: The Titillating Owner Bu

The fact that Tian Xuze was a wine lover was something that every member of the Void Sword Pavillion knew.

In fact, many of those who followed the path of the sword enjoyed drinking wine. There seemed to be a unexplainable relationship between them and alcohol that created a custom for many swordsmen to love wine.

Xiao Yue was a wine lover, so he was lured over here by the aroma of the wine. Tian Xuzy was even more of a wine lover, so he lost his patience and decided to go ahead of the others.

Xiao Yue watched on in amusement. He thought, "Tian Xuzy is going ahead even though the aroma is coming from Owner Bu's store... Doesn't he know about Fang Fang's Little Store's reputation?"

Everyone else remained on the spot and watched Tian Xuzy's back figure with strange gazes as he gradually entered the alleyway.

With a longsword on his back and his robe flapping loudly in the wind, Tian Xuzy unhurriedly arrived in front of the store.

The first thing he saw was a large black dog sleeping next to the entrance.

After pondering for a moment, Tian Xuzy directed his gaze toward the tightly shut door boards. He thought, "The entrance is closed. It looks like the store isn't open for business right now."

Lifting up his hand, Tian Xuzy knocked on one of the door boards.

As the sound of knocking echoed in the alleyway, everyone started becoming nervous and their gazes became even more serious.

After knocking for a while, Tian Xuzy's expression darkened... because not even the slightest sound was coming from within the store. This meant that the owner of the store was ignoring him and could not even bother to open the store.

"How dare he ignore me! However, it might be because he doesn't know that I am the one knocking on the door..." Tian Xuzy thought with a sullen expression.

Therefore, Tian Xuzy cleared his throat and said, "Store owner, this is Tian Xuzy from the Void Sword Pavillion. I suddenly smelled the wine aroma coming from your store, so I specially came here tonight to purchase your wine. Would you please open the door."

Tian Xuzy's voice loudly echoed in the quiet alleyway.

However, after a long while, there was still no response. The entrance of the store was still tightly closed and there was not even a slightest indication of the door boards moving.

Tian Xuzy finally lost all of his patience. His expression turned sour as he coldly said, "Even though I am sincerely trying to purchase your wine, are you not even going to give me a reply? Is my stature not even enough for you to open the store?"

Tian Xuzy, the grandmaster of the Void Sword Pavillion, was one of the strongest within the Light Wind Empire in his youth. Even though he was now much older, his might had not waned in the slightest. Many tales relating to him were still circulating within the empire.

A smirk appeared on Xiao Yue's face. He was amused by Tian Xuzy's words... He thought, "Honestly speaking, your stature is indeed not enough for Owner Bu to open the store."

"How dare you, I've never been treated in such a manner before! Today, I've truly witnessed your arrogance! Since this is the case, don't blame me for intruding!" Tian Xuzy was furious. As the true energy within his dantian revolved, his hair and beard suddenly started fluttering as well.

Waves of true energy encircled his body, as if a myriad of tiny dragons were surrounding him.

Bang!

Tian Xuzy's eyes hardened as he suddenly pushed his hand forward. His palm filled with true energy heavily struck the door boards covering the entrance of the store.

As the resulting shock wave spread into the surroundings, its intensity caused the expressions of many of those present to change.

The cultivation level of this Tian Xuzy... was indeed living up to his name!

However, right after many of them exclaimed at the level of his cultivation, their expressions became increasingly strange. The naive Ye Ziling even failed to hold in her laughter and burst out laughing.

The mood suddenly became rather awkward.

Even though Tian Xuze caused a powerful shock wave when he struck the door board, it did not damage them in the slightest. The entrance of the store was still tightly shut.

Tian Xuze's hair and beard were both hovering. His eyes were widened and his hand was still pressed against a door board. He was wavering on whether to lower his hand or not...

He said he was going to intrude into the store... and the result was he could not even get through the entrance. It was simply a slap in the face. Furthermore, it was of his own making.

