

Chapter 49 - In the Qingyang Restaurant

Li Qingshan's ambitions completely stunned Ye Dachuan. He had always wanted to protect Li Qingshan's life from the threat of the Black Wind stronghold, and it would be the best if he could use Li Qingshan. However, he never considered mounting the offence and provoking the Black Wind stronghold. He wanted to persuade him to stop dreaming. The money I collect isn't for subduing any bandits but for filling my own pockets. When the time comes, we just need to frighten those aristocrats and accept the money. Everyone will get a share.

However, he saw the determination in Li Qingshan's eyes. Although he still had a hint of immaturity that had yet to fade away, he was filled with high-spirited, self-confident righteousness. As a result, Ye Dachuan was unable to bring himself to try and dissuade him. The youth possessed the power to spur others on.

Ye Dachuan hesitated and struggled for quite a long while before suddenly slamming the table. "Alright! If you really have the confidence, I'll take this gamble with you!"

"Sir, you mustn't! We can't afford to offend any of these people or places!" The advisor rushed up.

Ye Dachuan said, "Move. I have some guts in me as well. I'll offend exactly what I can't offend!" He seemed to possess righteous ardour, but he thought rapidly in his head, Li Qingshan managed to kill twenty or thirty people and a boss from the Black Wind stronghold alone. The Black Wind stronghold has around two hundred people, so that's around ten times the quantity. Am I supposed to recruit a hundred and sixty or seventy people?

It had to be mentioned that this official Ye, who had neither wandered through the jianghu nor fought wars, was really quite naive. However, once a person had been carried away by their thoughts, they could no longer care.

If the Black Wind stronghold was destroyed, just who would still be bold enough to call him a country bumpkin who only managed to get his position through nepotism? Just who would still ignore his demands for money? And afterwards, he could get his younger sister to pressure the prefect a little. Perhaps he could get promoted, leaving this god forsaken place. And most importantly, the Black Wind stronghold had pillaged and plundered this region for all these years, so they must have accumulated quite a lot of wealth. Maybe they had five thousand, no, ten thousand taels of silver.

Thinking about the shining, white piles of silver, magistrate Ye was unable to maintain his appearance of righteous ardour any longer. He almost drooled.

Despite dusk nearing, the largest and finest establishment in Qingyang city, the Qingyang restaurant, was still blazing with lanterns. All of the tables of luxurious delicacies, over a dozen of them, had left Ye Dachuan feeling pained. He had invited the various important figures of the city. It was a banquet of the aristocrats and the wealthy.

Ye Dachuan had done this under the notion of no sacrifices, no success. He had really paid the price this time. Of course, the main reason for this was because no matter what he said, the owner of the establishment would continue to smile but refuse to take credit.

As a result, he sat in the host's seat, and his expression was slightly ugly. Li Qingshan stood beside him like a guard, willingly standing out. He saw Ye Dachuan's slightly twisted face, and he smiled. "Sir, there's no need to be pained over the money. Haven't I covered it for you already?"

Originally, official Ye really was unable to take out that much money in the end, so it was Li Qingshan who paid. Li Qingshan was not a petty person. As long as he was treated politely and with sincerity, he was easier to get along with than anyone else. He had a sense of extravagance that treasured moral uprightness over wealth.

However, if someone acted haughtily, trying to do something like strike fear in him and take him down a notch, then they had better forgive him for his bad temper.

Ye Dachuan said awkwardly, "Once I collect money, I'll definitely pay you back!" As the district magistrate, he had been shamed like this. He was only afraid of this powerful subordinate mocking him.

Li Qingshan waved his hand. "This is you helping me as well, so don't mention the money ever again."

The advisor stood downstairs, welcoming the aristocrats as the wooden stairs constantly drummed. Every person would come up and greet Ye Dachuan, referring to him politely as "Sir Ye." Afterwards, they would glance at Li Qingshan deeply and clasp their hands. "You must be the Descended Tiger who cut down several dozen mountain bandits. Your name has been reverberating like thunder, like thunder I say!"

They were all extremely well-informed, so they knew very well who the person of focus would be today. It would not be Ye Dachuan, who basically had no means or foundations about him, but the young man who had killed several dozen mountain bandits.

They were not afraid of Ye Dachuan. They were not even afraid of Li Qingshan. However, once they combined their influence and power together, they would be a rather troublesome combination to deal with. Perhaps it would never be like the past again, where they all looked down on district magistrate.

