

Gourmet 531

Chapter 531: A Man's Word Is as Heavy as Nine Tripods

In the end, Lord Dog finally got to eat the Spicy Diced Chicken.

When Bu Fang spotted Lord Dog's confused expression, he took out another bowl and placed it in front of him.

When Lord Dog looked over and saw Bu Fang's look of disdain, it almost flew into a rage.

Does this kid, Bu Fang, actually insist that a dog must learn to use chopsticks? Wasn't this asking for too much....

With an endless amount of resentment in his heart, the frustrated Lord Dog glared at Bu Fang, with the urge to slash him apart with its claws gnawing at it; however, it resisted the urge. If it were to kill this rascal now, who would cook the Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs for him...

Where the Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs was concerned, who cared how it momentarily felt?

After reining in its temper, the Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs were snatched away.

Despite that, Lord Dog's heart still felt constricted. Although it had no happiness toward the Spicy Diced Chicken, it still tasted great when eaten, and this made Lord Dog feel angry and weak.

After Nethery had learned how to use chopsticks, she quickly used them to pick up a piece of the Spicy Diced Chicken, which she promptly placed into her mouth. Her eyes instantly lit up, and the chopsticks' movements accelerated.

In almost no time at all, she completely ravaged the plate of Spicy Diced Chicken, and not even the peanut crumbs were spared.

Bu Fang was speechless; after all, he had barely eaten a few pieces. Those few pieces, however, tasted great and gave him a refreshing feeling.

While Nethery was eating, she kept letting out burps filled with spiritual energy. The scene was slightly comical.

After the Spicy Diced Chicken on Nethery's plate was no more, she licked her red lips, and her gaze shifted to Lord Dog's bowl, which was still filled with chicken.

Lord Dog's ears perked up, and it began to watch the woman cautiously. What exactly does she want?

That was a bowl of Spicy Diced Chicken he had sold his pride for! Hence, she should not even dream of touching a single piece of chicken in his bowl.

Despite its caution, in the end, Lord Dog was unable to protect all the chicken in its bowl. It could only watch in frustration as Nethery easily picked up chicken after chicken from his bowl using the chopsticks.

"Uh... This is the benefit of using chopsticks," Bu Fang said, when he saw Lord Dog's blank expression.

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As the moonlight shone down, the pitch-black sky began to turn into a shade of dark blue.

Before returning to his room, Bu Fang washed up, then he stood by his window, with his partially dried hair, enjoying the cool breeze and the view of Heavenly Mist City at night.

The scenery was breathtaking, enough to captivate anyone.

Bu Fang took a deep breath before getting into bed, ready to sleep. As a chef, sleep was very important to him.

In the next morning, the sky was bright, and the sun shone down like glittering gold. The rays of sunlight shone on Bu Fang's face, through the window, making him feel a little itchy.

He got up out of bed, washed, went down to the kitchen, and began to practice his knife skills; after that, he cooked a bowl of Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs and Dragon Blood Rice.

He served the dishes to Nethery and Blacky, then returned to the kitchen and began to prepare his own breakfast. Soon, he took out a Golden Shumai from the steamer.

He dipped a piece into some vinegar and tossed it into his mouth.

When Bu Fang finished his meal, he cleaned up the tableware, then went to open up the restaurant's bronze gates, ready to start the business for the day.

"Owner Bu, you're still opening shop today? Today's the day of the Miracle Hand Conference's competition of the Top 10. Don't you want to go see it?"

A customer spoke to Bu Fang, with a smile.

Bu Fang froze for a moment, but he quickly recovered and shook his head sideways, saying, "There's no need..."

Truthfully, there really was no need. For the next match, Bu Fang had already decided to put on a very good performance for Nangong Wuque, in which he would give the latter the win; after that, he would not have the chance to meet the alchemists anymore. Hence, there was simply no need for him to go and watch the matches. With the skills he possessed, he was better off continuing his business, selling a few more jars of Buddha Jumps Over The Wall Soup!

To him, selling even an extra jar of Buddha Jumps Over The Wall Soup was far more important than competing with those alchemists.

"Hey, Owner Bu, it looks like there's a new dish!"

A sharp-eyed customer, who frequently visited the restaurant, suddenly noticed that a new dish, Spicy Diced Chicken, had been added to the menu, then he turned to smile at Bu Fang.

The customers were all extremely interested in Bu Fang's dishes, so there was no shortage of orders for the new dish, Spicy Diced Chicken.

Bu Fang headed to the kitchen and got himself busy.

Nangong Wuque, who seemed as excited as a little child, came over to the store as well, bringing along his beautiful little sister Nangong Wan.

This guy actually didn't go to see Mu Bai's match today as well.

"Old Bu, you did not tell me that you had a new dish; quick, give me a portion," Nangong Wuque hollered the moment he entered the restaurant, after having sniffed out Bu Fang's new dish as though he was a dog.

"You're not going to see Mu Bai's match?" Bu Fang asked as he walked out with a portion of Spicy Diced Chicken, which he proceeded to place in front of Nangong Wuque.

"What's there to see? There isn't any meaning in going. With Mu Bai's ability, he will steamroll everything. I'm telling you now: the champion of this Magical Hand Conference can only be Mu Bai, no one else. That monster is someone who can't be bested on the path of refinement!"

Nangong Wuque used the chopsticks to put a piece of chicken into his mouth, and his eyes widened instantly, then he shook his legs and continued, saying, "Do you know that Mu Bai, that white face, has another nickname? Do you know what it is?" Nangong Wuque the chatterbox had begun to speak again, seemingly with no intention to stop.

"That show-off Mu Bai, people call him the King of Dan! Isn't that crazy? Even those great alchemy Grandmasters don't dare to call themselves Kings of Dan."

King of Dan Mu Bai was an alchemist from the enchanting Heavenly Pill City and the Pill Palace's youngest leader ever. He was chasing right after the Pill Palace's refining saintess, and he was hailed as the next saint of Dan refining.

Since no Dan-refining saint had taken part in the Magical Hand Conference, Mu Bai was the candidate who showed the most promise. With him competing, the winner of the conference was, more or less, predetermined.

“Old Bu, we are going to compete against each other in three days; do you really intend to give up?” Nangong Wuque, who had just finished his Spicy Diced Chicken, licked his greasy lips and asked Bu Fang with a serious expression.

“Well, there’s no longer any meaning. I’ve already achieved my objective for this competition, so as for the remaining matches, I’d rather spend my time working in this little store,” Bu Fang answered, lightly.

“Hei... then, in the next round, don’t throw in the towel immediately. At least put on a show and cook up something. If you forfeit just like that, I’ll lose face,” said Nangong Wuque, shamelessly instructing Bu Fang, with narrowed eyes.

Nangong Wan, who was sitting by the side, couldn’t help rolling her eyes. “Nangong Wuque, you really are shameless, without comparison.”

“What? Isn’t it Old Bu that says he doesn’t want to compete anymore? I’m just giving him a stage to step down from. This is called being reasonable. Since Old Bu is going to concede anyway, why not lose somewhat decently? At least he would still make it into the top ten!” Nangong Wuque argued.

Nangong Wan really couldn’t fathom how Nangong Wuque could bear to be that shameless. Was this really her brother by birth?

“I say, Owner Bu, do you really not intend to continue competing? I really think you could charge into the top three; being amongst the top three of the Magical Hand Conference is the dream of countless people. That position would give one the chance to enter a secret realm under the control of the Pill Palace, the Scorpio Secret Realm. It also gives one the chance to obtain a special prize, the recipe of a five-mark spirit pill,” Nangong Wan said to Bu Fang.

Nangong Wan’s words made Bu Fang pause momentarily.

“Being in the top three of the Magical Hand Conference has its rewards?”

This time, it was Nangong Wan’s and Nangong Wuque’s turns to pause momentarily. Why would Bu Fang ask such an illogical question? Don’t tell me he actually thought that alchemists participated in the Magical Hand Conference just for glory? What dog shit glory? Can one eat it?

They did it for the rewards!

Those that emerged among the top ten in the Magical Hand Conference would receive rewards. Each reward gave different levels of pill recipes; furthermore, there was a large number of crystals, too!

“There’s a reward of crystals?” Once Bu Fang heard the words “crystals”, he became spirited.

“Huu... there is actually a reward of crystals, but the rewards is not significant. The tenth place only gets only ten thousand crystals, while the third place only gets up to a hundred thousand...” Nangong Wan said.

For the Nangong family, who had strong financial backing, there was not much of a difference between ten thousand crystals and a hundred thousand crystals. Hence, this reward meant nothing to them. In other words, the reward that the Pill Palace had set was meaningless. For alchemists, ten thousand crystals or a hundred thousand crystals were both worth less than a fart.

“How about the top three? How many crystals does the top three get?” Bu Fang asked, pleasantly surprised.

“The top three? Old Bu, why would the top three be rewarded with crystals? How unsophisticated are you? The top three have the right to enter the secret realm; this privilege can’t be bought even with countless crystals,” Nangong Wuque said, shaking his head at Bu Fang as though the latter was a peasant.

After saying that, he suddenly felt nervous. “Old Bu, you wouldn’t continue competing for the rewards, right? Don’t do this; since you already said you would give up, you have to give up. A man’s words are as heavy as nine tripods.” Nangong Wuque blurted out, nervously.

“What are you so scared of? I’m not interested in this secret realm.” Bu Fang rolled his eyes before smirking when he saw the look on Nangong Wuque’s face.

Then, he returned to the kitchen.

After Nangong Wuque obtained Owner Bu’s guarantee, his heart quieted down, allowing him to feel relaxed. Then, he ordered a few more dishes, including a jar of Buddha Jumps Over The Wall Soup.

His extravagance made Bu Fang's eyes lit up.

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For the next three days, Nangong Wuque came to Bu Fang's restaurant to eat; he even seemed to have put on weight. With Bu Fang's reassurance, he felt relaxed. When the time for the next match arrived, all he had to do was to go on stage and put on a show.

Their match was scheduled for the next day.

In the competition for the top 10, only one match was held every day; ten matches would take ten days. The five people who made it through would continue to battle, and one would automatically make it to the next round. When the top three were selected, they would undergo a final test, and their individual performance would determine their ranking.

Nangong Wuque was humming a sweet song as he leisurely strolled through the Nangong family's courtyard.

The red sun resembled a ball of red flames, causing a mirage to appear on the horizon.

Suddenly, a burly figure walked into the Nangong Family's house.

Yang Meiji had come to find Nangong Wuque. When the latter saw Yang Meiji, he was puzzled.

He could not say he nursed any good feelings toward this lady, but he was not disgusted by her, either; after all, it was Yang Meiji's ability and destiny that earned her his former Nine Hell King Flame.

However, knowing that his Heaven and Earth Obsidian Flame was now being controlled by Yang Meiji was something that made him feel uncomfortable.

When the burly girl began to act coyly, Nangong Wuque began to wish he had learned how to roll his eyes from Nangong Wan.

“Miss Yang Meiji, is there something you are looking for? If there’s nothing, please leave first. I have to make my preparations for the match tomorrow,” Nangong Wuque said, coldly.

Yang Meiji shivered, and her face reddened; and with that flushed expression, she replied, “I know that tomorrow you are going up against Bu Fang; he’s a difficult opponent to deal with! His culinary skills are very good, so...”

“So what?” Nangong Wuque froze. Had this Yang Meiji actually come here to remind him that Bu Fang was strong, out of goodwill?

He already knew how strong Bu Fang was... but tomorrow, Bu Fang was going to lose to him! When Nangong Wuque thought about that, he felt a little excited.

“So... I’ve decided to return the Heaven and Earth Obsidian Flame to you! With the Heaven and Earth Obsidian Flame, your chances against Bu Fang will be higher!” Yang Meiji clutched her big fists and looked at Nangong Wuque sincerely.

Chapter 532: Giving Up On The Competition?

That night, Yang Meiji did not leave the Nangong Residence...

The following day, Bu Fang lazily opened his eyes, and a yawn escaped his lips. After that, he crawled off his bed with sleepy eyes. He walked to the window and took a deep breath, filling his lungs with fresh air; afterward, he felt more energetic.

It was another beautiful day.

He went down the stairs and into the kitchen, and as per usual, he began to practice his cutting and carving skills. He was able to practice the Overlord Thirteen Blades, but he was unable to grasp the Overlord’s Energy.

Knife skills were one of the basics of being a chef. This was the reason why Bu Fang took some time to practice his knife skills every day. Good knife skills were extremely important for a chef.

Bu Fang quickly began to prepare one serving of Sweet ‘n’ Sour Ribs and one serving of Dragon Blood Rice, and soon, a dense fragrance began to waft out of the kitchen.

After Blacky and Nethery had eaten their breakfast, the lazy dog returned to his spot underneath the Path-Understanding Tree and curled up, then it went back to sleep. Soon, it was snoring loudly.

Nethery, on the other hand, pulled out a chair underneath the Path-Understand Tree and sat on it. Her straight black hair cascaded down her shoulders and onto her snow-white legs. As the sunlight illuminated her pale face, she looked to be emitting an obscure beauty.

Bu Fang packed his things and clasped his hand behind his back; he was ready to leave the restaurant.

Nethery pondered for a moment and stood up. She had decided to follow Bu Fang today.

She knew what Bu Fang was going out to do. She had once tasted a dish Bu Fang made during the competition, after all. She knew that Bu Fang was going to make another delicious dish.

“This time, I won’t be making anything new... I’m going there to be a bystander,” Bu Fang said to Nethery with a serious expression.

Despite that, Nethery decided to follow him anyway. Bu Fang, who was helpless to change that, did not say anything more, so he allowed her to follow him.

However, this time, he did not carry his enormous signboard to the venue. Since the temporary mission was already completed, Bu Fang no longer needed to carry the signboard for the competition.

Today, he was going to be lowkey.

Nethery, who wore a long black dress, followed behind him. Her slender legs were snow-white and flawless. As usual, the Netherworld woman did not wear shoes; instead, she floated in the air. Every time the tip of her glistening feet touched the ground, her entire body would move.

They both gradually made their way over to the central plaza, and soon, they arrived.