Tian Xuze pulled back his hand and cleared his throat. Tapping the ground with the tip of his toes, he rose into the air before backing away from the store.

As Tian Xuze formed a sword-finger gesture with his hand, sword energy encircled his body and tore the air around him apart.

"I'll give you another chance. If you still don't come out... I'll really be intruding!" Tian Xuze unabashedly said.

The entrance of the store remained tightly shut and not a single sound was heard.

Tian Xuze was maddened from the embarrassment. With a shout, he pointed forward with a sword-finger gesture and the myriad of sword energy encircling him flew toward the store.

Blacky, who was lying next to the entrance, opened its mouth and let out a yawn. It disinterestedly watched as the dazzling sword energy struck the door boards before rolling its eyes and going back to sleep.

A cloud of dust rose into the air. As a gust of wind blew past, it was gradually cleared away.

Tian Xuzy's eyes trembled and almost popped out from the shock...

"What the? Is this run-down store made from a turtle's shell? How is it still intact? Even if it's not broken... Can't you at least show some trace of damage?! Is there a need to be so ruthless?!"

Tian Xuzy felt as if he was just fucked by a dog. The strength of this move was already quite powerful. Even the city gates of the imperial city would have been smashed open. However, when used on the entrance of this store... he could not even scratch the wooden boards!

"Haha! Tian Xuzy, have you weakened from old age? How did you even fail to break a few wooden boards?!"

"The skill of Tian Xuzy is impressive indeed. The wooden boards are still spotless after such an attack, how impressive!"

"Elder sister Ni Yan... Is this old man stupid?"

...

As Tian Xuzy listened to the chattering and the unrestrained jeering in the background, he suddenly felt as if his heart was pierced by an invisible arrow...

While everyone was busy mocking him, the humiliated Tian Xuzy was almost ready to unsheathe the longsword on his back. However, just before he was going to prepare an attack with all of his strength, one of the door boards covering the store's entrance was removed.

The moment when the door board was removed, an even more powerful aroma drifted out. This wine aroma was like a poison that caused everyone to fall into a state of euphoria.

An uninhibited figure was holding a porcelain cup in his hand while leaning on a door board. He was looking at them with a drunk expression.

"Burp... Who's the one knocking on my door in the middle of the night?"

Bu Fang's face was flushed, but his expression was extremely stern. This conflicting appearance created a strange image. He was wearing a robe with his chest area wide open, seemingly because he was feeling stuffy.

As the wine aroma wafted out from inside the store, Tian Xuze's eyes locked onto the porcelain cup in Bu Fang's hand.

"A fine wine! This is definitely a fine wine! The finest wine that I've ever encountered in my life!" Tian Xuze exclaimed.

Hovering above the porcelain cup in Bu Fang's hand, a dense mass of spirit energy was forming into three clouds.

"This is naturally a fine wine. However, you haven't answered my question yet. Are you the one knocking on my door in the middle of the night?" Bu Fang gave Tian Xuze a glance while leaning on a door board.

"That's right, I came here to purchase your wine. I wish your distinguished self would grant my request," Tian Xuze excitedly said.

Bu Fang raised his eyebrows. He lifted up the porcelain cup and gently shook the cup in front of everyone...

"Are you talking about the... wine in this cup?" Bu Fang softly asked.

As Bu Fang flaunted the cup before them, the aroma of the wine inside the cup assaulted their senses and their eyes all lit up.

Meanwhile, the ones who were familiar with Bu Fang all had strange expressions on their faces...

The corners of their mouths twitched as they watched the disheveled Bu Fang. Was this titillating person really the Owner Bu that they knew? Even though that expressionless face was still the same, his actions were simply... painful to watch.

Was Owner Bu... drunk?

"That's right!" Tian Xuzi swallowed his saliva. The wine bug in his stomach was already ensnared by the aroma.

A smile appeared on Bu Fang's lips as he looked at Tian Xuzi. Then, under Tian Xuzi's stunned gaze, he finished the cup of wine in a single gulp.

