

The Quest 87

Chapter 87: Rebuke

Master Chen, furious, entered the room, and his disciples didn't dare even breathe loudly in his presence.

“Why are you all silent now?”

They looked at each other, their minds grumbling, “Isn't it because you, Master, started hitting as soon as you entered, not letting us speak?”

Their gazes then turned to Da Zhu, who reluctantly spoke up:

“Master, this wasn't our fault.”

“Not your fault? Then whose fault is it? Mine? Did I start the fight?”

“They started bullying first!” Da Zhu whispered.

“Yes, Master, they were too much!” the disciples chimed in.

Master Chen scoffed, “Oh, so they were too much, and you guys did nothing wrong? Even if others are at fault, does it justify you beating them to this extent? If you were detained by the Dao Court, would I not have to shamelessly beg for your release? If someone got seriously injured, wouldn't I have to compensate with spirit stones?”

The more Master Chen spoke, the angrier he got. “Not to mention anything else, do you think spirit stones are easy to earn? How have I taught you bunch of wastrels? Up to now, you've hardly learned anything about artifact crafting, just causing me trouble!”

“Mo Hua was bullied, and that's why we fought!”

“So what if Mo Hua was bullied? Who hasn't been bullied? If you retaliate every time you're bullied, how many cultivators would die in this world? I think you lot need a beating to learn your lesson...”

Master Chen raised his stick as if to strike, then suddenly stopped and furrowed his brows:

“Who was bullied?”

“Mo Hua...” Da Zhu, seeing the stick in his master’s hand, shrank back a little.

“Mo Hua?”

Master Chen thought about Mo Hua’s appearance—a docile, harmless child barely in his teens—and couldn’t help but doubt:

“Who’s gone mad, bullying that little kid Mo Hua?”

Seeing his master’s anger subsiding, Da Zhu quickly added, “It’s not just bullying; they were really out to hurt him, so I had to step in!”

“Really out to hurt him?” Master Chen exclaimed, “This is outrageous!”

“Exactly!”

“Too much!”

“They’re shameless!”

“...”

“Shut up!” Master Chen ordered sternly.

Unbeknownst to him, after he had finished his work and gone for a drink to relieve his fatigue, his buttocks had barely warmed his seat when he heard that Da Zhu had gotten into a fight again—not just Da Zhu, but other apprentices as well, and not just a small skirmish, but a large one that had even disturbed the Dao Court.

Blood rushing to his head, he stormed back to settle the account with his disciples.

Master Chen continued to press Da Zhu, “Who was bullying Mo Hua?”

“Qian Xing.”

“Qian Xing? The young master of the Qian family?”

“Yes.”

“Do you know why?”

Da Zhu shook his head.

Master Chen’s brows furrowed tighter. What conflict could there possibly be between the Qian family and Mo Hua? Still, considering Qian Xing...

It was said that the boy was always up to no good, likely just throwing his weight around.

Da Zhu continued, “When I got there, Qian Xing and his group had surrounded Mo Hua, and someone was about to strike him hard on the forehead. In my panic, I intervened.”

Listening, Master Chen felt his guess was not off the mark and cursed, “What a little bastard...”

Probably used to throwing his weight around, wanting to bully anyone he sees just to show off his power. As long as someone doesn’t play along, he gets infuriated.

Qian Hong, the head of the Qian family, though not a good person, at least knew some limits. How could he have fathered such a miscreant...

Could it... really be a bastard?

Master Chen couldn't help but wonder.

Da Zhu, seeing his master no longer angry, quietly asked:

“Master, are you still going to hit us?”

Master Chen glared at him: “What, not satisfied unless you're beaten?”

Da Zhu hastily shook his head, “No, no, no!”

Master Chen tossed aside his stick but still said, “It's good you stood up for him, but simply helping out doesn't justify beating them to such an extent. You definitely got carried away and lost all sense of proportion.”

Master Chen knew his disciples too well. If it were truly about saving someone, they would have done it and left. There must have been some confrontation, these are young people after all, grievances arose and they couldn't stop themselves.

Fortunately, none of the disciples were seriously injured or killed; otherwise, just the cost of healing pills would have been a huge burden of spirit stones

, a not so trivial matter for an ordinary cultivator family.

It's good for young people to be spirited, but their background and family circumstances can't support such fervor.

Master Chen sighed, but still, he couldn't be vague about right and wrong.

Looking at the group of kids in front of him, he felt both concern and relief:

“The matter has a cause, so I won't pursue it further. Helping others is right, but try to avoid casualties and don't act impulsively, nor worry your parents. Today, you won't be beaten. Just kneel here for an hour, reflect on this and then you can leave.”

Da Zhu and the others breathed a sigh of relief. Kneeling for an hour wasn't a big deal, not being beaten was the main thing, and it seemed the Master wasn't really angry with them, just giving a symbolic punishment.

With this in mind, they felt much better. Even while kneeling, they sat up straighter.

Just then, Da Zhu thought of something and said to Master Chen, "Master, Mo Hua said that we helped him, so if we need any array drawn in the future, we can just ask him. As long as it's not too difficult, he can draw it..."

"Oh."

Master Chen walked away, hands behind his back, then turned back abruptly, "What did you say?"

Da Zhu found his master's reaction a bit odd and repeated, "Mo Hua said..."

Da Zhu repeated what Mo Hua had said.

"Mo Hua really said that?" Master Chen asked.

Da Zhu nodded, and the disciples added, "That's what he said."

Master Chen, after calming himself down, couldn't help but rub his hands together, pondered for a moment, then hesitantly said:

"You helped him, and he helps us with some arrays; that shouldn't count as taking advantage of him, right..."

Da Zhu recalled for a moment, then said, "Mo Hua said it's mutual aid among wandering cultivators, not taking advantage!"

"That's right!"

Master Chen finally couldn't help but laugh, then, remembering he was in front of his disciples, he tried to maintain a stern face, but couldn't quite keep his smile at bay.

Now that the artifact shop's array needs were sorted, even just saving on the array master's fee was a significant saving.

With the saved spirit stones, the shop could afford repairs, make necessary purchases, and even afford better quality steel for crafting. His subordinates could also afford to eat a bit more each meal.

Master Chen felt a great weight lift off his shoulders, feeling more agile all over.

"What fine children..." Master Chen said cheerfully, turning to his disciples, "Although Mo Hua is young, he is talented and diligent. He's willing to help us with arrays; we are the ones benefiting. If his family ever faces any trouble, you must help out as much as you can, remember that!"

"Of course, Master!" Da Zhu and the others nodded eagerly.

"Alright, off you go," Master Chen waved them off.

"Yes." Just as Da Zhu responded, he suddenly remembered something and asked quietly, "Aren't we kneeling anymore?"

Master Chen was both amused and annoyed, "Kneel for what, get lost!"

"Yes!"

The disciples responded loudly, relieved, and all ran off.

Master Chen shook his head, "A bunch of foolish boys, when will they ever grow up..."

Originally, he had returned in a rage, but now, seeing his disciples, his mood had much improved. Thinking of having a few more drinks somewhere, he took a few steps, then suddenly stopped.

Master Chen slapped his forehead, “I forgot to ask, how is the Qian family doing?”

Although Qian Xing was a good-for-nothing, any real trouble would still be troublesome.

But then again, the Qian family had many people and plenty of guards, and it was hard to imagine them suffering any loss. Moreover, it was just children in the Qi-cultivation stage fighting; even if someone was injured, it shouldn't be too serious. If there had been any real trouble, these kids wouldn't have come back so easily.

Thinking this, Master Chen felt relieved and went to enjoy his drink in peace.