

TALISMAN EMPEROR

Chapter 11 - Clear Stream Restaurant



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Swish! Swish!

Sword light flowed out like a stream, and the fierce and sharp sword qi flew out in a spray that spattered towards the surroundings, emitting strands of sharp whistling sounds as it rent the air.

Chen Hao held a sword in his left hand, his small face filled with a steadfast expression and a gaze as calm as still water. His thin and small figure was enclosed within dense sword silhouettes; the Minor Skystar Sword Technique that he'd learnt from the Skystar Institution was executed by him with precise and skilful moves that fluttered about agilely. His movements were smooth and natural as he dripped with sweat and executed the technique to his heart's content.

Chen Xi's expression was in an endless trance as he looked at his younger brother, as if he'd returned to 5 years ago.

At that time, he too was steadfast and persistent like this, infatuated with the cultivation of his swordsmanship, as every move of the sword technique was repeatedly trained by him millions upon millions of times without the slightest feeling of disinterest or exhaustion.

Every time this moment occurred, his grandfather would stand at the side without saying a word and only looked at him with a smile, his wrinkled face filled with gratification.

Grandfather's mood at that time was probably the same as mine now?

Chen Xi's mood was complicated and difficult to put into words as he gazed at this younger brother's figure that practiced his swordsmanship under the sunlight.

"Good! Your sword technique has already reached the advanced-stage. What's rare is because he's wielding the sword with the left hand, the sword moves have a trace of both unpredictability and diversity. With a little bit of tempering, he'd definitely become an outstanding talent!"

Meng Kong clapped as he praised highly, and a rare trace of admiration was revealed on his firm expression.

If one were to say that Meng Kong only decided to test Chen Hao out of fear of hurting Bai Wanqing's feelings, then now his heart was in admiration of the thin and weak youth who wielded a sword in his left hand.

He saw the staunchness and persistence towards the sword in Chen Hao, the most basic quality to become a qualified sword cultivator. Especially since Chen Hao was only 12 now, and yet he was still able to attain the advanced-stage in his sword technique. With time, such extraordinary talent was bound to journey further on the path of the Dao of the sword!

Bai Wanqing secretly heaved a sigh of relief. As she gazed at Chen Hao, she felt a sense of honour because of him. She knew how harsh Meng Kong's conditions were for disciple selections, and being able to receive generous praise from him was enough for Chen Hao to be proud of!

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Chen Xi kept silent as they walked out of the Pine Mist Institution.

He was naturally extremely happy that his younger brother had become the disciple of Instructor Meng Kong and a member of the Pine Mist Institution as expected. However, he felt a slight headache when he thought of how the Pine Mist Institutions yearly tuition fee was 4,000 spirit stones.

Even if he were to not eat nor drink, he would probably be unable to pay the tuition by merely relying upon talisman crafting. Looks like I must look for another path to earn spirit stones.

“You should be happy. The Pine Mist Institution isn’t a place anyone can enter, and there might not even be 1 in 1,000 that are able to become the disciple of Instructor Meng. Chen Hao will be able to tap into even more latent potential when training his swordsmanship with Instructor Meng, and it’s extremely beneficial for his future path as a sword cultivator.”

Bai Wanqing seemed to have discerned Chen Xi’s thoughts and laughed, “As for spirit stones, you don’t have to worry. I’ll lend you some first, just return it to me later on.”

Chen Xi shook his head, “That won’t do. Senior Meng agreeing to allow me to repay the tuition fees at the end of the year has already been a great help to me. I plan to find another job, and strive to gather the 4,000 by the end of the year.”

Bai Wanqing let out a laugh and didn’t force him, then said, “Besides talisman crafting, what else do you plan to do?”

Chen Xi pondered before saying, “Naturally the more money it earns, the better.”

“Oh,” Bai Wanqing said. She pondered for some time, then her eyes abruptly lit up, “Why don’t you come to Clear Stream Restaurant? Aren’t you skilled in talisman crafting? The controlling of spirit flames ought to be easy for you to learn. I know a spirit chef that still doesn’t have a disciple until today, why don’t you go give it a try? Once you become a spirit chef apprentice, earning 30 spirit stones a day wouldn’t be difficult. If you’re able to undertake cooking alone, you’d be completely able to earn even more spirit stones.”