Bu Fang bared his teeth and exclaimed, "Slurp, ahh! What a fine wine!"

Tian Xuzi felt as if his heart was cut apart by a knife. He thought, "This fellow... he's doing this on purpose!"

Bu Fang lightly breathed out and said, "Today's opening hours has already ended. No dishes will be sold tonight... including alcohol."

Tian Xuzi's expression turned cold and he said, "I am telling you to sell your wine, so you should just sell it! Don't waste my time with your nonsense!"

Within the Void Sword Pavillion and even the entire Light Wind Empire, there was no one who dared to talk to him in such a manner. Even if he drank wine without paying, no one would dare to say anything.

However, this store owner before him actually dared to be so arrogant...

With sword energy surrounding him, Tian Xuzi stepped forward and appeared before Bu Fang in the blink of an eye.

"Those who dared to make a fool of me have long since turned into bones. Brat... do you have a death wish?"

With extremely overbearing words and surging waves of sword energy, at that moment, Tian Xuzi was fully displaying the might of the Void Sword Pavillion's grandmaster.

Meanwhile, Bu Fang was calmly leaning against a wooden board while holding the porcelain wine cup with two fingers. As he let out a burp once more, a rich wine aroma filled the air.

Behind him, two beams of red light lit up and Whitey's chubby figure appeared.

Gazing at Tian Xuze, who was almost within arm's reach, Bu Fang wrinkled his nose as he looked at the other party's dazzling white beard and hair.

"I've already said that the opening hours is over. Are you trying to cause trouble? In that case, you'll have to bear the consequences."

Chapter 199: Whitey, You've Become Incredible

"If you're going to cause trouble, you'll have to bear the consequences," Bu Fang serenely said before letting out a burp.

He was leaning his shoulder against the door board while holding a porcelain wine cup with two fingers. His expressionless face was flushed from the alcohol and his eyes half-closed from tipsiness appeared very flirtatious.

Tian Xuze's face immediately scrunched together when he smelled the burp. He took a few steps backward and coldly glared at Bu Fang.

Then, a cold smile appeared on his lips as his hair and beard started fluttering and sword energy appeared behind him.

"So what if I am going to cause trouble? If I don't get to drink this wine tonight, I'll tear down your store!" Tian Xuze said. As he formed a sword-finger gesture with his hand, the longsword on his back emitted a melodious trill and shot out of its scabbard. It flew around a few times in the air before stopping above his head.

The blade of the sword was extremely dazzling. In the darkness, it was eye-catching like a sparkling starlight.

This was the Void Sword Pavilion's secret technique, the Sword Manipulation Technique.

Meanwhile, the corners of Xiao Yue's mouth were twitching as he watched Tian Xuzy exhibit the Sword Manipulation Technique. Looking at Tian Xuzy, who was itching to start the fight, Xiao Yue did not know whether to laugh or cry. He immediately realized Tian Xuzy did not gather information before coming to the imperial city and clearly knew very little about Fang Fang's Little Store.

Xiao Meng had received the short end of the stick at this store before, so why would Owner Bu even fear a seventh grade Battle-Saint?

On the other hand, Ni Yan was watching the confrontation with much interest. Her charming eyes were slightly widened with expectation as she gazed at the plump figure of Whitey stepping out from behind Bu Fang.

"This puppet... is very interesting," Ni Yan thought. She had never seen a puppet capable of going against a seventh grade Battle-Saint. "Looks like I'll get to witness something entertaining today."

"Elder sister Ni Yan, aren't we going to help him? That Tian Xuzy is a seventh grade Battle-Saint but Owner Bu seems to be just a fifth grade Battle-King... Wouldn't he get butchered at this rate?" Ye Ziling asked in bewilderment.

Her eyes were wide with confusion as she looked toward Ni Yan who appeared to be looking forward to a good show.

"It's fine, that old man isn't going to die," Ni Yan replied while patting Ye Ziling's head.