Although Bu Fang had explicitly said that he might give up on the competition, a huge number of spectators had still turned up to watch the match.

Bu Fang's was very famous now. He was no longer that nameless chef who arrived at Heavenly Mist City in the past. Now, he no longer had to rely on his Stinky Tofu to attract customers for his store.

Today, he was the biggest dark horse in the Magical Hands Conference. He was a dark horse who had caused the eyes of a countless number of people to bulge in shock.

His appearance was a miracle in and of itself. A chef like him had actually managed to defeat countless alchemists as he charged up the rankings; not even Sorceress An Sheng or Crazy Xiong could slow him down. Initially, almost no one had been optimistic about Bu Fang's chances in the competition.

However, the miraculous chef used his sharp kitchen knife to carve his way forward, into the top ten!

He did not only astound those watching in Heavenly Mist City; he also astounded those watching the competition via the projection array from their locations in other cities.

They were completely floored by this chef.

Some people had hoped that a genius alchemist would appear and thoroughly defeat this chef, avenging the other alchemists who the chef had defeated. Some others nursed positive thoughts for this dark horse. Although there were those who supported him and those who hated him—which was normal—what really surprised people was Bu Fang's profession.

When he walked into the arena with Nethery, deafening cheers erupted, leaving him feeling a little flustered.

When Bu Fang saw how excited the audience members were, he was puzzled.

This time, only one stage was to be used for all the matches. This stage was already surrounded by the huge crowd, and there was no empty seat left behind. Every seat had a spectator on it.

When the audience spotted Bu Fang, who had calmly entered the arena, they cheered fervently.

The roars and cheers seemed to emerge collectively, and the combined uproar was deafening!

“Bu Fang, do your best! Don’t give up!”

“Little Chef, you are the biggest dark horse in this competition! Please keep going till the end!”

“What do you mean you’ll give up... Real men never give up! Don’t even give up!”

...

The audience already knew that Bu Fang had made up his mind to drop out of the competition, but they still held on to hope and came, hoping that Bu Fang would participate in the competition of the top 10. They never believed for one second that Bu Fang would give up, and there he was; he actually showed up for the competition! Expressions of excitement colored their faces, and many could not stop themselves from cheering loudly.

Nethery looked around curiously. She seemed unaccustomed to the bustling atmosphere, especially the countless gazes directed her way.

Since she was walking beside Bu Fang, she had also garnered a lot of attention.

In fact, she was actually the center of attention. As a beautiful woman, the moment she appeared, almost all the attention had immediately shifted over to her.

“You should head over to the audience stand and wait for me,” Bu Fang said to Nethery.

Nethery nodded expressionlessly and turned around. The tip of her sparkling touched the ground once, and she floated over to a seat.

Bu Fang looked around and realized that a lot of people supported him, what left him slightly dazed for a moment. Could he have made the wrong decision? Faced with so many people who supported him, Bu Fang felt he should aim for first place.

If he did not, he would disappoint all his supporters! And if he let so many people down, he would feel guilty.

Nangong Wuque had not yet arrived, making Bu Fang feel as though something suspicious was going on.

Normally, this clown, Nangong Wuque, should have arrived a long time ago. Then, he would repeatedly urge Bu Fang to go through the motions without actually doing anything.

Bu Fang clasped his hand behind his back and walked up the stage.

The competition of the top 10 was being held in a specially made stage, and each match was held individually. The material used to build this stage was different. The bronze platform atop this specially-made stage had many mysterious arrays carved onto it. The arrays emitted subtle fluctuations that calmed the participants of the competition.

This bronze platform was of a much higher grade than the bronze platforms used in the previous rounds. If one was to conduct refinement on this new bronze platforms, they would be able to concentrate fully.

It was interesting.

Bu Fang surveyed the bronze platform for the first time, tracing his hand on its markings. The markings did not make the bronze platform feel rough; instead, Bu Fang felt comfortable when he touched it. It was as though he had laid his hand on a soothing breeze.

It was perfect for alchemists. Any alchemist that refined atop these bronze platforms would have their conditions improve by leaps and bounds.

Bu Fang examined the bronze platforms for some time, and the excitement of the audience gradually calmed down. However, even though some time had passed, there was still no sign of Nangong Wuque.

This caused many people to become suspicious.

“Where is Nangong Wuque? It’s already so late. Why isn’t he here yet?”

“The competition is about to begin. Where in the world is he? Is he going to abandon the match?”

“Wasn’t the chef the one who decided to give up on the match? Why is Nangong Wuque now absent?”

...

Many in the audience were confused and began to discuss amongst themselves. They truly had no idea what was going on.

With Nangong Wuque’s crappy attitude, the fellow should have arrived a long time ago.

Nangong Wan, who was sitting amongst the audience, was unable to endure it any longer.

The Nangong Wuque she knew would not give up on the competition. Especially after he had spoken to Bu Fang about it. Bu Fang was even supposed to go easy on him today.

But now, Nangong Wuque had gone missing?

Although he had already asked Owner Bu to go easy on him, he still decided to dig a pit for Bu Fang to jump into?

The start time for the match soon arrived, and the warship, which housed the five alchemy grandmasters, appeared in the sky above the arena. The five figures walked out of the warship with fluttering hairs. Grandmaster Xuan Ming stepped forward and announced the start of the first match of the competition for the top 10, with a serious expression on his face.

After he made the announcement, the atmosphere turned awkward.

This was because Nangong Wuque was still absent...

Did this brat actually plan to abandon the competition?

Since when was Nangong Wuque such a scaredy cat?

The audience was horrified.

Bu Fang also had an expression of confusion on his face. Did Nangong Wuque oversleep? That did not seem possible. How could he oversleep on the day of such an important event

No one knew what had happened to Nangong Wuque.

Grandmaster Xuan Ming's face was extremely unsightly, and at that moment, he looked extremely terrifying. He had to get down to the bottom of the matter.

Nangong Wuque... did he actually forsake the competition?!

"This is absolutely ridiculous! That little brat!" Grandmaster Xuan Ming was so angry, his beard fluttered on its own. He looked ready to beat someone up!

If anyone was going to abandon the match, they thought it would be Bu Fang, but it had turned out to be Nangong Wuque instead. The people who came to watch the match did so with their spare time, and in the end, it was Nangong Wuque who did not show up.

That little brat... Does he still care about his place in Heavenly Mist City's Pill Tower?

"What in the world is going on?" Grandmaster Xuan Ming muttered, solemnly staring at the chief judge, who was in charge of this round.

The chief judge felt a headache brewing. He realized that every time he had the slightest of contacts with Bu Fang, something would go wrong. Bu Fang's opponent, no matter who they were, would always meet with misfortune.

If their furnace didn't explode, they would bawl their eyes out, and now, someone had failed to turn up.

This dark horse... Has he planned to go through the entire competition without winning a single match properly?

"It's possible that Nangong Wuque has thrown the match. The competition should have already started already. We can't delay it any longer."

Grandmaster Xuan Ming's face sunk. He had wanted to help Nangong Wuque out, even if it meant stalling for time.

However, he was unable to stall for long.

"Forget it; just announce the start of this competition. Let Bu Fang advance through this round of the competition. Although he has no opponent, he still has to prepare a proper product. It's his obligation to the masses," Grandmaster Xuan Ming said.

He was still stunned. The person who had said he would participate in the match was the person who had thrown the match. The person who said he would throw the match was the person now standing on stage energetically.

Were they messing with him?

If Bu Fang could read Grandmaster Xuan Ming's thoughts, he would definitely go insane. That was because he really did plan to throw the match.

He was only standing here because Nangong Wuque asked him to lose with style.

Fine... In the end, he had achieved victory without even knowing how he did it.

The corners of Bu Fang's mouth curled upwards, and with a wave of his hand, the heavy Black Turtle Constellation Wok appeared, landing atop the bronze platform with a loud thud.

Since Nangong Wuque wasn't there for the match, he would definitely win. Since that was the case, Bu Fang decided to get serious and make a dish.

It was to appease the fervent audience.

This was the first time Bu Fang realized that he actually had a lot of supporters.

He remembered the time when the audience cheered for the alchemists he was up against, urging them to destroy him, the public enemy of alchemists.

As those thoughts crossed Bu Fang's mind, he took out a giant bear from his system's storage space. He prodded the giant bear for a bit and sliced off the other paw, then he prepared to make his dish.

Seeing this, Xiong Shi, who was sitting in the audience stand, was unable to control himself and began to cry. Did Bu Fang hate him or something? Why did he have to cook the bear in a round his victory was already assured? Couldn't he treat the bear nicely?

...

In the Nangong Residence.

In the secret chamber, Nangong Wuque opened his eyes, and a forceful aura surged out from behind him. Two chains hovered behind him, and a third chain was faintly visible.

A bright glow flickered in his eyes, and he exhaled a long breath of dark, turbid air.

An uncontrollable surge of delight appeared on Nangong Wuque's face. He raised his hand, and a clump of white flames danced atop his fingertips. That familiar feeling instantly enveloped his entire body.

The Nine Hell King Flame, which he had just regained, felt much easier to control.

Creak!

He opened the doors of the secret room, and the blinding sunlight shone on him. Nangong Wuque exhaled a long breath and felt his mind clear.

He felt very refreshed.

Suddenly, a servant, who had been respectfully standing outside the room, bowed toward Nangong Wuque, with a strange expression on his face. "Patriarch... You... You finally came out! The Magical Hand Conference is about to end!"

Chapter 533: If Your Cauldron Doesn't Explode, It'll Be my Loss

When Nangong Wuque first heard the news from the servant, he rejected it. He had thought that the servant was joking, but when he saw the scorching sun suspended in the sky, he was completely shocked.

Damn! He had actually missed the timing for the match. What time was it?!

This was something out of his expectations...

Originally, he had planned to spend the night fusing with the Nine Hell King Flame; after that, he would rush to the central plaza and win the match.

However, God's plans always superseded human plans, even his. He had actually spent this much time to fuse with the Nine Hell King Flame.

Nangong Wuque's heart was bleeding at the thought. Old Bu had planned to throw the match, but what did he himself do? He had ruined Old Bu's painstaking efforts; he did not even attend the match.

"Why didn't you remind me!" Nangong Wuque's heart lurched as he turned to the respectful servant, who was standing at his side, and asked in a depressing tone of voice.

The servant was stunned, but he only bowed and replied, "If the patriarch wants me to remind you, the patriarch has to tell us in advance; if patriarch does not do so, then how would this insignificant one know he should remind patriarch?! So, the next time the patriarch has business to attend, please tell us in advance; if you don't do so, it will mean that there is no trust between us."

"Say no more; it's all my fault!" Nangong Wuque was enraged, but he had no words with which to refute his servant.

He no longer cared for breathing in the fresh air, neither did he concern himself with the sense of fulfillment he obtained from the Nine Hell King Flame residing in his body. At that moment, all he wanted to do was rush to the central square with his fastest speed; maybe he would still make it in time for the match.

After leaving the secret room, Nangong Wuque did not take time to clean up the filth all over his body; instead, he charged out of the Nangong Family property, running toward the central plaza at an extremely quick pace.

He began to wonder if he had fallen for Yang Meiji's plans?

Did that lady deliberately mess things up? Was it all in order to make him fail to participate in today's match?

What exactly was the relationship between that Yang Meiji and Old Bu?!

He did not think Old Bu was actually like that! Nangong Wuque believed he had now seen through Old Bu's facade. His loss in this match was without reason.

No... He clearly understood the reason for his loss. He did not lose to Old Bu, but rather, he lost to Yang Meiji.

Who knew that Yang Meiji would, on the very last day, come running to him to return his Nine Hell King Flame? That sincere expression had made it hard for him to refuse.

And the result of his inability to refuse... was him being very late for the match.

When he arrived at the entrance of the central plaza, he perceived a pleasant aroma that had wafted over from somewhere else.

His heart sank to the bottom.

This smell... Without a doubt, Old Bu had already begun to cook. Victory in this match already belonged to Old Bu!

He had not participated in this match, so as long as Old Bu's dish met the minimum requirement, he would easily clinch the victory.

His loss was an injustice!

At this point, Bu Fang finished cooking the bear paw. The bear paw exuded a fragrance so pleasant that it attracted the attention of countless people.

Although this was not the first time he had cooked the bear paw dish, people still exclaimed in surprise whenever they saw it. The members of the audience had not tasted the bear paw dish before, but they could guess how good it tasted after seeing the joy and satisfaction on the faces of the few alchemy grandmasters.

Bu Fang wiped his wet hands and sighed gently.

He turned his attention to the empty bronze platform in the distance. Nangong Wuque still had not shown up.

"This rascal, where exactly did he go?" Bu Fang whispered in confusion.

Suddenly, the audience began to clamor, and laughter and whistles rang out.

The alchemy grandmasters, who were making quick work of the bear paws, were attracted by the uproar. They did not understand why the audience would suddenly begin to react this way, so they followed the audience's line of sight.

At the entrance of the square, a sorry figure had just waddled in. The person looked as though he was about to burst into tears. That person was Nangong Wuque.

“This kid still has the guts to appear?” Grandmaster Xuan Ming fumed; with a piece of bear paw still in his mouth, he glared coldly at Nangong Wuque.

“Look at that kid’s appearance. There must have been some matters that caused his late-coming,” Grandmaster Gu He said with a smile.

Bu Fang folded his arms and looked at Nangong Wuque with a smile.

When Nangong Wuque spotted Bu Fang’s gaze, he straightened his posture, and his countenance became serious, then he said, “Bu Fang, that which you requested of me, I have accomplished! The chance you wanted, I have given you! You cannot let me down! You have to make it into the top three. Let those alchemists who mocked you see what it means to be a true chef!”

Bu Fang froze, as did everyone else.

In the next moment, everyone sucked in a cold breath. Was this a trick? The reason for Nangong Wuque giving up the match was unclear.

So Owner Bu’s target was the top three? Did he not intend to give up on the competition? If he really sought to enter the top three, wouldn’t that mean he would have to go up against Mu Bai? Although they supported Bu Fang, they believed that if he met Mu Bai, the ensuing match would not be a match of opponents at the same level.

Even that Mao Shi couldn’t compete against Owner Bu.