Heavy footsteps rang through the building. Before the person had even arrived, the advisor had already called out loudly from below, "Old hero Liu of the Iron Fist school has arrived!" Everyone's gazes gathered at the stairway. As a matter of fact, there were even quite a few people who stood up. The amount of respect they showed could not be compared to what they showed to an empty husk of a district magistrate like Ye Dachuan.

The Iron Lion Liu Hong made his way up the stairs with his two disciples, Wang Lei and Li Long. He truly was proud like a lion.

The aristocrats all gathered over. Depending on their age and status, they constantly referred to him as 'old hero Liu' or 'brother Liu'. Even his two disciples beside him were rained with praises.

Quite a few aristocrats did that while glancing at Li Qingshan as if they were saying. We know the master of the Iron Fist school. You might be fierce and tough, but even you can't be unruly in his presence! In their eyes, Li Qingshan was powerful, but a great difference still existed between him and someone who had made a name for himself a long time ago within the jianghu like Liu Hong; this was what they relied on.

Li Qingshan had never thought the important figures Ye Dachuan wanted to introduce to him would include Liu Hong. However, he realised with just some thought that even if no one took Ye Dachuan seriously, they still had to hold a welcoming ceremony as important figures of the city to receive him as the new district magistrate. Otherwise, they would be looking down on the prefect's decision. The largest local power obviously could not be absent from an event like this.

Li Qingshan saw the awkwardness on Ye Dachuan's face as he hesitated over whether to stand up or not. Li Qingshan placed his hand on his shoulder and got him to sit still.

At this moment, a shocking sight happened. Liu Hong broke away from the group and arrived in front of Li Qingshan. He smiled. "Young hero Li, we meet again." His attitude was so warm that it made them wonder whether he was still the Iron Lion they knew.

Wang Lei also bowed awkwardly, no longer able to make trouble for this person who was younger than him.

Ye Dachuan was just about to introduce Li Qingshan. Seeing this, he was surprised as well. "You know each other?"

Liu Hong patted Li Long's shoulder. "He's from the same village as my youngest disciple. They've been acquainted since young. Today in Qingyang city, it was even Li Long who took him around to purchase what he's wearing right now." Ever since he arrived on the floor, he immediately saw Li Qingshan. He saw how he was dressed in navy warrior's robes, standing with his arms crossed by the window. He towered like a lone pine tree on a cliff, distinguishing himself from the common crowd and drawing attention. Even with his animosity towards Li Qingshan, he could not help but have his eyes light up as he secretly praised, What a valiant youth. The good men of jianghu did not particularly like men who were too handsome. Instead, Li Qingshan's looks formed the standard for them.

Li Long could be considered as naturally endowed. He had been chosen by Liu Hong as his final disciple from the first glance, where he felt a great liking towards him. However, compared to Li Qingshan, he was like mugwort to a pine tree. Just which sharp-eyed, insightful person unearthed this fine piece of jade? Why hadn't I seen him when I visited the Crouching Ox village before?

Never had he thought that when he accepted Li Long as his disciple, Li Qingshan was still wrapped up in swaddling blankets. Li Qingshan had changed drastically due to the supernatural ability, but his talent was never bad in the first place. Coupled with his knowledge that came with living two lives, he would have been chosen by someone a long time ago, and he would have quite the achievement if he had not reincarnated in the wrong place and was born somewhere as remote as the Crouching Ox village.

Although great men were not afraid of being born into lowly statuses, no one could deny the importance of birth status.

The hearts of the aristocrats immediately sunk completely. Originally, they wanted to rely on Liu Hong's power and influence to deal with Li Qingshan, but they never thought that Liu Hong would be even more familiar with Li Qingshan than them, vaguely treating him as someone on equal footing. When they looked at Li Qingshan again, there was much more caution in their gazes.

However, Ye Dachuan was utterly overjoyed. "So the guards had received him from you. Qingshan once saved me from a tiger's mouth, and I finally found him today. I've asked him to become the sheriff."

Originally, Liu Hong found this strange as well. Why would Li Qingshan be in contact with district magistrate Ye as soon as he had arrived in Qingyang city? Only now did he understand. "So Qingshan is the young hero the district magistrate mentioned, who chased a tiger to its death. When sir Ye recruits people of wisdom and valour, age doesn't bother him. It'll only be a matter of time before you make a career out of Qingyang city."

Li Qingshan was neither humble nor pushy. "You are too kind, old hero Liu. I just want to borrow sir Ye's power and do some things for the people of Qingyang. I want to eliminate a cancer of the city."

The corner of Liu Hong's eye leapt. He only chuckled, adding no more to the conversation.