"...Elder sister Ni Yan, you've got it wrong. I am saying that store owner might be in danger. A Battle-Saint is still quite powerful," Ye Ziling earnestly said.

Ni Yan glanced at this young girl whose earnestness contained a trace of childlike-adorableness and could not help but let out a chuckle. She said, "It's fine, that old man... really won't die."

Ye Ziling was dumbfounded by her reply.

Xiao Meng appeared unworried as well. He was standing there with his hands behind his back. He thought this was a good chance for him to check out how powerful the grandmaster of the Void Sword Pavillion was. Back then, he went toe to toe against Whitey. If Tian Xuzy could also achieve the same feat, he would have to view him as a serious opponent.

The thirteen bandits of Mozhou were intently watching the confrontation between Tian Xuzhi and Bu Fang with excited smiles filled with intrigue.

The man dressed in red clothing, Mu Lingfeng, was leaning against the walls of the alleyway while playing with his slender fingers as he serenely watched the fight that seemingly could begin at any moment.

Bu Fang smacked his lips as he recalled the captivating flavors of the wine. Then, he straightened his back and tidied his clothes. He turned around and gently patted Whitey's belly. He said, "Just strip the troublemakers and throw them out.

"Everyone, today's opening hours is already over. If anyone wishes to taste the wine, please queue up earlier tomorrow. Our store doesn't provide any services after business hours."

Bu Fang's figure gradually disappeared into the darkness of the store. However, that indifferent voice of his soon drifted out from the store and resounded in the ears of everyone present.

All of their expressions slightly changed. Come earlier... tomorrow?

Some of them even sneered, apparently holding Bu Fang's words in contempt and disdain. Who did he think he was? Letting a bunch of seventh grade Battle-Saints patiently wait until opening hours?

Even the emperor... did not have the capability to do such a thing!

"Hehe, queue up tomorrow? If your storefront is destroyed tonight, there's no need to queue up tomorrow." Standing together with the rest of the thirteen bandits, the seventh master sneered as he watched the imposing Tian Xuzi.

When Tian Xuzi saw Bu Fang was ignoring him and going back into the store, he immediately flew into a rage. When was he, the world-renowned Tian Xuzi, ever ignored in such a manner? This young man was simply too cocky!

"Arrogant brat, do you really think a mere puppet could stop me? How foolish!"

With a roar, Tian Xuzy pointed forward with a sword-finger gesture and the flying sword turned into a stream of light. As Tian Xuzy stepped forward, spectral figures encircled with sword energy appeared everywhere in an instant and charged toward the store. Their target was Bu Fang.

Whitey was standing in their path with its bulging belly and its mechanical eyes were flashing red. As the red beams emitting from its eyes scanned its surroundings, the seventh master hiding within the crowd shivered. He suddenly remembered some unpleasant memories.

The entire area was filled with sword energy and spectral figures. Tian Xuzy was moving extremely fast and attempted to get past Whitey in an instant.

Tian Xuzy's cultivation level was very high. His move caused the crowd to draw in a breath of cold air and their expressions to become serious. A Battle-Saint adept in the way of the sword was definitely fearsome in combat.

Even Xiao Meng would feel some pressure while facing this attack.

Meanwhile, Ni Yan was pursing her lips. This flashy move was so showy that it gave her goosebumps. However, she had to admit... it was formidable indeed.

"Elder sister Ni Yan..." When Ye Ziling saw Tian Xuzy performing this move, she looked toward Ni Yan once more to enquire whether they should intervene.

Nonetheless, Ni Yan still shook her head. However, the serious expression on her face indicated that she was wavering as well.

Tian Xuzy's figure appeared extremely imperceptible. Surrounded with sword energy, he was attempting to sneak into the store. He was very confident of himself. After all, he was performing the Sword Manipulation Technique. Whether in combat or fleeing, he was so fast that his enemies could not keep up with him. He was confident that a mere puppet would not be able to block him.

