

## Walker 451

### Chapter 451 - Gengbai Emporium

Lin Mu looked around the shop and saw all the items that were on display. There were spirit tools like shields, seals, weapons, clothes, and even some spatial storage treasure.

Lin Mu could sense the faint spatial fluctuations coming from the spatial storage tools and thus recognized them quickly. He looked at the shopkeeper, who had his hands clasped and nodded his head in greeting.

"Hi, I would like to buy some spirit tools from here." Lin Mu stated.

"Of course, we have a large assortment of spirit tools you can choose from, or if what you need are spirit weapons, we have those too." The shopkeeper said.

"I would like a Mid grade communication jade slip first." Lin Mu replied.

"Sure, I'll bring one right up." The shopkeeper said, and opened one of the drawers to his back.

From there he pulled out a pale green jade slip that was five inches long and one inch wide. He put it on a display cushion and slid it to Lin Mu.

"Here, you go sir. Please check if it is up to your satisfaction." The shopkeeper replied in a professional tone.

Lin Mu nodded his head and picked up the jade slip before checking it with his spirit sense. He could sense the formations that were constructed in it and the connections they formed with each other.

It was a bit different from the one he had with him, and he couldn't exactly tell why.

"This one seems to have a self-destruction formation integrated into it, that is why it looks different to you," Xukong stated.

"A self-destruction formation?" Lin Mu asked.

"Yes. It is actually quite popular to put them in certain spirit tools such as jade slips and spatial storage treasures as they can contain sensitive information or items that a cultivator would not want to be revealed to the public if they are killed.

They are as a precaution so that if someone kills them, they will not get their items from the ring or will be able to get the confidential information stored on the jade slip." Xukong explained.

Upon hearing this, Lin Mu declared what senior Xukong had told him a while back in the Sleepscape. At that time, Lin Mu had asked him how did so many items turn up in the void, to which Xukong had said that one of the major causes of the items ending up in the void was due to self destructing spatial storage treasures.

When a spatial storage treasure was destroyed, there were two things that could happen. In the case that there was no self destructive formation on it, the items contained in the treasures would all spill out into the real world.

But if there was a self destructive formation placed on it, the items would be thrown into the void instead of being pushed out into the real world. This also helped reduce the cases of robberies among the cultivators, but not completely.

If a cultivator was proficient in formations or spatial manipulation, they would still be able to retrieve the items. In fact, robbing was so lucrative that there were even special spirit tools made just for that. One of these spirit tools could even disable the self destructive formation of spatial storage tools and every robber worth their salt would own one of these.

Lin Mu was fine with the jade slip either way and decided to get it.

"How much does it cost?" Lin Mu questioned.

"This mid grade communication jade slip costs 150 low grade spirit stones." The shopkeeper answered.

"Oh, okay. I'll take it then." Lin Mu replied.

"Is there anything else that you would like, sir?" the shopkeeper asked.

He could tell that the customer in front of him was interested in more items than just the jade slip and it was now up to his own skills, to make him buy them. He was after all, a businessman and needed to use his sales skill to the best.

"Hmm... I do want a few more things," Lin Mu said, remembering the things he wanted for little Shrubby. "But they need to have certain properties which I do not know if you have them." Lin Mu added.

"Sir, even if you need something custom made, we will happily oblige to it. As long as you can pay for our service, we will do our best to please you." The shopkeeper replied, almost in a rehearsed manner.

"Can we talk in some place more private then?" Lin Mu asked, showing his reluctance to speak.

"Of course, sir. Please follow me." The shopkeeper said right away.

He could very well sense that Lin Mu was at the peak stages of the core condensation realm. This was not a cultivator he wanted to offend in any way as core condensation realm cultivators were already considered good experts, not to mention one that was at the peak stage.

The man took Lin Mu to a private room in the interior of the shop, away from the customers. A servant also came and served him some tea before the shopkeeper spoke again.

"We will not be disturbed here, sir. Please state your requirements." The shopkeeper said.

"That's good then. I need three more items in addition to the jade slip. I want a spatial storage treasure that can be used by anyone, even a beast. Then I need a durable harness made for riding on a beast and I also need a custom made spirit tool that can work as a hand." Lin Mu stated.

The shopkeeper had not expected that Lin Mu would be asking for something like this. In his twenty years of experience as a shopkeeper, he had never seen anyone ask for a spatial storage treasure for a beast.

As for the harness Lin Mu asked, it was something that could be easily procured from a blacksmith.

But the last item on the list was something he would need to ask a spirit tool refiner for. He would not be able to estimate the price himself either, as the complexity would determine that.

