

The Quest 217

Chapter 217: The Dining House

The Qian family had known when to back off and hadn't caused him any trouble for many days.

Mo Hua was happy to be free from disturbances and resumed his own affairs.

The artifact refining shop and alchemy shop were already built, so he no longer needed to worry about them. There was another matter he had planned to take on.

One afternoon, An Xiaofu came by again to eat.

He drank wine, ate meat, and chatted with everyone.

Perhaps inheriting his mother's talent, An Xiaofu was very good at listening to and sharing gossip.

When he listened, people liked to talk; when he talked, people liked to listen.

Mo Hua beckoned to him.

An Xiaofu, seeing this, was initially surprised but then delighted, immediately running over with joy.

He approached and saw nothing on the table in front of Mo Hua, looking puzzled:

"No food?"

Mo Hua sighed helplessly, thinking that An Xiaofu must have thought there was food, which was why he called him over.

"Have you decided what to do?" Mo Hua asked directly.

An Xiaofu sighed, "Not yet..."

“Do you want to open a dining house?” Mo Hua asked.

“A dining house?” An Xiaofu was momentarily confused, “Our family already has one...”

“This one is different.”

An Xiaofu frowned, thinking for a long time but couldn’t figure out what could be different.

“Aren’t all dining houses the same?”

“The dining house you open will be your own.”

“My own?”

An Xiaofu thought for a moment, a light bulb went off, and he was startled, “You want me to get rid of my dad and take over the family dining house?”

Mo Hua was also startled, “How did you come up with such an idea...”

“A traveling merchant passed by a few days ago. I invited him for a drink, and he told me...”

An Xiaofu lowered his voice, secretly confiding to Mo Hua:

“He said there was a son who secretly killed his father and took over his father’s cultivation property, doing it so cleanly that no one knew until the son accidentally revealed it when drunk...”

Mo Hua sighed, “You don’t need to kill your father.”

An Xiaofu breathed a sigh of relief, patting his chest, “That’s good, that’s good.”

Mo Hua continued, “You should open your own dining house, according to your own preferences.”

“My own preferences?”

An Xiaofu still didn’t quite understand.

“Do you like eating here?”

An Xiaofu nodded.

“Do you like listening to stories?”

“I do.”

“Do you like eating the demon meat here?”

An Xiaofu nodded even more enthusiastically.

“Do you understand now?” Mo Hua asked.

An Xiaofu roughly understood, his eyes gradually brightening, but he still hesitated:

“But I don’t have anything.”

“What do you need to open a dining house?”

An Xiaofu counted on his fingers, “Spirit stones, a small building, a chef, recipes, a stove, staff...”

“I can handle the stove, the recipes can come from my mother, and the spirit stones, location, and staff can come from Old Master An.”

“My grandfather?”

“Yes.”

An Xiaofu felt timid, “My grandfather won’t agree...”

“How do you know if you don’t ask?”

“But...”

“Do you want to open this dining house?” Mo Hua asked.

An Xiaofu thought about what Mo Hua said, seriously nodded, “I do!”

“Since you want to do it, you should strive to do it.”

An Xiaofu thought about his grandfather and felt scared.

Mo Hua said, “Some things, the more you fear, the less likely you are to do them, and the less you do, the more you fear.”

An Xiaofu mumbled, not knowing what to say.

“Does your grandfather hit you?”

“He doesn’t usually hit me, my father does...”

“Are you afraid of your father scolding you?”

An Xiaofu nodded.

“Then imagine your grandfather has already scolded you and hit you, then go talk to him.”

An Xiaofu was stunned.

“If he’s already scolded and hit you, what are you still afraid of?”

An Xiaofu suddenly understood, feeling less scared, “It makes sense...”

Mo Hua patted his shoulder, “If you don’t strive for what you love now, you’ll regret it in the future.”

An Xiaofu felt endless courage rising within him and nodded earnestly.

But that courage dissipated as soon as he got home.

Thinking of his grandfather and father, he instinctively felt afraid.

He couldn’t say exactly what he was afraid of, but he just felt very scared.

An Xiaofu couldn’t eat, and couldn’t sleep at night. He wanted to go to Mo Hua’s eatery to play but felt embarrassed because he didn’t have the courage to face Mo Hua after backing down.

Mo Hua had encouraged him so much, but he had chickened out, making him feel very guilty.

An Xiaofu’s mother noticed his condition and was very worried:

“I told you to eat less, not to stop eating altogether.”