"That arrogant brat, I'll definitely teach him a lesson. I'll let him know that the strong must be respected!" Tian Xuzy thought with a sneer.

Bang!

Suddenly, as a sound rang out, the sword energy filling the entire area completely disappeared in an instant.

A longsword fell onto the ground with a loud clatter.

Tian Xuzy's expression stiffened and his eyes were filled with disbelief. His ghostly figure was swiftly moving as he attempted to get past Whitey. However, his entire body suddenly started trembling. In his eyes, a gigantic metallic palm was swiftly becoming larger.

Bang!

Tian Xuzy's head slammed right into the Whitey's palm. During the moment of collision, all sorts of complicated feelings suddenly flooded his mind.

"God damn..."

Tian Xuzy's swiftly moving figure suddenly came to a halt and was sent flying by a tremendous force. His body somersaulted in the air before violently smashing into the ground. He was even pushed quite a distance away by the remaining force...

Embarrassment and silence filled the area...

The atmosphere suddenly became rather strange.

The eyes of the crowd were filled with disbelief as they stared at the sorry figure of Tian Xuzy groaning on the ground while clutching his nose. When they looked at the chubby Whitey once more, their faces... looked as if they had just saw a dog biting a lion to death.

Ye Ziling's adorable eyes were wide open and her rosy lips were parted enough that an egg could almost fit in her mouth.

Ni Yan had a smile on her face as she breathed a sigh of relief. As she expected, Owner Bu was not being brainless but instead had the means to back up his words.

Even though she did not know how much of a coincidence was involved in that scene just now, sending a Battle-Saint flying with a single blow... Whitey, you've become incredible!

Ni Yan was elated.

Tian Xuzy got up from the ground while clutching his nose. Just a moment ago, his nose made an intimate contact with Whitey's metallic palm. The feeling of colliding into something with his nose at such a speed made him feel like crying...

He was furious. He was completely enraged. If he was only looking to punish that arrogant brat previously, then his only desire right now was tearing apart this mechanical puppet that humiliated him.

His carelessness nearly caused a humiliating defeat. This was simply... mortifying!

Buzz!

With a humming noise, the longsword that fell onto the ground flew toward Tian Xuzy and hovered in front of him. His expression became grave and tiny swords were seemingly moving about in his eyes. Then, with a gentle flick of the sword-finger gesture, the longsword started duplicating. It turned into two, then two turned into four, four turned into a bunch...

Countless amount of longswords were hovering in front of him.

Attack, my swords!

Chapter 200: The Clothes Are Gone, Forget About the Wine!

Bu Fang staggered back into the kitchen. As he let out a light breath, the rich smell of alcohol spread from his mouth.

Having drank two cups of wine, Bu Fang felt all tipsy and lightheaded. He had to admit that this new wine was much stronger than the Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine.

He put away the rest of the wine jars in the kitchen, leaving out only three white jade wine jars. In these jars was the newly brewed spirit wine, which fragrance had engulfed half of the Imperial City.

The three white jade wine jars were carefully lidded, sealing the rich wine aroma within the wine jar themselves to prevent it from further dissipating. Bu Fang patted the white jade wine jars and licked his own lips. The scent of alcohol once again gushed out of his mouth.

Gazing at these white jade wine jars, Bu Fang fell into a deep contemplation. It was time to name the wine...

A spirit wine brewed with three types of seventh grade spirit herbs... maybe call it, Three Treasures Wine? Bu Fang quickly shook his head. This name sounded awfully gawky, and it would devalue the wine.

"One sip fills the mouth with burning flames, once swallowed it becomes cold as blades of ice... how about Frost Blaze Wine? Nope, still too unsophisticated, perhaps Frost Blaze Path-Understanding Wine? Hmm... let's go with Frost Blaze Path-Understanding Brew."

Bu Fang rubbed his chin as he mulled over this, but his heart was indeed fervent. The Frost Blaze Path-Understanding Brew had easily surpassed the Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine. He wondered how it might compare with the Dragon's Breath?