When they heard Nangong Wuque’s words, many began to sneer.

One of them was Mao Shi.

Mao Shi was seated amongst the audience, and he was looking at Bu Fang, who was on the stage, with disdain. He knew the kind of person Nangong Wuque was; that little kid wasn’t someone who would give up. It was clear that something had come up.

It was obvious that the chef had come across some dog shit luck; that was why he had won.

This type of person actually wanted to get into the top three? Did he really think that the Magical Hand Conference had no contestants?

Even if this was his dream, it was still impossible!

Mu Bai, on the other hand, was very gentle. He had always been amiable, and at that moment, he had a smile on his lips, one that was like flowing milk, making anyone who saw it feel refreshed.

This chef... was very interesting.

“The winner of this match is... Bu Fang!” Grandmaster Xuan Ming declared, even though he was still glaring at Nangong Wuque. He could tell that the kid was spouting nonsense because he was Nangong Wuque’s teacher.

He must have been late because he faced some sort of problem, not because he made any promises to Bu Fang.

This kid simply wanted a stage to step down from after giving up on the match.

However, wasn’t this kid lacking morals? Those words he had said, wasn’t that him pitting Bu Fang against the remaining top ten alchemists? This would cause Bu Fang to receive the wrath of many alchemists.

Furthermore, these alchemists were not ordinary alchemists.

Not mentioning Mu Bai, even Mao Shi and the other alchemists held a certain degree of influence. Mao Shi’s prowess at alchemy was very high—way higher than that of crazy Xiong Shi and sorceress An Sheng.

However, this did not matter to Bu Fang; after emerging victorious, he began to prepare to leave the stage.

He was already thinking of quickly returning to the restaurant to open for business. To him, his business was more important than the Magical Hand Conference.

Bu Fang had advanced yet again. Although it was hard to say who his opponent for the next round would be, many had begun to speculate that Bu Fang would most likely be matched against Mao Shi.

This was because Mao Shi was competing the next day. If he also advanced, it would be easy to assign them both to the competition for the top three. However, it could also be Mu Bai. If Bu Fang were to meet him early on, he could attribute it to bad luck. If Bu Fang met Mu Bai, he would have no hope of winning.

This was how much Dan King Mu Bai dominated the hearts of the audience members.

Bu Fang walked down the stage and went over to Nangong Wuque, then he folded his arms and glanced at the latecomer.

“Didn’t you want me to throw the match? Why didn’t you give me the chance to do so?”

“I...” Nangong Wuque felt frustrated; he really did not do it on purpose.

It was all because of that lady, Yang Meiji, who had sought him out for seemingly no reason, saying that she wished to return his former Heaven and Earth Obsidian Flame. How was he to know that fusing with the Heaven and Earth Obsidian Flame would take so much time?

“Okay; say no more. I have already decided to throw in the next match—just like you did,” Bu Fang calmly said, with a wave his hand, cutting Nangong Wuque’s speech off.

Nangong Wuque’s face turned an awkward shade of red.

“Tsk, ts. Going to give up the match? Didn’t you say your goal was the top three? Why has it suddenly changed to giving up?” A mocking voice floated over from behind them.

No one knew when Mao Shi walked over to stand beside them, with an expression of contempt on his face, sneering.

“That’s none of your business. You actually believed what Old Bu spouted at random? Has your brain been eaten by a dog?” Nangong Wuque said, looking at Mao Shi as though the latter was stupid.

Mao Shi twitched, then he smirked with disdain.

“I’m not talking to a coward who threw his match. I’ll directly tell this chef that in the next match, your opponent will be me!” Mao Shi said to Bu Fang with a cold stare.

Nangong Wuque exploded. Coward? Who was a coward?!

He had accidentally spent too much time on his cultivation. What did it have to do with cowardice?

“If you say anything else, you should be ready, for I, Nangong Wuque, will go hard on you!” Nangong Wuque’s nostrils flared, breathing heavily, and his bloodshot eyes opened wide.

Mao Shi shook his head in disdain; he was too lazy to reply to Nangong Wuque. His gaze remained fixed on Bu Fang, waiting for the chef’s reaction.

“Wo… Then, let me wish you good luck.” Bu Fang was stunned for a bit, then he replied, with a serious expression.

Mao Shi jumped. “Who needs your good luck wish? Beating you will be as easy as lifting a finger, so why would I need your luck? Don’t speak as though you are saying something so grandiose! Just wait to eat your loss! I’ll return An Sheng’s humiliation to you! I’ll let you know what defeat really means! A chef should just stay in the kitchen, quietly! There’s no need to come out and shame yourself!”

“Are you trying to help Big Boobs An regain her pride? Who are you to Big Boobs An? Do you have the right to make decisions for her?” Nangong Wuque, who simply couldn’t stand the look of superiority on Mao Shi’s face, began a string of inquiries.

“Shut up! Don’t use your vulgar vocabulary to coin An Sheng!” Mao Shi hollered, glaring at Nangong Wuque as though he was a snake.

“Hoho... You want this senior to shut up?”

Nangong Wuque was already enraged, and after being triggered by Mao Shi, he too also hollered, with fumes escaping his nostrils.

“As I said before, a chef is only a chef. Since it is difficult to ascend to the Hall of Elegance, then you should obediently stay in the kitchen, cooking your dishes. In the next match, I’ll let you know what despair really means! A chef cannot possibly be compared to an alchemist!” Mao Shi said coldly.

Nangong Wuque snorted and moved to take action, but he was stopped by Bu Fang, who had placed a hand on his shoulder.

Nethery gently glided over from afar and stood beside Bu Fang. Her gaze was deep and cold; when she glanced at Mao Shi, it was as though she was looking at an insignificant ant. She didn’t care a whit for him.

It was difficult for a chef to ascend the Hall of Elegance? Who gave you the confidence to spout such words?

Bu Fang’s mood had darkened at that point, but he remained expressionless; after a momentary pause, he calmly said, “So you are my opponent for the next round? Okay; if your furnace does not explode, then you can count the next round as my loss.”

Chapter 534: Brushing Past Each Other’s Shoulder

“In the next round.... if your furnace doesn’t explode, you can count it as my loss.”

This sentence fluttered out of Bu Fang’s mouth. Although it held no power behind it, it still made Nangong Wuque and Mao Shi jolt.

Nangong Wuque looked at Bu Fang in disbelief, with his eyes opened wide. What had Old Bu just said? So domineering? Was this still the Old Bu he knew?

Mao Shi was shocked as well. He stood frozen on the spot from those words, and his mind went blank.

“You...” Mao Shi’s eyebrows moved, as if he wanted to say something. He did not think that this chef would actually let out such words. Even he himself would not dare to spout such words, would he?

If your furnace doesn’t explode, it’ll be my loss? How did he have the guts to say something like that?

What did this chef take Mao Shi for? One of those trashy alchemists that would randomly cause their furnaces to explode? Wasn’t he looking down on Mao Shi too much?

He was a talented alchemist who could almost compare to Mu Bai! The words from this chef were simply... exasperating.

“You don’t have to say anything. You will understand once the next match comes. You can go now...” Bu Fang said with a serious face, giving Mao Shi a glance and waving his hand to cut off whatever the latter wanted to say.

You can go now? On what account? You say I can go so I’ll go?

Mao Shi exploded at once! He almost spit out blood due to his rage.

Nangong Wuque looked at Bu Fang in shock, as if it was his first time getting to know him. He never knew Bu Fang could be so domineering, and here he had always thought that this guy was kind of plain.

Nethery followed behind Bu Fang. Both of them had unchanging expressions, and they walked off into the distance, not caring about Mao Shi.

Bu Fang was angry, not because of Mao Shi’s aggressive tone but rather because Mao Shi looked down on chefs. What right did he have to look down on chefs? Did chefs let him down in any way?

As a chef himself, Bu Fang had the pride of a chef; it was a pride toward one's profession.

Mao Shi took in a deep breath. He had never felt such grievance before. A lowly chef actually dared to make him, an alchemist, lose face...

This was something unforgivable!

How could he simply let Bu Fang go like this?

He wouldn't be Mao Shi if he did.

Taking a step forward, the aura on his body surged, with three supreme shackles swaying behind his body. He stood in front of Bu Fang, wanting to prevent the latter from moving forward.

Weng...

That sudden explosion of aura shocked all the audience who had yet to leave, all looking toward the direction where the aura came from.

Although the cultivation level of some of the members of the audience was not high, their sensitivity to the aura was not weaker than anyone else's. Towards gossip, so to speak, they were very alert.

As they looked over, an uproar occurred.

After all, the person giving off this aura was none other than the talented alchemist Mao Shi. And the person that he was blocking was... actually the chef who stood out in the Magical Hand Conference.

What was that situation? Was Mao Shi going to make a move on the chef?

The audience's eyes were all wide open. Those who were actually planning to exit the central plaza all halted their steps, looking toward where Bu Fang was.

Mao Shi laughed coldly. Blinking, he looked at Bu Fang and sneered. “Did I scare this chef? But of course.... You are a chef who hasn’t even broken a single supreme shackle. Facing the strong, like us, all you can do is..... cower in fear.”

Nangong Wuque looked at Mao Shi as if he was looking at an idiot. Was this Mao Shi blind? Did he not see Big Sis Nethery standing behind Bu Fang? Who was Big Sis Nethery? She was someone who even the strongest of those who had broken five supreme shackles feared!

Did this Mao Shi have a hole in his head..... to dare to block Bu Fang’s path?! To block his path was equivalent to blocking Big Sis Nethery’s path!

Oh.... right... This Mao Shi wouldn’t recognize Big Sis Nethery.

This retard...

“What are you trying to do?” Bu Fang frowned as he said unhappily.

“Nothing.... just disgruntled, a chef who said his piece of nonsense in front of me, then tried to run away.... Do you think that I, Mao Shi, am a piece of trash?” Mao Shi laughed coldly.

A rush of true energy came flooding out of his dantian, covering his arm, which he swung toward Bu Fang, intending to teach him a lesson.

The audience was in an uproar!

He actually made a move! This was too..... exciting!

How would the dark horse chef react? After all, his strength was quite weak.

Out of everyone present, maybe only Nangong Wuque wasn’t worried about Bu Fang.

Weng...

A strange wave of fluctuation was suddenly released.

“Mao Shi! Stop now!”

Just as Mao Shi’s palm was about to approach Bu Fang, the former stopped.

Behind him, a few shouts could be heard as two figures darted over quickly. An Sheng arrived with a face full of anxiousness, and behind her followed Mu Bai, who gave people a feeling like a spring breeze.

Mu Bai was satisfied. No one would avoid giving him face, so even this Mao Shi held his hand. It was just that... when he looked over at Mao Shi, he was slightly shocked. He realized that Mao Shi’s entire body was stiff beyond comparison, and cold sweat fell from his forehead, dripping onto the floor.

En? What was going on there?

An Sheng and Mu Bai both noticed this strange phenomenon but did not know the cause behind it. Mao Shi felt like he had descended into an ice cave, from within his eyes emerged fear, which made him feel suffocated.

That woman... That terrifying woman, exactly what was she!

How could she be so terrifying!

That gaze... made him feel like she was a devil who climbed out of hell, causing his heart to constrict, not daring to move a single muscle.

Bu Fang’s face remained normal. He lifted his hand, pressing it onto Mao Shi’s palm, and as he gently pressed down, he glanced at him, pulling up the corner of his lips as though he was mocking him. Then, he left along with the graceful Nethery, slowly disappearing from the eyes of the audience.

Nangong Wuque looked at the frozen-on-the-spot Mao Shi, as if he was looking at a retard.

“To think of making a move on Boss Bu in front of Big Sis Nethery... you really are naive.” Nangong Wuque sighed as he shook his head, then staggered off. “Ai yo, Big Boobs An... you came, your flower guardian actually wanted to make a move on Old Bu. His courage is there, a shame that... his brain isn’t!” Seeing An Sheng rushing over, Nangong Wuque said laughingly.

Big what! To hell with your big boobs! Sorceress An Sheng glared at Nangong Wuque, waving her fists at him, but he ran off while laughing.

Looking at Nangong Wuque’s fading back, Sorceress An Sheng then slowly put down her arms, she glanced at the cold-sweating Mao Shi, who was still frozen on the spot, saying a short “humph”, then turned to leave.

Mu Bai frowned, because he felt that something wasn’t right. However, he did not dig in too deep, only patting Mao Shi’s shoulder, shaking the latter’s body.

The audience looked at the frozen Mao Shi, and their expressions were odd. Mao Shi was actually... frozen silly by one of Boss Bu’s gaze?

They didn’t know the truth behind the matter, but they had no need to clarify it. All they needed to know was that the talented alchemist Mao Shi was scared silly by the dark horse chef. The rumor began to spread like wildfire, spreading to the entire central square, becoming common news among the people.

What was more...

“The dark horse chef let out big words saying that if, in the next round, Mao Shi doesn’t cause his furnace to explode, it’ll be his loss?!”

“That domineering? As expected of the dark horse chef... sweeping through the rest while remaining invincible.

“Exploding a furnace, we can see another furnace exploding next round? How exciting! To see a talent explode his furnace... makes it even more so! I can’t wait for the next match to start!”

.....

That domineering sentence from Owner Bu was spread with breakneck speed. The people who wanted to watch the spectacle were so excited that they were about to yell out.

Just when he was about to reach Cloud Mist Restaurant, Bu Fang suddenly lagged. Just in front of him, two figures slowly walked over.

One in front, and one behind, one man and one woman.

That lady had fiery red hair, looking like a burning flame, which was extremely attractive. Her slender legs, white and crystal clear, wore a pair of red shoes, looking very seductive. Her lips were extremely red, and her beauty stood in its grandeur. This woman's temperament was exactly like those from the generation of emperors, proud and elegant.

Behind her was a hunching elder, who gave off a cold atmosphere. His eyes were unfathomable, giving people a feeling of being unable to see through him.

Bu Fang walked slowly, and that lady also walked toward him.

The distance between the two shrunk, and shrunk...

In the end, the two brushed by each other's shoulder.

Neither stopped. Both continued making their way forward.

