

The Quest 326

Chapter 326: Disposal

The news that the Qian Family's patriarch was a demonic cultivator quickly spread throughout Tongxian City.

People were surprised, but not entirely shocked.

After all, the Qian Family's reputation was already terrible, and they had many enemies.

Because of the Qian Family patriarch, the entire Qian Family was sealed off and confined, with no cultivators allowed to leave. Violators would be punished as traitors to the demonic cultivators.

Once the Qian Family patriarch was found, the Dao Court would convict him, and then further actions would be taken.

"What will happen to the Qian Family?"

While drinking tea in the Dao Court, Mo Hua asked Chief Supervisor Zhou.

Mo Hua was there to help Chief Supervisor Zhou.

The Qian Family patriarch had escaped, but his cave residence remained. The Dao Court had confiscated everything in it, looking for more clues or evidence.

Since the cave involved arrays that Chief Supervisor Zhou did not understand, he had invited Mo Hua to help.

At the old chief's request, Mo Hua examined the arrays one by one, identifying the demonic ones and finding other clues proving the Qian Family patriarch's connection with Heishan Stronghold.

With such solid evidence, Chief Supervisor Zhou could write a comprehensive report to the Dao Court.

After working for a while, Chief Supervisor Zhou invited Mo Hua for tea. During their break, Mo Hua asked the question.

Chief Supervisor Zhou, still pale from his injuries, coughed lightly and said slowly, "The Qian Family patriarch must be captured and executed to uphold the Dao Laws and set an example."

"As for the other Qian Family members... their fate varies."

Mo Hua was puzzled, "What do you mean?"

"If convicted severely, there is no doubt. I will report to the Dao Court that the Qian Family colluded with Heishan Stronghold and demonic cultivators, committing murder and robbery. Most Qian Family cultivators will be executed. Even if not killed, their family will be exiled, stripped of their surname, and banished from Tongxian City."

"If convicted lightly, we could claim that the collusion was solely the Qian Family patriarch's doing and that the other members were unaware. In that case, the Dao Court's punishment would be less severe, perhaps just confiscating their property, sparing most of their lives."

Chief Supervisor Zhou patiently explained.

Mo Hua was shocked, "Isn't there a lot of room for manipulation here? Wouldn't that breed corruption?"

Chief Supervisor Zhou choked, coughed violently twice, and said irritably, "You child, how dare you say anything..."

Mo Hua smiled apologetically.

Chief Supervisor Zhou, helpless, sighed, "Indeed, it does..."

He sighed again, "That's why some cultivators commit great crimes yet remain unharmed, protected by the Dao Court, while others make minor mistakes but are exterminated because they offended the Dao Court."

"I'm telling you this not to encourage bribery or corruption, but to make you understand how things work so you won't suffer losses in the future."

"Some things are simple if you know the right way, but if you don't, no matter how hard you try, you might face obstacles everywhere, ending up in a sorry state."

Chief Supervisor Zhou spoke earnestly.

Having spent most of his life in the Dao Court, he knew its workings inside out.

These things weren't profound or complex, but without someone to point them out, an outsider cultivator might never understand them.

Mo Hua, grateful for Chief Supervisor Zhou's guidance, patted his chest and said, "Supervisor, if you ever need array help, just ask me!"

Chief Supervisor Zhou, both amused and exasperated, laughed, "Alright, I'll count on you, little array master!"

Mo Hua nodded confidently.

Within the scope of First Grade arrays, he was fearless, seeing no worthy opponents, except for Mr. Zhuang.

Mo Hua then asked, "So, how will the Qian Family matter be handled?"

"What do you think?" Chief Supervisor Zhou asked back, his eyes cautious.

Mo Hua pondered for a moment, "I think neither harsh nor lenient treatment is good..."

"Harsh punishment would result in too many deaths, and even if many Qian Family cultivators are guilty, there are always innocent people. A blanket punishment isn't right."

"Lenient treatment won't work either; the Qian Family wouldn't learn a lesson and might worsen in the future."

"The best way is to look into past crimes, execute and arrest those with blood on their hands or criminal records to set an example, confiscate their property, and make the remaining cultivators live tough lives, forcing them to refine tools, pills, or hunt demons..."

"When people live comfortably, they tend to develop evil thoughts. If they're exhausted daily and fall asleep as soon as they lie down, they won't have the energy to think of bad ideas."