Bu Fang's knowledge of the Dragon's Breath rested on Ni Yan's description. He hadn't personally tasted the Dragon's Breath himself, and so he was unable to make a valid judgement.

"System, is it possible to test whether the Frost Blaze Path-Understanding Brew or the Dragon's Breath is more superior?" Bu Fang asked the system in great anticipation.

However, the system remained silent for a while before solemnly replying him: "The comparison needs to be made by someone who has tasted Dragon's Breath. Thus, the host is unable to complete the temporary assignment at this stage. Please continue trying hard. However, the Frost Blaze Path-Understanding Brew has been successfully recorded, and so the price valuation has begun..."

The system's reply exceeded Bu Fang's expectations, leaving him slightly dumbfounded.

Must the comparison be made by someone who has tasted the Dragon's Breath? It caused Bu Fang to wrinkle his brows.

Not after long, he relaxed his brows and curled the corners of his lips. There was one person in the Imperial City who had drank the Dragon's Breath before. That was Ni Yan, which meant that the judgement could be issued once she came by on the following day to try the Frost Blaze Path-Understanding Brew.

The System was still working on the price valuation. Bu Fang didn't have a clue over how it would turn out. However, he was clear on one thing: it certainly wouldn't be cheap.

The results wouldn't be in for quite a while, and Bu Fang was also drowsy from the wine. He yawned, walked out of the kitchen, and got ready to close up and withdraw upstairs.

...

Whitey stood by the store like an unshakeable mountain. A red light flickered continuously in its mechanic eyes.

A thick rain of swords fell before Tian Xuzi. These shadows of blades were all generated from the sword in his hand.

Tian Xuzi's face was grave. Dark red blood trickled out of his nose and stained his white beard...

"Behead this robotic puppet!"

With a light snarl, Tian Xuzi concentrated hard and released waves of true energy from his body. Clink, clank. The shadows of blades whistled and charged toward Whitey.

The shadows covered the sky, almost metamorphosizing into a shower of swords. Its density made one's hair stand on ends and one's heart shudder uncontrollably.

Amidst the rainstorm of blades was Tian Xuzi's vigor of sword. That was a seventh grade Battle-Saint's vigor of sword, a mighty, formidable and rare one. It poured down in a way that nearly crumbled the city gates. An ordinary seventh grade Battle-Saint wouldn't even have the guts to resist this move.

This move... was plainly terrifying.

Those nearby were in awe. They now had considerable awareness of Tian Xuze's brooding strength.

Whitey's plump body seemed so tiny amidst the torrent of blades, as if a single boat on the vast sea, just waiting to be overturned by the tides.

A robotic sound suddenly rang in the air. Whitey's mechanic eyes raised up and emitted a red beam over the shower of blades.

At that moment, the dense torrent of blades had completely engulfed it.

"Hahaha! Crush it for good!" Tian Xuze roared with laughter. He wiped away the blood dripping from his nose, absorbed by elation.

Suddenly, his hearty laughter stopped short.

This was because, right before him, the rainstorm of blades were being swallowed by a bottomless pit, and continued to thin out.

Not after long, only a few shadows of blades were left.

The incredible show of force had abruptly reduced to a sorry sight.

Tian Xuze's eyeballs bulged as he glared at Whitey. Extending out a finger, he couldn't stop shuddering... Damn it, why was there such an intimidating puppet in this world.

Whitey's mechanic eyes flashed red once more, and the delicate metal sword in its hands was instantly bent out of shape. With a crack, the blade was completely broken...

That crispy sound reverberated in the alleyway once so quiet that one could hear a pin drop.

In that moment, everyone in the crowd took in a chilled breath. Tian Xuze spat out a mouthful of blood and retreated a few steps in dejection. His body couldn't stop trembling.

That was a spirit sword he had created with essence blood. Who would have thought that the robotic puppet before him could... simply crush it!

Tian Xuzy even felt his kidney twitch. He felt weak as never before.