"Old Fox, just now the two that passed by... one of them has the fluctuations of the Shura Tower." The Saintess of Shura played with her slender fingers, and her fingernails that were painted red shone with a bizarre light, as if they were fresh blood.

"Yes, my saintess, on that youth, there was indeed the fluctuations of the Shura Tower..." the old servant respectfully said.

"Looks like that Tong He didn't lie to me... Since that youth is the owner of that little store, then that lady following behind him must be the Netherworld woman that Tong He was talking about, right?"

“Within the Netherworld Ship from the secret realm came the Netherworld woman. My lord saintess, that lady is not simple. I’m afraid it’ll be a difficult entanglement... Tong He actually did things right this time around. If we had moved hastily, we might have been unable to snatch the Shura Tower,” the old servant commented seriously.

His cultivation was strong, but the Netherworld woman’s strength left him trembling.

“Hu... Then there’s no need to rush. Take things slow. Isn’t that little store owner taking part in the Magical Hand Conference? Watch him carefully... As long as the Netherworld woman isn’t by his side, then we can make a move, directly catching that little shop owner... To actually use the Shura Tower as a pendant... that guy sure is big-hearted.”

The red lips of the Shura Saintess rose as she let out a breathtaking smile.

Behind her, the old servant bent his back, nodding his head.

“Yes, my saintess.”

Chapter 535: To Help you Win Against that Chef..... It’s Good Stuff

Bu Fang and Nethery returned to the restaurant straightaway, without taking note of the lady who had brushed past their shoulders.

Although the woman’s features were fairly stunning, Bu Fang paid her no mind.

Nethery—who was a lady herself, albeit one with a cold attitude—also did not think much of the saintess; at that moment, all she thought about was the fragrant Dragon Blood Rice.

Ever since she began to follow Bu Fang, the spirit energy in her body had always been constantly refilled, so she no longer had to worry about the backlash. This made her extremely satisfied; this lifestyle was pretty good for her.

The fact that her face got rosier by the day was a testament to this.

When the two returned to the restaurant, they found Lord Dog lazily lying below the Path-Understanding Tree, having good dreams. “This lazy dog...”

Bu Fang went to the kitchen and washed his hands, then began to cook Lord Dog’s Sweet ‘n’ Sour Ribs and Nethery’s Dragon Blood Rice.

As he carried the dishes out of the kitchen, the sleeping Lord Dog seemed to have an epiphany, and its eyes flew open. The plump dog excitedly rushed over to the table and stared at Bu Fang, with its tongue hanging out.

This dog could never sleep when he perceived food, eh...

Eat, then sleep. Sleep, then eat... The lazy dog’s figure grew plumper by the day, and now, it was a certified fat dog.

To think that when he first saw Blacky back then, it was such a slender dog.

Bu Fang shook his head as he watched the happy Blacky scarf its food down, then he sighed and turned to look at Nethery. Wasn’t her appetite even greater than that dog’s...

Bu Fang stared blankly. He looked at the glamorous Nethery, then at the fat dog, and back to Nethery again.

Nethery was still as slender as ever, but if she kept this gluttonous attitude up, wouldn’t she end up as fat as that fat dog?

No way! That was a sight that would hurt the eyes. It seemed he needed to control Nethery’s diet in the future. Nethery might not care about her figure, but as her boss, he felt the responsibility to show a little care for his workers.

When Nethery and Lord Dog finished their meals, they both lazily stretched at the same time, then the dog went back beneath the Path-Understanding Tree, while the Netherworld woman went into the Netherworld Ship. Both were of the same mind: they were going to sleep.

Bu Fang was speechless as he cleaned up the tableware. These two lazy fellows...

After packing the tableware, Bu Fang returned to the kitchen. Whitey stood at its usual spot, beside the kitchen door, with Shrimpy laying atop its head, snoozing out bubbles.

There was another lazy fellow there too, a prawn...

Bu Fang found it funny that he was taking care of three lazy beings. Unlike those three, who only knew how to sleep, Whitey was much better.

After giving Whitey's belly a slight rub, Bu Fang stood before the stove, pondering what he should cook next. He initially did not plan to participate in the next round.

However, Mao Shi's words made him a little uncomfortable, so Bu Fang felt he ought to teach the kid a little lesson; if he let Mao Shi taste despair, he would understand the terror that a chef could pose.

Bu Fang rubbed his chin, contemplating seriously.

Suddenly, his eyes lit up as though he had thought of something, and he hurriedly asked the system a question, in excitement:

"System, the Magic Hand Conference has crystals as rewards. Do these crystals count as part of the business's revenue?" Bu Fang asked seriously, as this was something extremely important.

The system did not reply immediately. It was silent for a while before it proceeded to answer Bu Fang's question:

"It counts... The crystals obtained from ranking in the Magical Hands Conference will be counted into the host's business revenue."

Bu Fang was silent, but he was overjoyed on the inside. He had only just thought of that and decided to ask. He did not think that the crystal rewards from the Magical Hands Conference would be counted as part of his business revenue.

Now, he really had to take part in the competition; even if it was just for the crystals, he would see the competition through till the end.

For the crystals!

It was all for the crystals!

Bu Fang clenched his fists, and his face turned serious.

Crystals were the most beautiful things in this world.

Since he had already uttered such big words, Bu Fang knew that he had to take things seriously if he did not want to lose face. He had to try his hardest to get his opponent to blow up their furnace.

Should he cook another spicy dish? Or, should he cook another stinky dish like Stinky Tofu, one that denied the possibility of having any friends? Or perhaps should he cook another fragrant dish that brought one a countless number of friends...

As these thoughts ran through his mind, Bu Fang felt that if he did one of these, his chances of victory would still be pretty low; after all, Mao Shi's level of skill at alchemy was pretty high, so he wouldn't be so easily affected.

Such a normal impact may have no influence on him.

Bu Fang twirled the knife in his hand as he slowly paced around the kitchen, seriously contemplating this conundrum.

If Mao Shi's furnace did not explode, he would be the one who lost; thus, he would have to make an extremely stimulating dish. However, making a dish capable of causing Mao Shi to blow up his own furnace... was a difficult task to accomplish. He was currently unable to come up with any dishes that could do that.

Mao Shi had a high cultivation level, strong vitality, and lots of energy; an ordinary dish would have no effect on him.

This gave Bu Fang a headache.

Even after twirling the knife in his grip a few more times, Bu Fang still had not come up with anything. He continued to think as he put back the Black Turtle Constellation Wok and the Golden Dragon Bone Kitchen Knife, then returned to his room. He proceeded to have a warm shower, and after that, he walked to his bed.

Even after towel-drying his moist hair, Bu Fang still had not come up with any ideas.

In the end, he lay on his bed and fell asleep, temporarily discarding the problem that has brought him nothing but headaches.

The remaining two days flew by quickly. In these two days, Bu Fang kept thinking about the dish to cook. While he was contemplating, the top ten matches of the Magical Hand Conference ended.

After that, the names of the top five were released.

The names for the next match were also released. Out of the five contestants, only one would advance to the next round without having to take part in a match.

The person who obtained this luxury was not Bu Fang; it was Mu Bai.

Who would have known that this guy whose alchemy skills was already so good and he would have such luck as well, instantly advancing to the top three without doing anything...

When the other contestants heard the news, they heaved sighs of relief. This way, they would not meet Mu Bai, hence they have avoided elimination.

Bu Fang's opponent had also been determined; it was Mao Shi, the—arrogant guy.

This matchup did not come as a surprise to anyone, but despite that, everyone was still very excited, especially the audience. They had all watched that scene where Mao Shi made a move on Bu Fang. They knew that Bu Fang and Mao Shi disliked each other, so in a match where both of them were pitted against each other, there was bound to be a huge clash.

Furthermore, Bu Fang had told Mao Shi that If his furnace didn't explode, it would be Bu Fang's loss; such strong words made them look forward to the match all the more.

On the second day, Nangong Wuque had run over, in excitement, to tell Bu Fang the news. He waved his clenched fists as he urged Bu Fang to destroy Mao Shi, the boastful guy.

Bu Fang did not react any differently. At that point, he was still thinking of what dish to cook.

He was even ready to take out Buddha Jumps Over the Wall Soup—his killing move. If he made the Buddha Jumps Over the Wall Soup, he would easily win against Mao Shi; however, for him to make Mao Shi to blow up his furnace... would be difficult, so it gave Bu Fang a persistent headache.

As though he knew Bu Fang's current predicament, Nangong Wuque quieted down and pondered for a long while; then, he patted his chest and told Bu Fang, with certainty, that he would provide an ingredient which would leave him satisfied.

Bu Fang was confused; he could not understand the meaning behind Nangong Wuque's words.

However, Nangong Wuque did not explain. He only gave Bu Fang an understanding gaze, then he walked off proudly...

Bu Fang suddenly felt like that guy was about to stir up something.

...

Within Heavenly Shine City's battleship, Mao Shi's hair was scattered, and his eyes were bloodshot. In his hand, there was a blazing black flame, which caused the air on its surrounding to distort.

In front of him was a huge alchemy furnace. Countless medicinal herbs were thrown in, and with a ferocious expression, he began to refine the ingredients within the furnace, causing it to melt into drops of medicinal liquid.

Weng!

The alchemy furnace slammed heavily onto the floor of the secret room, giving off a loud “hong” sound, and green smoke gushed out of it.

Mao Shi felt as though his mental force was boiling, and the true energy within his body fluctuated constantly.

“Goddamn... It can’t go on like this. The mental energy is still unstable; this will make me vulnerable. If the chef finds that opening, I will be finished. This match... I can only win, not lose!” Mao Shi sighed with his face pale.

He had been practicing and training his mental force relentlessly. He trained the perseverance level of his mental force so that it would not be influenced by anything.

After a period of time, the door to the secret room was pushed open. Mao Shi walked out completely soaked in his own sweat. His eyes were slightly bloodshot, and he was out of breath. He was still unable to solve that problem. He could feel the presence of his flaw, and he was afraid that Bu Fang would find it and make him blow up his furnace. When that happened, it was not only his furnace that would blow up; his reputation would blow up along with it.

He would then become another stepping stone for the chef.

Suddenly, Mao Shi was jolted out of his reverie and narrowed his eyes as he looked into the distance.

From there, two figures were walking over.

“Xiong Shi? Are you looking for me?” Mao Shi asked with his hoarse voice.

Xiong Shi was dispirited, of course. He had been that way since his big bear was killed and made into a dish in front of him. That was a feeling of sorrow that could not be expressed with words. Hence, there would be something wrong with him if he wasn’t dispirited over that.

“Senior Mao is having a headache over how he would deal with that chef?” Xiong Shi asked, lowering his head to look at Mao Shi.

Mao Shi only glanced at Xiong Shi before sneering. “Do you have an idea? I only remember the chef wiping the floor with you...”

Xiong Shi paused, feeling a little depressed. That was his mistake. He had thought that his big bear had run off to look for a female; who knew it would end up becoming an ingredient? Completely caught off guard, a heavy blow was done to his mental force.

That was what caused him to almost blow up his furnace; this was what caused him to lose... It was why he had sought death by using the Sorrowful Orchid...

That alone was adding a cherry atop the chef’s victory. If he hadn’t blown up his furnace after all that, he would feel sorry for himself.

Although Xiong Shi was depressed, he didn’t say any more. He turned around, and a hunched figure appeared from behind him.

Mao Shi was now able to see an elderly man, who had a hunched back, staring at him with a solemn expression.

Suddenly, the elderly’s hands moved, bringing out a red jade bottle, which he hurled toward Mao Shi, who understood the meaning behind his actions and caught the bottle. When he opened his palms to examine the bottle, his eyes widened.

“What is this?” Mao Shi asked, after taking a deep breath.

The hunched elderly’s wrinkled face suddenly quivered, and the corners of his lips curled up, saying, “Weren’t you having a headache over how you would deal with that chef? This is something that can help you win. It is something good.”

“Blood Fire... Shura pill... You are someone from Shura City?” Mao Shi exclaimed with wide eyes once he opened the jade bottle and tipped it over his palm, causing a scalding hot pill to roll out onto it.

Chapter 536: Lord Dog and Chicken

“Blood Fire Shura Pill! This is the pill you Shura give to people on death row. Why would you dare recommend such a pill to me?!”

When Mao Shi looked at the blood-red pill atop his palm, strong killing intent flickered in his eyes. He balled the hand into a fist, and his true energy surged, reducing the blood-red pill to dust.

After that, he hurled the jade pill bottle back to the old man, who had a hunch back.

The old man’s wrinkly face contorted slightly, and his eyes narrowed into slits as he caught the jade pill bottle.

“Since you already know about the Blood Fire Shura Pill, then you should clearly understand its effects, right? Right now, this is the elixir most suitable to help you. You should already understand this clearly,” said the old man, with a slight smile.

“Do you take me for a fool? Once this pill is consumed, it would allow one’s vitality to surge, but once its effectiveness wears off, the consumer would be rendered listless for half a month! Do I need to go that far for a chef?!” Mao Shi glared at the elderly and snorted!

Xiong Shi, who stood at the side, did not say a thing; even he did not know what to say.

When the old man came to look for him, Xiong Shi was wallowing in his sorrow; thus, when the elderly asked him if he desired revenge, he thought of his big bear and readily agreed. He did not think that the old man’s offer of revenge would contain this method...

“I’ll tell you the truth: you can’t win against that chef,” the old man said. “If you don’t take this elixir, you will lose, and you will lose very badly.”

“How could I, Mao Shi, possibly lose?! You... don’t be an alarmist, you disgusting fellow from Shura City!” Mao Shi roared angrily, and true energy began to surge from him, ready to send this elderly flying.

However, all the old man did was lightly wave his palm, and Mao Shi suddenly felt his energy being suppressed; it was literally being forced back into his body.

It was so unbearable, he almost spat out blood!

Deng! Deng!

Mao Shi took a few steps backward and fell on his butt, then he raised his head and looked at the old man with an expression of disbelief.

“You youngsters... really have no manners; you are all so full of yourselves. That is your greatest fault, and it is also the reason why you have never been able to match up to Mu Bai. Tomorrow, you will realize... that you can’t even beat that chef,” the old man said, slowly retracting his palm.