Chen Xi said hesitatingly, “Chef?”

Bai Wanqing had a smile on her face as she stared angrily and said, “Don’t look down on spirit chefs. The dishes that every spirit chef cooks are not only superb in flavour, but also possess various wonderful effects. For example, stabilizing the Dao foundation, strengthening True Essence, healing injuries... Every one of those wealthy clans possess their own exclusive spirit chef to serve them, with a status that is no different in the slightest to a talisman master.”

Chen Xi was startled, “Then, aren’t spirit chefs extremely similar to alchemists?”

Bai Wanqing let out a laugh, “Exactly, both require being able to understand the properties of various medicinal materials by heart, and both require spirit flames to control the process. But they both still have differences. the spirit chef attaches importance to the taste and its effects are only supplementary; the alchemist attaches importance to effects, but instead never considers taste. If one were to judge which is superior, then it would depend on their standards.”

Chen Xi came to a sudden understanding and thought for a moment, then finally made a decision, “Then I’ll go give it a try.”

Bai Wanqing smiled happily as she said, “You’ll definitely be fine. Wielding a brush to craft talismans requires wrist strength, wielding the ladle and cutting up ingredients requires wrist strength as well; the combination of ink requires balancing various materials according to proportions and the cooking of dishes is similarly so. The only thing you have to pay attention to is the control of spirit flames, but you draw talismans throughout the year and are skilled in precise control. Thus, controlling the spirit flames wouldn’t be too difficult for you.”

Chen Xi however never expected that Bai Wanqing would look so favourably upon him, and couldn’t help but feel embarrassed. How was he skilled at

crafting talismans when he'd only mastered various first-grade basic talismans now?

"Let's go, I'll take you over right now," Bai Wanqing said excitedly.

"Uh, now?" Chen Xi felt extremely conflicted, as he still hadn't thanked Bai Wanqing for the matter of his younger brother entering Pine Mist Institution earlier and now he had to trouble her again. Even if his face was even thicker, he would still find it slightly embarrassing.

Bai Wanqing was stupefied momentarily, and looked in amazement at the embarrassed and uncomfortable youth before her. This was still the first time she'd seen such a rich change in Chen Xi's expression, and he completely lacked the sedate and stiff aura from before.

She couldn't help but sigh emotionally in her heart, "If he wasn't forced by life, Chen Xi would probably be a cheerful and optimistic youth, right? How else could he possibly keep a straight face as he rushed about all day for the sake of maintaining his family's livelihood?"

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The Clear Stream Restaurant was built at the riverside, and its construction was refined and exquisite with superb style. Three 3 leaf spirit chefs personally attended to the cooking, and it possessed the reputation of being the number 1 restaurant within Pine Mist City.

Bai Wanqing was a kitchen assistant within the Clear Stream Restaurant that specialized in purchasing ingredients.

The rear kitchen of the Clear Stream Restaurant was situated at the back of the restaurant, and row after row of bright and clean stoves were spread out in a range of around 330m. Freshly purchased pieces of spirit birds and demon beast's meat, produce and grains that emitted traces of spirit energy, bottles

and containers that contained exotic seasonings... Various materials related to delicacies filled the entire kitchen in orderly placements.

Apprentices were busy at every corner, some were using spirit flames to cure and smoke meat, some used knives to peel and cut produce and some were combining seasonings. Before the stoves were strands of spirit flames in various colors that continuously gushed out, and youth spirit chef apprentices wielded their ladles and lifted their woks as they cooked semi-finished dishes one after the other.

Chen Xi, who followed behind Bai Wanqing, couldn't help but be shocked in his heart the moment he walked into the rear kitchen and saw such a magnificent scene. It was the first time he'd seen a kitchen of such scale.

"Let's go, we're going to the 2nd floor." Without wasting any time here, Bai Wanqing brought Chen Xi along the nearby staircase to walk up the 2nd floor.