"Troublemaker, you will be stripped as an example to others."

Whitey's robotic voice rang. Nobody understood what that meant, and were all taken back.

The seventh master hiding among the spectators recognized this familiar, nightmare-like sound. His entire body shuddered and shivered in fear.

Again... not again! A demon obsessed with stripping others!

Whitey threw the broken sword in its hands onto the floor. Its palms lifted up, and with a whirl, extended outwards. They rested above Tian Xuzy and simply lifted him up by the head.

That was a palm that could crumple a spirit sword...

The bystanders felt their brains freeze. If that palm even exerted a tiny bit of force—mind one that Tian Xuzy's brain was certainly not sturdier than the spirit sword—the consequences would naturally be... hard to digest.

But the reality wasn't what those in the crowd had envisioned, even though that sight would have been too hard to bear.

Rip!!

Tian Xuzy felt a chill breeze around his body. The robe he wore was torn apart by the metallic lump...

Oh my gosh! What did this metallic lump want? Has it lost its mind, unwilling to even let an old chap go?!

The seventh master's teeth chattered. This was a familiar sight, one that was eye-blinding... and fully evoked the pain in his heart!

Whitey's red beam scanned across Tian Xuzi's naked body, then its arms swung and flung Tian Xuzi away. He was like a bean bun tossed far away, kicking up the dust on the ground.

Ni Yan blinked her eyes and quickly covered Ye Ziling's eyes, "You little girl, don't look."

The Thirteen Bandits felt a pain shoot up their teeth as they wheezed one after another. Damn it, exactly as what the seventh master had said... This metallic lump was a demon obsessed with stripping others. It wouldn't kill you, but it wanted to strip you naked, now that was messed up!

Tian Xuzi crawled up from the floor. As the wind blew by, his balls felt oh so cold. His old, saggy face became paler than ever. He had effectively snapped out of the temptation of fine wine. The clothes were gone, forget about the wine!

The metallic lump of a puppet before his eyes was a fierce warrior. That, alas, was the trump card of the store... no wonder it could possess a Five Stripes Path-Understanding Tree. Turns out it had a puppet that could singlehandedly strip a seventh grade Battle-Saint. It was plainly terrifying.

Tian Xuzi no longer had the face to stay there. He waved his hand and numerous swords appeared in his hands. With a flick of a finger, these long swords covered the lower part of his body and began spinning, as if forming a skirt... but at least it succeeded in screening off the eye-blinding sight.

Xiao Yue was stunned. The elder of the Void Sword Pavilion lived up to his name. He knew how to have fun!

The light tap of footsteps rang. The tipsiness has yet to fade from Bu Fang's complexion. He walked to the entrance, flicked a gaze at the bare naked Tian Xuzi attempting to cover himself with rotating swords, and curled his lips.

Patting Whitey's fat belly, Bu Fang said coolly: "We are closed. If you want wine, come back earlier tomorrow and line up..."

"Oh, there is a limited amount of wine. First come, first served."

Bu Fang stated calmly. Whitey turned around, returned to the store and stepped into the kitchen. Bu Fang reached for the shutters and closed them before the dumbstruck crowd.

Having shut the door, Bu Fang felt his eyelids struggle in a battle. He was far too sleepy. Emitting another breath that was still rich with the scent of alcohol, he returned to his room on the second floor. After a bath, he climbed onto his bed and fell into a deep sleep.

There was a limited amount of wine, first come, first served... this announcement caused many to avert their eyes. They left one after another, each immersed in their own thoughts.

It seemed like this wine... could only be tasted tomorrow.

Try to snatch it by force? Tian Xu's eyesore of a spectacle was still vivid in their minds. They were not idiots, and naturally wouldn't consider making a move against Whitey, the demon clearly obsessed with stripping others.

"Let's go. Tonight's show has ended. Let's get here early tomorrow to drink the wine," Ni Yan said as she patted Ye Ziling's head. Afterwards, she pulled the latter after her and left the alleyway.