He coughed lightly, and the blood-red jade bottle rolled right in front of Mao Shi, coming to a stop at Mao Shi’s feet.

“I’ll gift you this elixir. Whether you take it or not is up to you.”

After he had said that, the hunched old man placed his arms behind his back and slowly exited the battleship, then his figure quickly faded into the distance.

Xiong Shi stood rooted to the spot. Recent events had unfolded too quickly. He never thought that Mao Shi would be so imposing, neither did he think the old man would be so unfathomable.

“This...” Mao Shi slapped his cheeks and stared at the old man’s retreating figure, with a confused expression. However, he gritted his teeth and slowly picked up the blood-red jade pill bottle. He glanced at it for a bit, then he looked in the direction the old man had vanished.

His gaze deepened.

....

When Bu Fang was done with business for the day, he walked forward to close the restaurant’s bronze gates; however, just as he was about to shut the gates, he spotted Nangong Wuque in the distance, waving his arms as he raced to the restaurant.

“Old Bu! Wait a minute!”

Nangong Wuque hollered.

The rays from the setting sun shone down on Nangong Wuque, who was running with all his might. This created an abnormally elongated shadow which was flailing around. It was a bit comical.

Bu Fang was slightly dazed at the sight. After he regained his concentration, he expressionlessly turned around and, with a loud bang, shut the bronze gates.

“Shit! Old Bu, you are not kind at all! How could you close the gate knowing it’s me?!” Nangong Wuque froze, facing the shut gates with a look of shock.

Peng, peng, peng!

After he knocked loudly for a while, the gates were slowly opened. There was an expressionless but beautiful face beyond the bronze gate.

“Hey! Big Sis Nethery, what a coincidence! To think that you were also here.” When Nangong Wuque realized it was Nethery who opened the gates, he froze for a moment before speaking awkwardly.

Bu Fang pulled out a chair and leaned on it, watching Nangong Wuque with a calm expression.

“Speak; what have you come to find me for? The restaurant’s opening hours have already ended,” Bu Fang said.

Nangong Wuque furrowed his eyebrows, shooting Bu Fang a meaningful glance. He walked over to pull out a chair and sat beside Bu Fang. After looking around the surroundings mysteriously, he whispered to Bu Fang:

“Old Bu... let me show you something good!”

After saying that, he smiled in a creepy manner.

Bu Fang froze. Something good? What was that something good?

“Weren’t you pondering about an ingredient to use for the competition? I have brought it for you... here, open your eyes for a bit,” Nangong Wuque said.

Ingredient? Nangong Wuque had brought him an ingredient? Now there was some meaning!

Bu Fang became curious, and he tilted his head, looking at Nangong Wuque.

Nangong Wuque couldn’t wipe the smile off his face. He rapidly glanced at the gate, and his hands began to glow as he took something, which seemed to flap rapidly, out from his spatial spirit tool.

“Ge ge ge...”

Nangong Wuque held the figure tightly, and the corners of his lips curled upwards into a silly smile. The thing in his grasp was struggling, causing its feathers to scatter all around.

This...

Bu Fang’s pupils dilated when he saw what it was. “This little thing... isn’t it the mystical ingredient from legends... Eight Treasures Chicken?!”

That’s right; what Nangong Wuque held in his hands was a chicken—which had colorful feathers.

The plump chicken flapped its wings, earnestly putting on a struggle, and it cried out non-stop. “Ge ge ge”. Furthermore, this Eight Treasures Chicken was missing a wing. Its tiny eyes stared at Nangong Wuque as though he was a demon; it was terrified.

The Eight Treasures Chicken was a divine ingredient. Unlike the divine big bear, this chicken had much more flavor. The meat of the divine big bear could not be considered mouth-watering, but that was not the case for the Eight Treasures Chicken.

The Eight Treasures Chicken had the most flavor of any ingredient in the human world!

This was an ingredient truly hard to come by!

Nangong Wuque had actually managed to catch this Eight Treasures Chicken! After it was cooked, it would become a very delicious dish.

Gulp.

Bu Fang pursed his lips, and his eyes lit up.

Seeing this, the Eight Treasures Chicken got frightened again and began to cluck louder! It did not stop flapping its wings, causing its colorful feathers to scatter about.

“Stop making a fuss! Give Owner Bu a smile.” Nangong Wuque gripped the Eight Treasures Chicken by its little head and lifted it up to face Bu Fang.

The Eight Treasures Chicken went wide-eyed, and it opened its beaks wide in horror. Its clawed-legs crumpled in fright.

Don’t look at me like that. I’m just a damn chicken. The Eight Treasures Chicken felt as though a thousand black dogs had flown past its head.

It initially thought that, since Jinx had left the palace, it could enjoy a leisurely lifestyle, eating some spirit wheat and basking in the sun during the day, then enjoying a good rest in its nest at night.

However, who would have thought that this unlucky comet would return, grab it by its wings, and run off?

That look terrified the chicken! Don’t eat chicken! I’m just a chicken with no dreams!

“Old Bu, take a look, isn’t it plump? With this little guy, you can finish off that Mao Shi tomorrow!” Nangong Wuque looked at Bu Fang with shiny eyes.

As he took the chicken from Nangong Wuque, Bu Fang pursed his lips and nodded in satisfaction. The Eight Treasures Chicken was a really high-quality ingredient. This would explain why even the system had a good review of it.

“Why is this chicken missing a wing?” Bu Fang asked, curiously.

“Ehhh... Don’t sweat over the small details. I ate it a while ago, and... it hasn’t grown back since then!” Nangong Wuque’s mouth twitched as he spoke.

The chicken was really pitiful. How did it have the misfortune of meeting this happy-go-lucky guy, Nangong Wuque?

Why would someone eat only one wing from a chicken? That was not right. It was the wrong way to eat chickens.

However, when Bu Fang looked at the Eight Treasures Chicken, he felt happy and had the urge to experiment with it. With that chicken in his possession, his victory in the next day’s match was guaranteed...

He had also decided on the dish he would make the next day.

“Okay; leave the chicken here and go back first. Tomorrow, all you need to do is watch. If his furnace doesn’t explode, it’ll be my loss,” Bu Fang calmly said.

When Nangong Wuque heard this, his eyes instantly lit up. After letting go of the Eight Treasures Chicken, he gave Bu Fang a thumbs up. “Old Bu, I, Nangong Wuque, look up to you highly. All the best!”

Saying so, Nangong Wuque rose and began to head to the gate.

When he reached the restaurant’s bronze gates, he turned around and said, “Old Bu, you have to give this Eight Treasures Chicken the best treatment; after all, it has only one life.”

With a loud peng, the bronze gates were closed shut.

“Ge ge ge...”

When the Eight Treasures Chicken saw Nangong Wuque leave, it visibly relaxed. However, when it turned around and saw Bu Fang looking at it, it began to thrash about and flap its wings wildly, struggling frantically.

“Eight Treasures Chicken... Bu Fang, young lad, if this chicken is made into a Sweet ‘n’ Sour Ribs dish, it would taste even better than Sweet ‘n’ Sour Dragon Meat Ribs, right?”

No one knew when Blacky had arrived beside Bu Fang. It was staring at the Eight Treasures Chicken with starry eyes.

“Well, that is a matter course; after all, it is an Eight Treasures Chicken—an extremely famous ingredient. Although this Eight Treasures Chicken is only a mixed-blood Eight Treasures Chicken, not a purebred one, its taste is not something that ordinary dragon meat can be compared to. However, if you happen to come across the meat of a real dragon... then the Sweet ‘n’ Sour Dragon Meat Ribs you would make from it would be much better than a dish made with this chicken,” Bu Fang replied and stood up.

Lord Dog rolled his eyes at that. “Bu Fang, you young lad... do you think a real dragon is a large lettuce? How could it be possible to easily find the meat of a real dragon?”

“Okay, then. This chicken is slightly restless. I’ll let you give it some guidance tonight, yes... Make it more nervous; this will preserve the perfection of its meat. Tomorrow, I’ll make an extremely delicious meal with it,” Bu Fang said to Blacky. The corners of his lips curled upwards as he hurled the struggling chicken toward Lord Dog.

The Eight Treasures Chicken drew a beautiful arc in the air and landed in front of the black dog. When the chicken landed, it raised its head and saw Lord Dog’s starry eyes.

“Ge ge ge.... Ge?”

Lord Dog’s eyes gleamed dangerously, and its really sharp canines were bared. After that, it barked.

“Woof!”

“Ge?!!”

In the next moment, the chicken hurriedly moved to scamper, and the dog pounced.

The Eight Treasures Chicken was so scared, its nerves were stretched taut. It flapped its wings and clucked loudly as it fled with all its might.

Lord Dog’s fur was standing on end, and it was excited beyond comparison. It barked loudly while chasing the chicken.

Nethery watched this scene expressionlessly but stunned. After a while, however, she turned around and returned to the Netherworld Ship.

Bu Fang was also speechless. This fat dog... Was it actually bullying a chicken that had no dreams?

“Hu. Fat dog, you better pay attention. Don’t eat this chicken, alright? If you do, you won’t get any Sweet ‘n’ Sour Ribs for a month.” Bu Fang, who had been moving to the kitchen, said to Lord Dog with a serious tone of voice.

Lord Dog’s froze in its steps, and drool stopped dripping down its hanging tongue.

Between this uncooked chicken and the Sweet ‘n’ Sour Ribs, the dog preferred the latter.

When he spotted the situation deescalate, Bu Fang nodded and entered the kitchen, with the intention of starting his research on the next day’s dish. With the Eight Treasures Chicken in his possession, Bu Fang now had the confidence to make Mao Shi... blow up his furnace!

If his furnace doesn’t explode, it’ll be my loss!

Chapter 537: Bullish Chef

On the second day, the sun had just risen. As the warm sunlight landed on Bu Fang's face, he felt an itchy feeling on it.

Opening his eyes, he crawled out of bed slowly before stretching his waist. After washing up, Bu Fang left the room and he went toward the restaurant.

That day, the restaurant seemed extremely quiet and Bu Fang became slightly suspicious. It had been an extremely noisy night... Why was it so quiet now?

Thinking hard about it, Bu Fang looked into the Cloud Mist Restaurant. Before long, he found the Eight Treasures Chicken.

In the distance, Lord Dog was lying under the Path-Understanding Tree as it slept. Sounds of steady breathing could be heard coming from Lord Dog's nose.

One of its paws were pressing on top of the head of the Eight Treasures Chicken.

As its head was pressed on the ground, the Eight Treasures Chicken had a depressed expression on its face. Its wings were drooping and there were feathers all over the ground. Occasionally, its body would twitch.

Its tiny eyes glared at Lord Dog and there was an enraged expression on its face.

It was too scary... It was really frightening. The dog was an extremely fearsome monster!

Bu Fang yawned as he walked toward the Eight Treasures Chicken. Standing in front of the chicken, he sighed as he stretched out his hand to rub its head. However, the Eight Treasures Chicken still had a depressed expression on its face.

"It has been hard on you... You managed to safely make it through the night. Tsk... This chicken meat is really firm!"

Bu Fang praised the Eight Treasures Chicken. He didn't store the Eight Treasures Chicken back into the system's dimensional space, but only walked into the kitchen with a contented expression on his face.

Preparing a portion of Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs and Dragon Blood Rice, he carried two porcelain plates out of the kitchen.

Lord Dog and Nethery were already sitting on the table when Bu Fang came out of the kitchen.

“Blacky’s Sweet ‘n’ Sour Ribs... This is Nethery’s Dragon Blood Rice...”

Nethery looked at the porcelain plate in front of her which had only half a portion of Dragon Blood Rice left. A displeased expression instantly formed on her exquisite face and she raised her head to glare at Bu Fang.

Reaching out his hand, Bu Fang patted Nethery’s head. “Hey, do you want to turn into a fatty like this fat dog? For the sake of your figure, you should eat less...”

Nethery was extremely angry! She would rather turn into a fatty like that fat dog sitting beside her!

She angrily tilted her head and directed her anger into the plate of Dragon Blood Rice. The way she ate showed how angry she was.

The corner of Lord Dog’s mouth curled upwards and it revealed a mocking smile. It seemed as though it was extremely proud of the fats on its body as it laughed at Nethery. The lumps of fat on its body jiggled around.

It made Nethery even angrier...

Bu Fang returned to the kitchen and, after making his preparations, he grabbed the Eight Treasures Chicken and walked out of the restaurant.

He slowly walked toward the central plaza. Today was the day he would compete against Mao Shi. Bu Fang was taking this round pretty seriously as he had already made a promise. If he wasn’t able to uphold the promise he made, he would feel extremely embarrassed.

He was someone who kept his word.

The Eight Treasures Chicken seemed to be extremely active as its eyes rolled around continuously.

Bu Fang grabbed the chicken's head and walked towards the small path in the middle of the tall buildings. As it became brighter and brighter, he slowly made his way into the central plaza.

In the instant he entered the plaza, deafening cheers filled the arena. A giant stage was erected in the middle of the plaza and, surrounding the stage, the audience stand was densely packed. It was completely filled and the audience members were incomparably excited. When they saw Bu Fang, all of them started screaming.

There were countless people watching this match.

It was because of a single sentence from Bu Fang.

“If your furnace doesn't explode, count it as my loss.”

Wasn't he extremely domineering? Wasn't he extremely arrogant?

Facing a genius alchemist who had the qualifications to fight for the top spot, Bu Fang actually dared to say something like that. This chef was pretty awesome! There were people who admired Bu Fang's domineering attitude. Facing the genius alchemist, Mao Shi, he didn't shrink back at all. Instead, he made a ruthless oath.

Of course, there were others who felt that Bu Fang was only trying to act cool. After all, Mao Shi was not someone whose furnace exploded in the past due to Bu Fang's actions. He was a true genius. He was someone who had the chance to fight for the top spot with Mu Bai... As a genius, he was definitely outstanding in some fields, otherwise, how would he be considered a genius?

If Bu Fang wanted to cause Mao Shi's furnace to explode, it was almost impossible.

Everyone thought that it was something Bu Fang said impulsively.