"The 1st floor is where the various ingredients are prepared and the 2nd floor is where the three spirit chefs cook delicacies." Bai Wanqing explained as they walked, "The spirit chef I spoke of is surnamed Ma, and everyone calls him old man Ma. His character is slightly strange, but he's a very kind person. You better nicely show off your skills when you see him later."

Chen Xi silently nodded.

"Little Bai? Why're you talking behind my back, little girl? Be careful or I might ask the boss to fire you." A hoarse voice that was unpleasant to hear sounded from within the room in 2nd floor, seeming to be enraged and yet revealing a joking tone.

Little Bai...

Chen Xi shot a glance at the nearby Bai Wanqing, as a weird feeling emerged in his heart. Aunt Bai's daughter was already 6, but this old man Ma instead

called her Little Bai; he was practically an old man who didn't know how to conduct himself.

Bai Wanqing noticed Chen Xi's gaze and secretly was extremely embarrassed and angry. If she'd known that this would happen earlier, she wouldn't have brought Chen Xi here. But when she thought about how old man Ma was a person who said everything on his mind, she dropped it.

She led Chen Xi to push the door and enter, and what entered their eyes was actually a scene that was like a paradise away from the world.

The blue sky was like silk, with white clouds like cotton and a path that twisted and turned between the surrounding flowers, trees, and thick grass. At the end of the path stood an impressive jade-green bamboo pavilion that was concealed within cedar trees and green pine trees.

Illusion formation!

Chen Xi's gaze lingered for a moment, practically instantly discerning that everything before him were illusions formed by a formation.

A scene so picturesque that's absolutely lifelike, such an illusion formation probably must be placed by a Grand Talisman Formation Master that's skilled in illusion formations, right?

Infinite wonder couldn't help but be aroused within Chen Xi's heart as he breathed the delicate fragrance of flowers and trees in the air. Only one that was above a ninth-grade talisman master could be called a talisman formation master. Currently, he was only a first-grade talisman master, and he couldn't help but wonder when he'd be able to attain such heights.

"This is a Jadesky Flower Formation, a low-grade illusion formation, and it contains life-threatening dangers hidden within. Carefully follow behind me, don't move about arbitrarily." Bai Wanqing instructed in a low voice before walking forward on the winding path.

Chen Xi's heart jumped and he followed behind Bai Wanqing step by step, not daring to be careless in the slightest.

Talisman masters and the talismans they crafted were divided into 9 grades. Above the ninth-grade talisman master was the talisman formation master, and the talisman formations crafted by them were divided into the low-grade, intermediate-grade, and high-grade.

According to Chen Xi's knowledge, a graded illusion formation was sufficient to cause a Violet Palace Realm cultivator to not dare go one step beyond its boundaries. The Jadesky Flower Formation before him undoubtedly possessed such a formidable lethality. How would he dare act rashly?

The scene changed once again when he stepped into the jade-green bamboo pavilion. The entire room was extremely simple, and only three stoves were placed within. There was nothing else present within, and it was completely incomparable to a strand of that beautiful kitchen from earlier.

At this moment, an old man, a man, and a woman stood before the three stoves as they cooked with skilled movements. Behind the three, an almost lifelike puppet quietly stood there holding a round tray in its hand, and placed on top of the tray were a great variety of various ingredients.

Along with a resonant whistle, the man that stood behind a stove raised his head and greeted Bai Wanqing while smiling broadly, "Hi, pretty lady Bai."

This tall and handsome man was dressed like a gentleman and had a pair of sword shaped eyebrows and starry eyes, the corners of his mouth lightly curled up and a trace of a charming smile hung there.

"What a young and handsome youth! This big sister is drooling at the sight of him. Mmm, little sister Wanqing, is this your lover?" Behind the other stove, the enchanting woman clad in a fiery red dress raised her head. Her hot and graceful figure had a pair of soft breasts that stood tall and erect, and her

watery eyes were shaped like a petal of a peach blossom while staring straight at Chen Xi as her charming and beautiful face revealed an attractive smile.

Before the last stove, an old man who was skinny like a monkey glared as he struck the ladle in his hand and shouted loudly, "Get back to work!"

The entire body of the handsome man and enchanting woman trembled as their bodies swished in unison to devote themselves to cooking, looking like they were extremely obedient...