An Xiaofu mumbled, “Mom, it’s not that...”

“You’ve been so distracted these past few days, is something on your mind?”

An Xiaofu couldn’t say it.

She couldn’t guess her son’s thoughts, so she just said, “You need to eat well to have the strength to think.”

An Xiaofu originally had no appetite, but after a few bites, he suddenly felt like eating, and finally ate ravenously until he was full.

After eating, his courage suddenly returned.

An Xiaofu, with a face full of determination, said, “Mom, I’m going.”

His mother looked at him bewildered, wondering what was going on with this child...

An Xiaofu, with a heart set on a do-or-die mission, walked down the long corridor and finally reached the door of Old Master An’s study.

This journey had nearly exhausted all his energy.

An Xiaofu stood there for a long time, regaining some courage before biting his lip, closing his eyes, and stepping over the threshold.

Old Master An had long known his grandson was coming.

When he was young and carefree, Xiaofu often came to play alone.

But since he was seven or eight years old, he never took the initiative to approach the study.

Perhaps he grew up and became sensible, or maybe he could read people’s expressions.

Children, though young, can be very perceptive. This sensitivity is almost instinctive, and they might not even realize it themselves.

This time, for some reason, he came alone again.

But with such a solemn expression, it was as if he was going to his execution...

Old Master An felt complicated watching this.

“I’m still his grandfather, at most I’ll scold him a few times, I won’t eat him, why is he so scared...”

An Xiaofu mustered his courage and finally stood in front of Old Master An.

“Xiaofu, do you have something to say?”

Old Master An asked, trying to make his voice sound kinder.

An Xiaofu stammered for a long time before saying:

“Grandfather, I... I want to open... a dining house.”

Old Master An frowned, “Doesn’t the An family already have many dining houses?”

An Xiaofu felt timid but still braced himself and said, “I want to open my own.”

“Why do you suddenly want to open a dining house? Did someone tell you something?” Old Master An asked calmly.

An Xiaofu, feeling the need to be loyal, didn’t mention Mo Hua and just said:

“No one told me anything, I just want to do it.”

Old Master An raised an eyebrow, “What about the location and the spirit stones for capital?”

An Xiaofu said, “I’ll ask you for them!”

This was said with a hint of righteous indignation.

Old Master An was a bit surprised and asked again, “What about the food and recipes?”

“I have connections.”

“And the stove?”

“I’ll find someone to refine it.”

“What about the formations on the stove?”

“Mo Hua will help me draw them.”

An Xiaofu blurted out.

When it came to formations, the first person that came to his mind was Mo Hua...

Old Master An understood.

But he wasn’t displeased, rather he was quite happy.

Mo Hua helping An Xiaofu, regardless of what he did, was a good thing.

Old Master An pretended to ponder and didn’t speak.

An Xiaofu was on pins and needles, both hopeful and anxious, his chubby forehead sweating.

Old Master An thought it was enough and nodded, “I agree.”

An Xiaofu was overjoyed, his eyes wide, “Really?”

Old Master An nodded, “Go talk to your father. Ask for whatever you need and say I agreed. He cannot refuse.”

“Oh, oh.” An Xiaofu nodded repeatedly, then immediately ran out.

Halfway, he suddenly remembered something, ran back quickly, and respectfully said:

“Thank you, grandfather!”

Old Master An shook his head helplessly, “Go.”

An Xiaofu ran out again, completely immersed in joy, his feet feeling light, as if walking on clouds.

An Xiaofu found his father, An Yonglu, and told him what his grandfather had said.

An Yonglu was surprised, “Really?”

“Grandfather agreed!”

An Xiaofu was more confident.

An Yonglu was skeptical, but he also knew his son wasn’t bold enough to lie about such a thing, especially using his grandfather’s name.

An Yonglu agreed. After An Xiaofu left happily, he went to find Old Master An.

“Father, about Xiaofu’s matter...”

“Let him do it.”

“But...”

“No buts, it’s just a dining house, and Mo Hua is willing to help. It’s worth it.”

“Why would Mo Hua

help Xiaofu?” An Yonglu was puzzled.

“Probably some friendship.” Old Master An glanced at An Yonglu, “In Mo Hua’s eyes, your son has more face than you. If you ask Mo Hua for help, he might not even bother.”

An Yonglu smiled awkwardly.

“But,” An Yonglu was still puzzled, “Why open a dining house?”

Although a dining house could earn spirit stones, it couldn’t compare to an artifact refining shop or alchemy shop.

