

## The Quest 203

### Chapter 203: The Cunning Rabbit

The artifact crafting shop started off smoothly, but soon problems arose because Mo Hua overheard Elder Yu cursing again.

Mo Hua went to the shop to check the arrays and saw Elder Yu chatting with Yu Chengyi.

As they chatted, Elder Yu suddenly started cursing Qian Hong.

He called him "bloodsucking parasite," "old turtle hiding in its shell," "insidious beast," and other creative insults.

Elder Yu was in the middle of cursing when he noticed Mo Hua eavesdropping, taking notes with great interest.

Mo Hua murmured softly, "So you can curse like that too," "Why didn't I think of that."

Elder Yu coughed, stopped cursing, and said to Mo Hua:

"You didn't hear anything."

"Mm." Mo Hua nodded, "I didn't hear anything!"

Elder Yu's anger subsided, and he sat down comfortably in a chair.

Mo Hua poured him a cup of tea, handed it to him, and asked, "Is the Qian family causing trouble again?"

Elder Yu was used to chatting with Mo Hua now and didn't avoid talking to him about anything, except for cursing.

Elder Yu took a sip of the tea Mo Hua poured, sighed, and nodded, "We can't sell our spiritual tools."

"No one wants them?"

"There are cultivators who want them, of course. After all, spiritual tools like rattan armor and simple knives are always useful. But I approached several traveling merchants and some demon hunters from other immortal cities, and they all think the price is too high."

Mo Hua was puzzled, "Aren't our prices quite cheap?"

Because the shop was large with high output, their spiritual tools were priced a couple of spirit stones lower than the market rate.

"It's the Qian family; they're undercutting us."

"The Qian family is lowering their prices?"

"Yes." Elder Yu got angry again at the mention, "The Qian family's artifact shop treats cultivators like livestock, making them work overtime to stockpile spiritual tools. They waited until we opened and then sold their stock at low prices to suppress us."

"That Qian Hong, that turtle son of a turtle..."

Elder Yu stopped mid-curse, glanced at Mo Hua, and swallowed his words.

Mo Hua frowned but realized he had no good solution either. He noticed that although Elder Yu was angry, he didn't seem too worried, so he asked:

"Elder, do you have a plan?"

Elder Yu raised an eyebrow, "You can tell?"

Mo Hua said, "If you didn't have a plan, you'd be more anxious, and your cursing would be much harsher."

Compared to before, Elder Yu's cursing was relatively "mild" now.

Elder Yu felt a bit embarrassed and thought he should curse less in the future, at least not in front of Mo Hua.

Mo Hua was too young to learn from him and fill his head with curses...

Elder Yu coughed to cover his embarrassment and said, "There is indeed a plan."

Mo Hua poured him another cup of tea, "Tell me about it."

Mo Hua looked curious.

Elder Yu thought for a moment and decided this was something he could teach, so he patiently explained, "I told those traveling merchants that whatever price the Qian family offers, we would be five-fen cheaper."

"Five fen..."

As expected of Elder Yu, he calculated everything precisely, even undercutting by five fen...

Mo Hua thought.

"Five fen is quite good." Elder Yu snorted, "With so many spiritual tools, it adds up. Five fen of spirit stones isn't a small amount."

"And after that?" Mo Hua asked.

"As long as we can sell them and get the spirit stones back, the Qian family won't be able to compete with us." Elder Yu said confidently.

"Why won't the Qian family be able to compete with us?" Mo Hua didn't understand.

Elder Yu glanced at Mo Hua and sighed, "Because of the arrays you drew."

"The Qian family keeps their artifact furnaces highly confidential. I can't find out much, but I can see the spiritual tools they produce..."

"The quality of the Qian family's spiritual tools is good, but ours are slightly better. Besides Master Chen's exquisite craftsmanship, another reason is that our artifact furnaces are better than theirs..."

"Their artifact furnaces are First Grade, and so are ours. If there's a difference, it's the arrays inside."

Elder Yu took another sip of tea and continued, "I guess their artifact furnaces also have a First Grade Molten Fire Array. These furnaces are comparable to our small artifact furnaces but far inferior to our large artifact furnace."

Mo Hua suddenly understood.

The large artifact furnace had a First Grade Molten Fire Spirit Control Composite Array, which was more effective than a regular First Grade array.

"Will the Qian family find out about our large artifact furnace?" Mo Hua asked.

"Artifact furnaces are highly confidential. I can't find out about theirs, and they won't know about ours either." Elder Yu said.

"But the Qian family will find out eventually."

"As long as they don't know now, it's fine. Even if they find out later, it'll be too late."

"Is there more to it?"

Elder Yu patiently explained, "Undercutting prices is a losing game and can't last long. The Qian family is undercutting because they have good artifact furnaces and high output. They want to kill us in one go, even if it means losing some money initially. But they don't know that our artifact furnaces are better and our output is higher."

"Over time, as we recover and produce more spiritual tools, their continued undercutting will mean cutting their own flesh, making a losing deal."

Elder Yu looked somewhat pleased.

"So, as long as we get through the beginning, we won't fear the Qian family anymore?" Mo Hua asked.

"Exactly!" Elder Yu said proudly, "At that time, our shop will be bigger than theirs, our furnaces better, our craftsmen more numerous, and our spiritual tools better in quality and quantity. The Qian family won't be a threat."

Mo Hua nodded, understanding a bit but still sensing some flaws. Even if things developed as planned, it would just be competition, with their side having some advantage.

It shouldn't make Elder Yu so pleased.

Mo Hua looked at Elder Yu suspiciously, "Elder, do you have another plan?"

Elder Yu paused, looked at Mo Hua, and said helplessly, "You're like a little fox."

Mo Hua's eyes lit up, waiting for Elder Yu to continue.

"The other plan is 'cutting off the supply.'"

"Cutting off the supply?"

Elder Yu said, "The Qian family's artifact shop rushes production, making their craftsmen work day and night. Their own craftsmen might manage, but the hired ones will be resentful, only working for food, unwilling to be slaves..."

"I've secretly sent people to recruit them, offering more spirit stones and not making them work day and night. In a while, these craftsmen will come to work for us."

"I've also notified all demon hunters that any materials they get should not be sold to the Qian family. We'll buy them ourselves."

"I've informed the market owners run by independent cultivators not to do business with the Qian family for now. If the Qian family troubles them, they can come to me, and I'll handle it."

Elder Yu's eyes showed a hint of mischief, "In the future, the Qian family will lack both materials and craftsmen for artifact crafting. This is called cutting off the supply."

On the surface, they were undercutting each other, but secretly, they were poaching their craftsmen and cutting off their material supply.

Mo Hua sighed, "Elder Yu, you're so insidious!"