It could be said that there were countless people who were watching this competition. Almost everyone in the Pill Palace was watching this round.

As of today, there were many people who were rooting for Bu Fang in the Pill Palace. However, the number of people who supported him was much lesser than the number of people who supported Mao Shi. After all, Mao Shi was an extremely popular alchemist in the Pill Palace. He naturally had many supporters. Even though there were more people who were supporters of Mu Bai, the number of supporters he had was naturally far more than Bu Fang, who was someone who had just appeared in the spotlight.

“That chef is crazy! He will know the meaning of despair soon enough!”

“It’s finally about to begin. We are going to see how Senior Brother Mao will ruthlessly destroy this chef! I’m so excited!”

“Let Senior Brother Mao protect the dignity of us alchemists!”

“Defeat the public enemy of the alchemists! Senior Brother Mao, it’s time for you to unleash your true power!”

...

The audience members were chattering among themselves and they seemed to be extremely excited. It didn’t matter if they were located within the projection array or not... They were all equally excited.

Albeit the number of people who supported Mao Shi far outstripped the number of people who supported Bu Fang, the latter was extremely calm. He held onto the Eight Treasures Chicken as he walked into the plaza.

In the distance, Nangong Wuque waved his hands at Bu Fang.

“Old Bu, do your best! Screw that pretentious bastard!” Nangong Wuque yelled at the top of his lungs. The face of the alchemists from Heavenly Shine City instantly turned black.

Bu Fang nodded his head but didn’t speak much.

In the audience stand, the Ancient Shura City’s Saintess’ eyelashes trembled as her gaze landed on Bu Fang.

The hunchbacked elder who was sitting beside her was expressionless.

“Old monster, is everything ready?” The red lips of the Saintess moved as she lazily said. One of her slender legs rose as it crossed over the top of her other leg. Her slippery skirt slipped slightly and her snow-white skin was revealed to the world.

This scene caused many audience member’s eyes to widen and they swallowed mouthfuls of saliva.

The Ancient Shura City’s Saintess didn’t mind at all as she conversed with the old laborer calmly.

“It has already been prepared... This little chef is going to lose for sure,” the old servant said.

“Very good. After his first defeat in the competition, he will definitely be extremely disappointed. When that time comes, our chance will appear...”

The Saintess giggled.

“Saintess, since the Netherworld Woman isn’t here today, we can directly take action.”

“Don’t mess around... This is a Pill City after all. Even though our Ancient Shura City isn’t afraid of the Pill Palace, it would be troublesome for us to directly kidnap a competitor in the middle of a Pill City. We should find an opportunity to take action,” the Saintess lazily said.

The old servant’s face which was full of wrinkles scrunched together for a moment. In the next instant, his face returned to normal and he sighed, “Fine.”

After that, the gazes of the two of them landed on the stage.

Bu Fang walked up the stage as he held onto the Eight Treasures Chicken. He went to the spot allocated to him. When Mao Shi appeared, the entire audience stand erupted with cheers. All of them roared out crazily.

There were all kinds of encouragement thrown at Mao Shi and there were curses directed at Bu Fang.

“You should hurry up and admit defeat. If you don’t, you will regret it...”

Bu Fang glanced at Mao Shi and the corners of his lips curled upwards. “Your furnace is definitely going to explode.”

Humph!

Mao Shi sucked in a deep breath and he coldly harrumphed. He looked at Bu Fang with despise and turned around to walk toward his bronze platform.

In the sky, a warship slowly made its way into the central plaza and the five grandmasters gradually made their way out of the warship. Grandmaster Xuan Ming and the others arrived and they appeared as though they were immortals. After seriously discussing with each other, their gazes landed on the stage as they sat in their seats.

The person who was in charge of this round was still the head judge. He had an extremely solemn expression in his face as this round was going to be extraordinary. On one side, there was a genius alchemist. On the other, it was the biggest black horse in this Magical Hand Conference. The competition between the two of them would be extremely intense and the head judge didn’t dare to be careless at all.

He didn’t think that Bu Fang would lose. After all, he understood Bu Fang and he was sure that the chef was hiding something up his sleeves.

No one knew what this chef was going to cook for this round.

Chicken? Could it be that his dish had something to do with that chicken?

The head judge had noticed that chicken in Bu Fang’s hand a long time ago. He narrowed his eyes as he thought about something in his mind. That didn’t seem to be an ordinary chicken.

Mao Shi stood on his bronze platform and seemed extremely calm. Even though he was extremely arrogant at times, he was someone who would fully focus when he was refining elixirs. He meticulously took out all the medicinal ingredients which he had prepared in advance and laid them onto the bronze platform.

This time, he had to refine a three-mark spirit pill. It could be said that this was the highest grade of pill refined in this Magical Hand Conference.

The pressure on Mao Shi was extremely huge. After all, he was going to refine a three-mark spirit pill. He wasn't completely confident that he would be able to successfully refine it. Even though he never took this chef seriously, he knew that Bu Fang was not an easy opponent. Otherwise, he wouldn't have a headache as he thought of a way to deal with Bu Fang.

On the other side, Bu Fang took out many ingredients from the system's dimensional space. The dense spiritual energy enveloped Bu Fang's bronze platform and many people let out shrieks of surprise.

That was because they realized that every single one of Bu Fang's ingredient was of an extremely high grade. The spirit energy contained in them was extremely dense.

"Alright, will the two competitors take note, this round will decide whether or not you will advance into the finals. The winner will be promoted into the top three and will have the chance to fight for the first place in the competition against young master Mu Bai. The winner will receive the entry quota to the 'Heaven Secret Territory'. The winner will also receive a one-mark spirit pill prepared by the Pill Palace. Please do your best and fight for your honor!" The head judge stood in the middle of the stage as he solemnly declared to the two participants.

Even though his voice wasn't loud, the noise coming from the audience stand started to die down as he spoke.

After he was done, the audience erupted into cheers and they screamed continuously.

"Now, let the competition officially begin!"

"Wow!"

The cheers from the audience were deafening and seemed as though they were about to flip the sky.

Mao Shi's eyes became sharp and the true energy in his body started to surge. Raising his hand, a ball of black flame emerged from his palm. The terrifying heat immediately caused the temperature in the plaza to rise by a few degrees!

A Heaven and Earth Obsidian Flame, the Universal Dark Fire, had appeared!

Chapter 538: What Happened To The Trust Between Human And Chicken?

Heaven and Earth Obsidian Flame, born from between heaven and earth, was a treasure which occurred naturally in the world. It carried a terrifying might and it was the alchemic fire that all alchemists longed for.

Within the Hidden Dragon Continent, the number of alchemic fire was limited. The number of people who managed to obtain a Heaven and Earth Obsidian Flame was extremely little.

The Universal Dark Fire was a bundle of black flames. It burned and brought with it an extremely high temperature. As Mao Shi held it in his palm, the air around it started to distort.

So, Mao Shi also possessed a Heaven and Earth Obsidian Flame. It was the reason he was qualified to challenge Mu Bai... Of course, it was his trump card. However, in order to deal with this chef, Bu Fang, Mao Shi didn't hesitate to bring out his Heaven and Earth Obsidian Flame.

Deeply sighing, Mao Shi's eyes fell onto Bu Fang's body. With a wave of his hand, the pitch-black flames rose into the sky as a loud roar could be heard. As it charged into the heavy alchemy furnace, a loud rumbling sound resounded.

Afterward, a loud blast echoed in the air and reverberated in the ears of everyone present for quite some time.

Within the alchemy furnace, the light of the flames suddenly flourished.

One by one, Mao Shi threw the spirit herbs into the furnace. In an instant, the herbs were swallowed up by the pitch-black Heaven and Earth Obsidian Flame. Cracking sounds could be heard constantly.

Mao Shi's eyes were cold and his gaze was extremely deep. After staring at Bu Fang for a long time, he turned away and focused all his attention into his furnace.

In this match, there could only be one outcome. Mao Shi knew that he had no other option other than to win and crush Bu Fang.

The clamor which came from the audience stand gradually started to die down and they stared at Mao Shi who had turned completely serious. They didn't even dare to breathe loudly.

After some time, many people turned and looked at Bu Fang's bronze platform.

When they saw what Bu Fang was doing, they became dazed and stunned. They were unable to think clearly for a moment.

Bu Fang released the Eight Treasures Chicken and, after rubbing its head, pulled out all of the ingredients which he had prepared in advance. The Eight Treasures Chicken shrunk its chicken legs as it stared at Bu Fang with its small eyes. Bu Fang was retrieving his ingredients one by one from the system's storage space and the ingredients he took out made its eyes spin. There were many different kinds of spirit medicine stacked around it and the spiritual energy was extremely dense. All of the feathers on its body stood erect.

Among all the ingredients, there was a red colored fruit. It had a stunning bright red color and it was an eight-grade elixir, which contained extremely concentrated spirit energy.

There were also many dried black fruit and they were all very hard. They brought with them a medicinal scent which filled the air.

As the Eight Treasures Chicken was surrounded by the ingredients, it became confused...

All of a sudden, its body jolted. Its small eyes opened wide as it looked at the green smoke revolving around Bu Fang's hand. A heavy and pitch-black wok appeared and slammed against the bronze platform with a loud "bang".

The Eight Treasures Chicken was shocked and it couldn't control itself as it released a cry of surprise.

Bu Fang looked at the Eight Treasures Chicken with a deep gaze. The expression on his face caused a trace of terror to appear in the chicken's heart. That small trace started to develop into true fear as it felt that something bad was about to happen.

"Don't be scared, this will only take a moment."

Bu Fang saw that the Eight Treasures Chicken was scared and he reached out his hand to stroke its head. It was an attempt to calm the chicken...

The Eight Treasures Chicken began to calm down from Bu Fang's touch. Its feathers started to relax as its eyes narrowed.

Buzz!

An incomparably bright light flashed past and the Eight Treasures Chicken felt as though it was dunked into a pool of cold water.

Opening its beaks, it released a startled cry.

It saw that Bu Fang was holding an extremely sharp kitchen knife that was radiating a unique pressure. The aura the knife gave off made its heart beat faster... It was an extremely terrifying feeling! The Eight Treasures Chicken knew that if it was cut by that knife, it might be impossible for it to recover.

This kitchen knife.... was extremely dangerous!

Bu Fang's hand held onto the Dragon Bone Kitchen Knife as he flicked his wrists. In an instant, the Dragon Bone Kitchen Knife flashed and the blade moved in front of the Eight Treasures Chicken.

"Cluck cluck cluck?"

The Eight Treasures Chicken opened its eyes wide. Where was the trust between human and chicken? Why did you take out your kitchen knife? How could you be more despicable than the dog I met yesterday?

The Eight Treasure Chicken was originally a chicken with no dreams. However, a dream appeared in its mind in the instant it caught sight of the Dragon Bone Kitchen Knife. As for what the dream was, it was extremely simple. Its dream was simply not to be cut by that kitchen knife.

Raising its chicken head, its crown rustled in the wind as it flapped its wings. With a leap, the Eight Treasures Chicken left the bronze platform.

It flew!

It was actually able to support its plump body with only one of its wings... Flapping one wing, it flew out of the bronze platform.

The chicken flew away!

Under the gazes of the audience members, the chicken was flying with its dream!

Bu Fang stared at the Eight Treasures Chicken with a blank expression on his face as he looked at the chicken feathers which were falling onto the bronze platform.

The head judge froze and the audience was stunned. Bu Fang was confused as well...

Bu Fang held onto the Dragon Bone Kitchen Knife and he didn't know what to do.

"Eighty, come over here quickly... Don't run!"

By Fang's lips curled upwards. This restless chicken... He walked away from his bronze platform and approached the Eight Treasures Chicken.

The chicken raised its head as it glanced at Bu Fang. Shaking its chicken butt, its colorful feathers flew in the sky as it clucked at Bu Fang. It folded its wings as it started to run away from Bu Fang.

“What the hell? What is going on?”

“Am I watching a fake match? Did the chef’s chicken just run away?”

“What a proud chicken! It should be the role model for all the chickens in the world! A chicken that knows how to fight!”

....

The audience didn’t know whether to laugh or to cry. They felt as though they were watching a fake match.

No one expected that the black horse chef who didn’t make a mistake since the start of the competition would make a mistake when choosing his ingredients.

His ingredient which was the proud chicken actually ran away!

Watching Bu Fang creeping carefully toward the Eight Treasures Chicken, the audience couldn’t help but laugh... It was impossible to control their laughter as the chicken ran away again.

By Fang had only taken two steps before the Eight Treasures Chicken started running again. It ran around the platform.

It wanted to chase after its dreams!

It was now a chicken with dreams!

By Fang’s face blackened. His lips moved and his figure accelerated. With true energy spilling out, he moved toward the Eight Treasures Chicken like a bolt of lightning.

“Eighty, Stop running!”

No matter how Bu Fang called for it, the Eight Treasures Chicken didn’t look back at him. Instead, it started to run around the platform like a crazy chicken.

The head judge felt as though he shouldn't be laughing as it would convey the wrong message. However, he really couldn't control himself. He looked at the calm Bu Fang who was chasing after a chicken. Coupled with the fact that the chicken was shaking its butt at Bu Fang, the head judge felt as though it was hilarious.

Pu...

Finally, he couldn't take it any longer and he laughed out loud.

"Cluck cluck cluck!"

Suddenly, the head judge froze. He realized that the chicken was running straight at him and with a flap of its wings, it leaped up from the ground and its claws grabbed onto the head judge's head. With another leap, it started to run around the arena.

Bu Fang's lips curled upwards... This dumb judge, why don't you keep laughing?

The Eight Treasures Chicken was a divine beast, after all. Even though it had almost no combat abilities, its speed was extraordinary. Even experts from the Divine Physique Echelon realm would find it hard to catch up.

In an instant, the enraged judge joined in the chicken hunt and the two of them started to run around the platform. However, they were unable to catch the chicken.

Nangong Wuque sat on the platform as he laughed and slapped his thighs. He had never thought that something like that would ever occur. He was convinced that, with Bu Fang's method, there would be no problem when dealing with the Eight Treasures Chicken!