Why would Mo Hua open a dining house?

Old Master An couldn’t figure it out for a moment, but although Mo Hua was an array master, he was still a child.

It was hard to predict what was on a child’s mind.

“Maybe he’s just playing around, opening it for fun.”

Old Master An sighed and instructed An Yonglu:

“Whatever Xiaofu needs, give it to him. It’s just a dining house. Let them do it and consider it a good connection with Mo Hua.”

An Yonglu nodded, “Yes, father.”

An Xiaofu mustered all his courage, spoke to his grandfather, made his request, and his grandfather agreed.

His dining house was settled.

An Xiaofu felt he had completed his mission and lived up to Mo Hua's expectations, feeling a huge relief.

That afternoon, he happily went to Mo Hua's eatery.

Having completed his task, he felt he had the "face" to see Mo Hua.

Mo Hua praised him and treated him to many good things.

An Xiaofu was very touched and decided to make up for the meals he had missed in the past few days.

Then came the preparation for the dining house.

Preparing a dining house was much simpler than an artifact refining shop or alchemy shop.

Moreover, the An family had opened so many dining houses that everything was familiar, from location to staff, all handled by the An family without Mo Hua needing to worry.

Mo Hua only needed to care about the stove and the formations on it.

The stove in the eatery was refined by Master Chen and the formations were drawn by Mo Hua.

However, at that time, Mo Hua's formation skills were still low, the stove was small, the heat was not strong, and its functions were average.

Mo Hua suggested changing it, but Liu Ruhua disagreed.

It was the stove they used when the eatery first opened, and the formations were drawn by Mo Hua himself. She had gotten used to it over time and didn't want to waste spirit stones to change it.

But for the new dining house, the small stove wouldn't do, so Mo Hua decided to refine a larger first-grade stove.

Mo Hua asked Master Chen for help, who agreed without hesitation.

Having refined first-grade artifact refining furnaces and alchemy furnaces, a stove was a piece of cake.

The artifact refining blueprint was found by Master Chen, materials were provided by Elder Yu, and the artifact refiners worked together. In less than a week, the stove was ready.

The refined stove was two people tall, made of solid and durable materials, with less celestial aura and more earthly smoke in its design.

This stove was already at the first-grade spiritual tool level.

Mo Hua was very satisfied.

He then drew a simplified version of the first-grade Molten Fire Spirit Control Composite Array inside the stove.

This array could control the heat and had a cold air array for cooling, but it only included a first-grade Molten Fire Array.

Cooking didn't require as much heat as refining artifacts, so one array was enough.

Too much heat could damage the stove.

With the stove ready, the dining house was also renovated.

The dining house wasn't on North Street but on South Street where many independent cultivators lived.

North Street already had the An family's spiritual dining house, so opening another one there was meaningless, and Mo Hua didn't want it there either.

He wanted the dining house to provide cheap meat for independent cultivators.

So it naturally had to be on South Street where they congregated.

The dining house was named “Fortune Dining House,” hoping that all the lower-level independent cultivators in Tongxian City would have good food, bringing some joy to their hard lives.

Fortune Dining House was half owned by An Xiaofu and half by Mo Hua.

Mo Hua gave his half to his mother.

Liu Ruhua disagreed, but Mo Hua said:

“Mom, what’s mine is yours. Please help me manage this dining house for now.”

Liu Ruhua couldn’t argue with Mo Hua and had to agree.

The recipes were provided by Liu Ruhua, and the chefs were guided by her, but she didn’t need to personally labor. She just needed to oversee the eatery and study recipes.

An Xiaofu managed the day-to-day affairs of the dining house.

As a young master of the An family, even if he didn’t know how to manage, the An family would find someone to teach him. Even if he made mistakes initially, he would become adept over time.

Although An Xiaofu was a family member, he was kind-hearted and sincere, making him suitable for the dining house business.

The An family was already in the dining house business, so An Xiaofu had been influenced since childhood and would learn quickly and do well.

This was also why Mo Hua pulled An Xiaofu and his family into the business.

He didn't want his mother to be too overworked.

Running an eatery was tough, let alone a dining house larger than an eatery.

An Xiaofu was chubby and liked to eat; a bit of hard work would help him lose weight.

But his mother's health was poor, and she couldn't work too hard. She just needed to focus on researching recipes and occasionally cooking some good food.

This way, she could do what she wanted without being too burdened.

Mo Hua had thought it all through.