Chief Supervisor Zhou's eyes brightened.

Neither vengeful nor overly kind, with a clear sense of right and wrong, each punishment fitting its crime.

What a good kid...

Chief Supervisor Zhou smiled, "Well said, just like a little old man who always strives for moderation."

Mo Hua muttered, "A little old man is fine..."

As long as things are handled properly.

Leaving the Dao Court, Mo Hua was about to go home when he encountered Master Luo on the way.

Master Luo greeted, "Mr. Mo, what a coincidence."

But Mo Hua saw that Master Luo seemed well-prepared, not coincidental at all.

"Master Luo, do you need something?"

"Meeting by chance is better than a planned encounter. I have recently acquired some Dragon Group Tea at home. Would you honor me with a tasting?"

Already filled with tea, Mo Hua intended to refuse, but Master Luo's enthusiasm was hard to reject, and he was curious about the Dragon Group Tea, so he agreed.

Master Luo personally took Mo Hua to his cave, carefully bringing out the tea cake and brewing it himself, then offering it to Mo Hua.

"Please!"

Mo Hua glanced at the tea's golden color, tasting it—rich and fragrant, better than the tea Chief Supervisor Zhou had offered.

He couldn't help but sigh, seeing that Master Luo lived a more "corrupt" life than Chief Supervisor Zhou...

"Good tea!" Mo Hua praised.

Though he didn't know why it was good, it indeed tasted great.

Master Luo, pleased with the compliment, smiled brightly.

Mo Hua took another small sip before leaning closer to Master Luo, asking, "Do you need something?"

"No," Master Luo said casually, "just inviting Mr. Mo for tea."

Mo Hua looked at Master Luo with a "who would believe that" expression.

Master Luo, embarrassed, coughed lightly before lowering his voice, "Master Qian wants to see you."

"Master Qian?"

Master Luo sighed, "With the Qian Family patriarch's scandal, the Qian Family is now sealed off. Master Qian, unable to leave and worried about the family's fate, asked me to arrange a meeting with you."

"But why me?" Mo Hua was puzzled.

Master Luo explained, "The Qian Family isn't well-liked. Though Master Qian is an array master with many connections, he's helpless in this situation and could only turn to you."

"What does Master Qian want to tell me?"

"I'm not sure, probably just questions about the Qian Family's fate."

Master Luo sighed, "Such a large Qian Family, collapsing overnight."

Mo Hua thought for a moment and nodded, "Alright."

Master Luo was overjoyed, "Thank you, Mr. Mo!"

Later, Mo Hua went to Chief Supervisor Zhou, got a pass to enter the Qian Family, and met Master Qian.

Using his spiritual sense, Mo Hua confirmed no elders or Foundation Building cultivators were around, just Master Qian, before speaking.

Master Qian asked nothing else, just as Master Luo had said, only about the Qian Family's safety and Dao Court's actions.

For Mo Hua, it was a minor matter, but for Master Qian, it was life or death.

However, the Dao Court would decide the matter, so Mo Hua couldn't overstep but simply said, "The Dao Court is fair. They won't kick you when you're down. The Qian Family is guilty but not to the extent of extermination."

Master Qian breathed a sigh of relief.

Mo Hua then asked, "Were you aware of the Heishan Stronghold affair?"

Master Qian smiled bitterly, shaking his head.

He was just an array master, devoted to his studies, never daring to involve himself in demonic matters.

Mo Hua nodded, "If you know nothing, you're safe."

Master Qian, a true First Grade array master, was invaluable everywhere.

Even if the Qian Family were severely punished, as long as Master Qian was truly unaware, the Dao Court would find a way to spare his life.

Because he was an array master.

Even if the Dao Court didn't intervene, Mo Hua would ask the old chief to spare him, based on their relationship.

Hearing this, Master Qian gratefully looked at Mo Hua.

Master Qian escorted Mo Hua to the door, apologizing, "Being disgraced, I can only see you off here. Please forgive me, Mr. Mo."

"No need to be so polite, Master Qian."

Mo Hua turned to leave but was called back by Master Qian.

Master Qian deeply bowed to Mo Hua, solemnly saying, "I won't say thank you for such a great favor. In the future, if Mr. Mo needs anything, I, Qian, will do whatever it takes!"

"No need for such courtesy, Master Qian."

Mo Hua returned the bow, thinking that he might indeed need Master Qian's help in the future.