Originally, when he was at the Pill Palace, he had used various kinds of tricks to finally get a wing. When he compared himself to the chicken, he was extremely slow.

"Cluck cluck cluck!"

"Cluck cluck cluck cluck cluck..."

The chirping sound continuously rang out from the platform. The Eight Treasures Chicken was like a ray of light and it puffed out its chest. It seemed extremely proud as it chased after its dreams.

Mao Shi had no idea what was happening on the arena.

In his eyes, there seemed to be a pitch-black flame which was burning. The flame surged as Mao Shi's mental energy emerged from his body. It wrapped around the medicinal ingredients in the alchemy furnace as he threw them into the fire. Before long, only medicinal liquid remained.

The medicinal liquid rolled around in a grotesque pattern as it floated around in the furnace. It was an extremely colorful scene.

This was an extremely beautiful sight and Mao Shi was intoxicated. He became unable to pull himself out of it.

Mao Shi was someone who had always thought highly of himself and he only felt that Mu Bai was a worthy opponent. He didn't put Bu Fang in his eyes at all. He felt that it was pointless to compare a chef to an alchemist!

Just as he was about to focus on his refinement process, a weird sound appeared in his ear.

"What the hell? Where are the chicken cries coming from?"

Mao Shi froze for a moment. The chicken cries came too suddenly and they penetrated deep into his mind. He was caught completely off-guard.

In the next second, his pupils contracted and his breathing became a mess. His mental force was thrown into disarray.

"Ah! Where did this chicken come from? Why did it run into my alchemy furnace?"

A chicken stood on top of the heavy alchemy furnace with a proud expression. It raised its head as it puffed out its chest. Its neck shook back and forth.

Mao Shi's eyes opened wide and the chicken's eyes were huge as well. The chicken and the human both stared at each other awkwardly.

"Eighty, stop making a fuss. Other people are refining their elixir... You should be more serious!" From afar, Bu Fang saw this scene and he hurriedly took two steps forward. He was somewhat out of breath as he shouted at Eighty.

The Eight Treasures Chicken turned its head around and glanced at Bu Fang. the crown on its head waved around.

"Contestant Mao Shi, you have to remain calm. You are currently at the most important part of the refining process. Your heart needs to remain calm! Your mental energy cannot fluctuate too much..."

The head judge's heart constricted and he felt that something big was about to happen. He quickly advised Mao Shi.

"Eighty, be good. Stop causing trouble!"

Mao Shi took in a deep breath and he somehow managed to calm down.

"You stupid chef! Hurry up and take your chicken away!" Mao Shi said coldly. A pitch black flame revolved in his eyes.

"Okay... Eighty, did you hear that? That person despises you, hurry up and get back here!" Bu Fang walked toward Mao Shi's bronze platform as he commanded.

The Eight Treasures Chicken clucked at Bu Fang and turned its chicken head to look at Mao Shi. Staring back at the chicken, Mao Shi coldly harrumphed.

Suddenly, the Eight Treasures Chicken felt that Bu Fang was approaching. Opening its wing, its legs moved and it started to run away. As it took a step out, it jumped onto Mao Shi's head. It jumped as it tried to distance itself from Bu Fang but before it was able to run further, something shiny fell out from behind the Eight Treasures Chicken. It landed on top of Mao Shi's hair.

Bu Fang, Mao Shi, and even the audience froze.

In the next instant, Mao Shi's mental force erupted and the alchemy furnace started boiling.

An extremely furious roar rang out!

“This god damned chicken! You actually dare to shit on my head? Ahhh!”

Chapter 539: This Chicken Has To Die!

An awkward atmosphere filled the area.

Only Mao Shi's furious roar could be heard as it resounded in the entire plaza. Everyone looked at each other with blank expressions on their faces.

That chicken actually shat on Mao Shi's head?

Everyone had a weird expression on their face as they were completely speechless.

All of a sudden, everyone's eyes opened wide as they looked at where Mao Shi was standing. From there, the air started to shake. A roaring sound resounded in the ears of everyone around.

From within the alchemy furnace, a strong power started to surge. It seemed as though it was going to explode.

Bu Fang's eyes opened wide and he quickly took a step back.

The head judge pressed his lips together and helplessly sucked in a cold breath. He looked at Mao Shi, who had a resentful expression on his face. He was actually unable to restrain himself... As a result, the furnace was going to explode.

The roar which came from the furnace was extremely loud. Ripples of energy came from the platform as it rolled outwards. The pitch-black flames charged into the sky as it brought along with it a heatwave.

The heavy alchemy furnace in front of Mao Shi exploded into pieces and the medicinal powder scattered in all directions, engulfing the surroundings.

Everyone was stunned.

Mao Shi actually... His furnace actually exploded...

Bu Fang blinked his eyes and was surprised. This guy's furnace actually exploded? Wait a minute... Bu Fang wasn't the one to cause the explosion, instead, it was because of the Eight Treasures Chicken. The Eight Treasures Chicken was also sent flying by the explosion of the furnace. Opening its wings, it clucked a few times in the air and it was dazed.

Bu Fang woke up from his stunned state and regained his spirits. He moved quickly and took a step forward, catching the Eight Treasures Chicken in his arm.

When the Eight Treasures Chicken saw Bu Fang, its head drooped and it pretended to be dead.

Bu Fang was speechless. This chicken was really too brazen.

A gust of wind blew across the arena and it cleared away the black smoke which enveloped the platform. A figure who exuded endless pressure could be seen standing on the stage.

Mao Shi's eyes were spitting fire. His furnace exploded? His furnace had actually exploded!

It wasn't because of the dish Bu Fang cooked and it wasn't because of a mistake on his part. Instead, it was because a chicken that shat on his head!

He felt like his face was burning up. No matter how many excuses he thought of, the fact was that his furnace had exploded. Although it wasn't because of Bu Fang, when he recalled Bu Fang's words, he felt extremely frustrated.

“This chicken... This chicken has to die!”

Mao Shi’s gaze landed upon Bu Fang’s body and it was brimming with killing intent. He coldly declared.

“Contestant Mao Shi, calm down.... Now that your furnace has exploded, do you intend to continue this match?” The head judge asked awkwardly when he saw Mao Shi’s wretched appearance.

Was Bu Fang going to win like this? If he won like this, this match which had been highly anticipated would become boring.

Mao Shi shot a glance at the judge as he coldly said, “Of course this match continues... I haven’t lost!”

Buzz...

A wave of fluctuation appeared and a pitch-black alchemy furnace appeared in Mao Shi’s hand. He held onto the alchemy furnace as he ruthlessly smashed it onto the platform.

After the dust settled, Mao Shi’s face was as black as thunderclouds. However, his expression was as solemn as ever and it was as though he had made prior preparations. He took out the spirit herbs once again.

The audience members were all stunned and the head judge was completely speechless.

Bu Fang nudged the head of the Eight Treasures Chicken. He had a shocked expression on his face.

“This Mao Shi actually came prepared... Was he prepared for a furnace explosion?”

“As expected from the talented alchemist from our Heavenly Shine City. When he does things, he never neglects anything!”

“It looks like the chef is going to lose this time. Once a three-mark spirit pill is produced, he won’t stand a chance.”

....

The audience gradually recovered and they started to get heated up again. They chattered non-stop.

The head judge also recovered his spirit and lightly coughed a few times. Before long, he announced that the match would continue.

“This chicken has to die!” Mao Shi said as he coldly looked at Bu Fang.

He walked away from his bronze platform as he made his way toward Bu Fang. His killing intent locked onto the Eight Treasures Chicken.

Bu Fang frowned. How could he allow Mao Shi to kill the Eight Treasures Chicken? Although it was slightly restless, it was still his chicken!

“Sorry... This chicken cannot die.”

Bu Fang stood firm as his figure rapidly retreated. He chose to protect the Eight Treasures Chicken.

“If you want to kill the chicken and I allow you to do so, I, Bu Fang, will feel extremely embarrassed!”

Mao Shi stood still as his cold gaze locked onto Bu Fang. “Very good. If you really want to protect this chicken, you better not use it in this match. Since you want it to live, let it live! I’ll definitely kill the chicken after this match ends.”

Bu Fang froze and his eyes narrowed. This Mao Shi actually cornered him into a trap. He saw that the Eight Treasures Chicken was unusual and if Bu Fang were to use the chicken to cook a dish, the dish would definitely be extraordinary.

That was the reason Mao Shi tricked Bu Fang. After saying in front of so many people that he wouldn’t let the chicken die, Bu Fang couldn’t go back on his words.

“Will the two of you please return to your platforms... The competition is resuming,” said the head judge with a blank face.

Bu Fang's eyes narrowed and Mao Shi's gaze was cold. They stared at each other and it seemed as though there were explosions happening when their gazes met.

"Fine... If I use this chicken, I lose," Bu Fang said lightly.

After rubbing the head of the Eight Treasures Chicken, Bu Fang returned to his bronze platform. He placed the Eight Treasures Chicken at the side.

As his lips curled upwards, Bu Fang retrieved a huge cage from within the system's storage space.

Bu Fang pulled out a chicken whose body was covered in burning flames.

Although the Heavenly Flame Chicken was not as good as the Eight Treasures Chicken, Bu Fang had no choice. He had to cook a chicken.

In the end, Bu Fang got the chicken from the system.

The Eight Treasures Chicken lay at the side as it looked at Bu Fang who pulled out a flaming chicken. It seemed to have realized that it had just dodged a bullet. Its eyes started to spin around happily.

Bu Fang didn't pay attention to the Eight Treasures Chicken as he started to cook his dish. He opened his mouth and a golden flame instantly appeared. It rolled about as it burned majestically.

Buzz...

The Ten Thousand Bestial Flames was also a Heaven and Earth Obsidian Flame. The moment it started to burn below the wok, a mysterious tremor was produced.

Mao Shi froze and the Universal Dark Flames within his alchemy furnace began to stir around. It formed the image of a skull in front of his face.

The Ten Thousand Bestial Flame started to burn even more ferociously as it formed the image of an angry roaring beast. Even though it wasn't possible to tell the identity of the beast from the hazy figure formed by the flame, it gave off an intimidating pressure.

The two different types of Heaven and Earth Obsidian Flame seemed to be testing each other out. Their might clashed against each other.

When they saw the clash between the two different types of Heaven and Earth Obsidian Flame, the audience became extremely excited.

Bu Fang shot a glance at Mao Shi and started to cook his dish without bothering about anything else.

For starters, Bu Fang plucked out the feathers of the Heavenly Flame Chicken, and with a twist of his Dragon Bone Kitchen Knife, he dealt with the innards of the Heavenly Flame Chicken. He placed the entire chicken into the wok.

With a spin of the Dragon Bone Kitchen Knife, Bu Fang sliced the chicken's neck and forced the left wing into that opening. The tip of the wing came out from the beak of the chicken.

He did it for the other side of the wing as well, fixing both the right and left wing into place.

Bu Fang had a serious expression on his face as he pulled on the leg of the chicken with just enough strength. With a swing of the Dragon Bone Kitchen Knife, the true energy in Bu Fang's body started to circulate as the back of the knife smashed down onto the bone of the chicken leg.

After crossing the two broken legs together, he stuffed it into the chicken's stomach. The shape of the chicken became extremely unique.

The Eight Treasures Chicken watched from the side and when it saw the Heavenly Flame Chicken's "amazing" appearance, the crown on its head trembled.

This was too scary.... Its choice to rebel was indeed correct after all. If it hadn't run away, the one lying in front of Bu Fang would be itself!

After settling his preparations, Bu Fang twisted his head to give the Eight Treasures Chicken a glance. He scared the chicken so much that its neck shrunk back.

Bu Fang then started to continuously knead the body of the chicken as his true energy circulated through his fingers and constantly entered the chicken meat. The meat slowly became tender.

After the meat became extremely tender, Bu Fang moved on to the next step.

He brought out a green flower-decorated bowl which was quite large. It contained an orange syrup which seemed extremely unique.

Under the audience's curious gaze, Bu Fang poured the syrup onto the Heavenly Flame Chicken's body, completely covering the chicken. After covering the chicken with the syrup, he placed the Heavenly Flame Chicken to the side.

Heating up the Black Turtle Constellation Wok, he poured a suitable amount of oil in. As he waited for the oil to start boiling, Bu Fang reached out his hand and placed it right above the wok. When he felt that the temperature was right, he narrowed his eyes and placed the Heavenly Flame Chicken which was covered in orange syrup into the wok. Thus, he started to fry the chicken.

Sizzle sizzle sizzle...

The oil in the wok began to boil and white bubbles started to roll off the surface.

In the instant the Heavenly Flame Chicken entered the oil, it seemed as though it started to burn. The scene was extremely cool as the color of the chicken meat changed at a speed visible to the naked eye.

Before long, the entire chicken became a golden color.

A dense fragrance of fried chicken drifted out from within the wok.

It was the aroma which appeared when a chicken was deep fried and it was extremely enticing. The audience sucked in a deep breath as it smelled too good. They were once again able to smell such a nice aroma.

They felt satisfied every time they watched Bu Fang. They would be able to smell a new fragrance every time.

The aroma intoxicated many people.

After taking out the Heavenly Flame Chicken from the Black Turtle Constellation Wok, Bu Fang dried off the oil on it and placed it at the side. Golden droplets of oil slowly rolled off the body of the Heavenly Flame Chicken and steam rose to the sky.

However, Bu Fang's dish wasn't completed yet. He was merely halfway done.

After clearing the oil from the wok, Bu Fang began his second step. It was the most important part, and he started to cook again.

From afar, Mao Shi's heart calmed down and he started to seriously refine his elixir. Gritting his teeth, his mental force surged forth.

Rumbling sounds resounded around the arena.

A medicinal fragrance was released from within his alchemy furnace. Even though he was refining his elixir, he furrowed his brows all of a sudden. A strong aroma came over from Bu Fang's bronze platform and his heart and mind started to jump.

"Goddamn it! Since the first refinement was ruined by that chicken, the difficulty of gathering my mental energy increased..." Mao Shi's eyes were bloodshot and he ground his teeth together. He was extremely enraged and he thought about his vengeance.

The aroma of the chicken meat was boundless as it constantly assaulted his nose. Mao Shi's heart became uncomfortable. However, it wasn't too bad. The aroma wasn't too strong and he was still able to hold on.

Even though he was able to resist against the distractions, his heart was unable to calm down. He was afraid that his furnace was going to explode twice in a single match!

There was no way he could afford for his furnace to explode again. This was his last alchemy furnace. If it exploded, he really would have lost!

Bu Fang was completely oblivious to Mao Shi's feeling as he continued to cook. He placed the Heavenly Flame Chicken, which was fried until it became golden, into the Black Turtle Constellation Wok, before pouring in some Heaven Alps Spirit Lake Water. The Heavenly Flame Chicken was completely submerged in the spirit spring water.

Rumble...

After sprouting air bubbles, the Heavenly Flame Chicken began to float on top of the water.

Chopping the spirit herbs into many little pieces, Bu Fang mixed them together. The spirit energy contained in the mixture was extremely dense and Bu Fang poured all of it into the wok.

A gleam appeared in Bu Fang's eyes as he took in a deep breath. The Ten Thousand Bestial Flames started to burn at a stronger intensity. The Ten Thousand Bestial Flame flourished in a moment and it became a huge sea of flames. The whole Black Turtle Constellation Wok seemed alive.

Rumble rumble...

As the flames raged on, the spirit spring water in the wok started to boil.

Bu Fang's mental energy surged forth as it entered the wok. It directed the spiritual energy in the wok. The spirit energy in the spirit herbs was completely assimilated into the chicken and only a layer of residue floated on top of the surface of the soup.

Throwing away the residue from the wok, the spirit spring water within continued to boil.

He controlled the flames and made them smaller. As it slowly burned, the boiling water started to bubble less vigorously. It was eventually lowered to a simmer.

Bu Fang closed his eyes and crossed his arms together. His mental energy surged forth again and he directed the spiritual energy to continuously enter the chicken meat.

Following the assimilation of the spiritual energy, a dense aroma emerged.

This time, the aroma was extremely dense and it was accompanied by a unique medicinal fragrance. The entire area was filled with a dense fragrance.

As the audience members took deep breaths, intoxicated expressions appeared on their faces. The head judge had also secretly moved closer to Bu Fang as he enjoyed the aroma. The audience could feel that the aroma was slowly getting thicker. It was as though it was an Epiphyllum which was about to bloom.

Wait till the flower blooms... The fragrance would travel far and wide!

However, there was someone who wasn't enjoying the fragrance.

In the instant Mao Shi smelled the thick aroma, his heart started to tighten!

Chapter 540: Heavenly Flame Braised Chicken

On top of the platform, the Ancient Shura City Saintess' beautiful legs, which were crossed, changed position. She placed her leg down and her eyes narrowed. Taking a whiff, the aroma that was revolving around the entire place entered her nose.

She was slightly taken aback. She didn't think that the aroma in the air would smell that good. It was somewhat out of her expectations.

"Old monster, this aroma is really not ordinary. This chef has some tricks up his sleeves," the Ancient Shura City Saintess' red lips rose upwards as she turned around and talked to the old servant.

"As expected of the chef who made a name for himself in the Pill Palace. In this place that regards elixirs as sacred objects, how could a chef make a name for himself? His appearance alone tells us that he isn't ordinary," the old servant's face twitched as he said seriously.

“That’s right, this chef really isn’t ordinary. How in the world is the alchemist on the bronze platform going to win? Why do I feel that the alchemist is going to lose...” The Saintess said with a disappointed expression.

The old monster became silent for a moment. He wasn’t able to predict the result as he had already given all the assistance he could.

However, the old monster felt as though he was pretty accurate when judging people. This Mao Shi had a strong desire to win... He would definitely not obediently accept his loss.

Up till the result was announced, no one would know about the outcome of the match.

...

“I cannot lose! How can I lose to this chef?” I am the pride of Heavenly Shine City! My only opponent is Mu Bai, not this chef! I cannot lose!”

Mao Shi’s entire body was shaking, and his bloodshot eyes spun. He didn’t want to lose and he couldn’t lose!

His heart was screaming out as his mental force started to rise to the extreme.

That intoxicating aroma constantly surged forth, becoming denser and denser. As the dish in the Black Turtle Constellation Wok neared completion, the aroma seemed to become even stronger, flooding in from everywhere.

The aroma was too fragrant and was almost irresistible. Everyone unconsciously wanted to sniff the fragrance in the air.

Mao Shi gritted his teeth harshly and his heart almost collapsed. That dense aroma caused his already unstable metal force to sway and his Universal Dark Flame also started to fluctuate. It almost caused his furnace to explode, which would completely waste all his efforts.

The audience were all intoxicated within the aroma. This smell of meat caused countless people to swallow a mouthful of saliva.

It was too fragrant... The smell of meat which was wrapped up in medicinal fragrance was just like a drug. Everyone was unable to resist the temptation of the aroma.

Mao Shi almost couldn't hang on any longer and there were many people who noticed Mao Shi's abnormal behavior. Under the assault of this fragrance, how would an alchemist be able to control his mental force properly? How was he supposed to refine his elixir?

Many began to pity Mao Shi. Meeting such a troublesome chef like Bu Fang would only cause him to feel frustration.

Bu Fang crossed his hands as he slowly walked around the Black Turtle Constellation Wok. Beads of sweat began to form on his forehead.

The next step wasn't simple.

That was because this time he had chosen many ingredients. Furthermore, many of these elixirs had a high grade and it wasn't a simple matter to fuse the essence of so many of them together.

The Heavenly Flame Chicken seemed to have regained its life inside the wok. Its entire body was shaking as waves of dense spiritual energy emerge from within the meat. In the audience's eyes, the chicken was about to ascend to the heavens. There was a spiritual essence which was hard to describe.

The entire chicken was covered in the broth. As it cooked, it seemed to be moving about in the water unceasingly.

Finally, when the water within the wok began to evaporate, the chicken head was finally exposed. In that instant, Bu Fang's eyes gleamed.

He reached out a finger as he pointed at the head of the chicken. His mental force began to surge. The mental force being released at that moment made the entire chicken seem like it was full of energy and vigor.

On Bu Fang's neck hung a black pagoda that was tied up with a velvet string. It seemed to be floating as it gave out a hidden light.

Above the platform, the Shura Saintess and the old servant tensed up. The peaks on the Shura Saintess' chest moved up and down and there was an expression of shock on her beautiful face. She glared at Bu Fang with a serious expression on her face.

"I said he must be a Supreme-Being... How else would his mental force be able to stay on par with those alchemists'? As it turns out, he was relying on the Shura Tower's ability to reinforce himself... Wait a minute, how is he able to use the Shura Tower?" The Shura Saintess deeply breathed in and asked in curiosity.

"Saintess... This chef might have some kind of important connection to our Ancient Shura City. To be able to personally utilize the Shura Tower, this person's body must be hiding some huge secret. It looks like we can't just take away the Shura Tower. We have to take away this chef as well!" The old servant said ominously.

A divine light shone in the old servant's eyes. Even though his eyes seemed like they were going to close, anyone's heart would shiver if they looked into those eyes. That frightening aura caused the people in the surrounding who were secretly observing the Shura Saintess to jump back in terror.

"Yes, make your move immediately when the chance presents itself. This won't do, we won't wait any longer. We are going to make our move during the Magical Hand Conference. We'll use the chance to run away from those old bastards who are barely alive," said the Shura Saintess with a solemn expression on her face.

Judging from the situation, this chef had a chance to fight for the top spot in the Magical Hand Conference. If she were to snatch him and run away, she would make an enemy out of the entire Pill Palace.

This really was a headache-inducing problem.

The aroma started to get stronger and stronger...

"My Saintess... It has begun." The old monster's gaze suddenly looked toward the platform Mao Shi was on.

Mao Shi's eyes flashed as he raised his head. Looking at the pillar of light which seemed to be coming from Bu Fang's dish, he finally started to panic.

That was because his furnace was about to explode!

The mental force was about to go out of his control and the furnace was shaking. In one competition, he would explode his furnace twice?

He couldn't embarrass himself like this...

He definitely couldn't let his furnace explode! Mao Shi's eyes became bloodshot. In the next moment, he waved his hand and many people didn't notice that a blood-red elixir appeared in his hand.

Kacha...

Shattering the elixir, Mao Shi's entire bloodstream seemed to boil. He gritted his teeth and felt a mind-searing pain shoot through his body.

However, under his perseverance, that boiling mental force seemed to calm down. After focusing all his attention, he was only able to see his alchemy furnace.

A layer of demonic blood-red radiance was emitted from Mao Shi's skin. It made his entire person look demonic...

The Magical Hand Conference did indeed allow the use of certain elixirs. However, the use of this particular elixir was prohibited... The reason was that if the effectiveness of spirit pill was too strong, it would ruin the rules of the competition.

Any elixir which didn't reach the level of a spirit pill was allowed.

This was why Mao Shi dared to use the Shura Pill. It was because the Shura Pill was not a spirit pill. However, the side effects of this particular elixir were too strong... Once consumed, he would be weak and lacking in vitality for at least a few months.

In order not to lose, this prideful person had decided to lay out all his cards.

Hmm?

Bu Fang seemed to sense something and shifted his gaze to Mao Shi's bronze platform.

From afar, Mao Shi also looked over. He had a ferocious expression on his face and his lips were raised. A malicious smile hung on his face. It was a smile which held a lot of meanings.

He stabilized the alchemy furnace as his elixir was about to congeal. Once a three-mark spirit pill appeared, how was Bu Fang going to win?

"This guy seems to have regained his confidence suddenly..." Bu Fang was suspicious but he didn't care too much. "Well, this Heavenly Flame braised chicken is about to be finished... It sure is troublesome."

Bu Fang was too lazy to care about Mao Shi as he focused all his attention on the Heavenly Flame Chicken. The cooking method that he had chosen this time was from De Zhou. The De Zhou Braised Chicken was an extremely famous dish in his previous world. It even held the title of "China's best chicken". From this, one could see how extraordinary this dish was.

What's more, Bu Fang had chosen to use so many elixirs this time. Coupled with the fact that he used a Heavenly Flame Chicken as the main ingredient, the quality of his dish was bound to be great. Bu Fang had tasted the Heavenly Flame Chicken before when he made it into Spicy Diced Chicken and it had great flavor.

Although it couldn't quite compare to the Eight Treasures Chicken, Bu Fang was unable to do anything about it, as Eighty made such a huge fuss.

Bu Fang moved the finger that was pressed on the chicken's head. He lightly tapped his finger on the head of the chicken.

In the next moment, the audience felt as though they heard an ear-shattering cry from the chicken. The cry pierced their ear and they became absentminded.

The Heavenly Flame Chicken within the Black Turtle Constellation Wok radiated a dazzling golden light and it emitted an enticing brilliance which attracted many gazes.

“A chicken that gives off light!”

The whole audience went into an uproar.

The Eight Treasures Chicken cowering in the corner had its eyes as wide as saucers as it looked at Bu Fang. It was shocked when it saw the Heavenly Flame Chicken which came out from the wok.

A chicken that gave off light! It was majestic!

How could it be cooler than the Eight Treasures Chicken?

The steam rose and surged. It was as though a dragon was rushing toward the heavens. The aroma filled the area, and the audience became intoxicated.

“I really want to eat it! The aroma of meat coupled with medicinal fragrance... It’s a hundred times better than the fragrance of an elixir!”

“No way, I can’t resist it anymore! When I go back, I’m going to make this chicken as well!”

.....

The audience began to chatter. Even though the expressions on their faces were different, there was a common fact. Everyone was deeply entranced by the fragrance coming from the chicken.

Nangong Wuque’s eyes were almost crossed, he thought that the Eight Treasures Chicken wing he had eaten was already very tasty. Compared to the Heavenly Flame Chicken in Bu Fang’s hand right now, the Eight Treasures Chicken paled in comparison.

“If the Eight Treasures Chicken were to be eaten like that, how tasty would it be?” Thinking about that, Nangong Wuque couldn’t resist as he wiped the drool off the side of his mouth.

Bu Fang grabbed onto the chicken neck as the body of the chicken glowed a shade of bright gold. The skin of the chicken was extremely smooth and it was almost like a work of art. He held onto the chicken with one hand while the other began to season the broth.

He pulled out a can, from within which he scooped out half a spoon of Abyssal Chilli Sauce. After adding it into the wok, it fused with the boiling spirit spring water and the broth became red.

In the next instant, Bu Fang took that boiling spirit spring water as he poured it over the Heavenly Flame Chicken's head.

Sizzle sizzle sizzle!

The fragrance in the air seemed to evolve further and the light started to flash around the body of the chicken. In the end, the aroma was stabilized but it became thicker and thicker.

Grabbing a huge porcelain plate, Bu Fang placed the Heavenly Flame Braised Chicken on top.

A few plump and white radishes were taken out of the system's storage space. Throwing them into the air, the Dragon Bone Kitchen Knife in his hand twirled around. Only a flash could be seen.

In an instant, with light flashing around the radishes, they were sliced into many pieces, landing onto the porcelain plate. They surrounded the Heavenly Flame Braised Chicken.

Bu Fang remained expressionless. With a flick of his hand, the water droplets which hung on his finger disappeared in mid-air.

The white radish seemed to bloom like an Epiphyllum, with its beauty radiating as it literally shone.

"Heavenly Flame Braised Chicken, served."

With a spin of his kitchen knife, a soft sound resounded through the entire area. The audience woke up from their trance after looking at the beautiful art-like piece.

Pu Chi!

Mao Shi glared at that Heavenly Flame Braised Chicken. As the wave of spiritual energy swept over, he felt a sense of danger. In the next moment, he spat out a mouthful of blood. The pores of his body started to ooze blood and a stream of blood could be seen trickling down his nose. His entire being became hideous and ferocious!

Boom!

With a blast, the alchemy furnace also became silent. In the next moment, the fragrance of an elixir came from within.

Mao Shi's chest heaved as the blood dripped out from the corner of his mouth. There was a ferocious look in his eyes.

“My three-mark spirit pill... is also done!”