#### **Chapter 452 - Buying The Tools For Little Shrubby**

"Please let me call our in-house Spirit tool refiner, sir. He may be able to give a more accurate answer for this than me as you need custom tools." The shopkeeper replied.

"Okay," Lin Mu said before watching the shopkeeper leave.

While he was gone, Lin Mu spread his spirit sense around the shop and observed everyone and everything. While Lin Mu was traveling on the back of Little Shrubby he had nothing much to do and as such decided to refine his spirit sense further.

In the short span that he had traveled, Lin Mu had already managed to increase the range of his spirit sense to two hundred meters. With a range this large, Lin Mu was easily able to scan the entire shop and the people within it.

A couple of minutes passed like this and the Shopkeeper returned with another man. This was the in-house spirit tool refiner of the Gengbai Emporium. Lin Mu had watched them coming here with his spirit sense and thus knew just the right moment to withdraw his back in.

It was likely the shopkeeper and the owner of this establishment would not like Lin Mu spying on them and their customers. They in fact had formations that blocked the perception of spirit sense, placed on their walls.

But Lin Mu simply went around them using the doors which actually did not have those formations on them. It was a flaw in the security but it was more due to affordable costs, similar to the Alluring Wisteria pavilion.

"This is our spirit tool refiner, Refiner Ru." The shopkeeper introduced the old man.

"Greetings customer..." Refiner Ru spoke but could not recall the name of the man in front of them.

"Ah, I forgot to introduce myself. My name is Wu Lian." Lin Mu said, corresponding with the name that he had given before to the guards.

"So I heard you need some custom spirit tools, can you please describe them to me in detail?" Refiner Ru asked.

"Sure. I need a spatial storage treasure that can be used by anyone, even spirit beasts; a durable harness that can handle a speed equivalent to that of a nascent soul realm cultivator and a spirit tool that can function as a hand." Lin Mu replied.

"Hmm... the spatial storage treasure will need to be modified a bit, but it shouldn't be a problem. For the harness, I can get one made from the leather of a bronze bull which is one of the best materials we have for it. And for the spirit tool that can function as a hand, I actually have something ready with me." Refiner Ru said after thinking for a minute.

"That's good. Can you show it to me?" Lin Mu asked.

Refiner Ru nodded his head before withdrawing a hand that was made from metal from his spatial storage treasure. It had multiple moving parts and had the same structure as that of a human hand.

The only difference would be the color, as it did not have skin covering it.

"How did you have something like this pre-made?" Lin Mu asked curiously.

"This is a prosthetic arm that some cultivators use. Not all of them can afford alchemical pills that can heal and regrow their arms and thus they use these in their stead.

They are a bit difficult to make and as such I keep at least one of them prepared in case anyone comes to buy and it saves me time too." Refiner Ru stated.

"Ah, I see now. That does make sense." Lin Mu replied.

"If you want, you can check how it works yourself." Refiner Ru suggested.

"I'll do that then." Lin Mu said before taking hold of the metallic hand.

He was intending to let little Shrubby use it for cooking, as it had a hard time with certain parts of it, like using spices and brushing condiments on meat. Even stirring was something that he found to be problematic. He had ever made something that needed stirring, thus little shrubby only found that out when Lin Mu was teaching him to make stews and soups.

Lin Mu looked at the metal hand and let his spirit sense enter it. As soon as it did, he could feel a connection with the tens of small joints of the hand and the fingers. He had to control each part individually and took a few tries before he was able to properly move the fingers.

"Hmm, it's good. A bit tough but good." Lin Mu assessed before placing it back on the table.

"Indeed. It takes a bit of practice to get used to but once you do, it will act the same as a normal arm. Even its durability is quite good due to being made with refined iron essence. The only flaw is that one cannot use most Qi skills with it as that requires meridians. Though martial skills should be no problem." Refiner Ru explained.

Lin Mu nodded his head and decided to get this hand too.

"What about the spatial storage tool? When can I get it?" Lin Mu questioned.

"If you are willing to wait for a few minutes, I'll modify a basic spatial storage tool." Refiner Ru answered.

"Sure, do that. Also, what kind of a spatial storage tool is it? I want something that can be used as a belt." Lin Mu stated.

"That will be no problem. I have a spatial storage tool that is in the form of a belt." Refiner Ru said before going to get the spatial storage tool.

A couple of minutes later, he returned with a brown belt that had a few gems embedded in it. He placed it on the table and created a few runes around it before making modifications to it.

Ten minutes passed, before he was done with it.

~huu~

"It is done. Now this belt can be used by anyone, and all of the restrictions on it have been removed. As for the harness, I will give the order to the blacksmith, you should get it by tomorrow at the latest." Refiner Ru said.

### **Chapter 453 - Spatial Storage Treasures**

Lin Mu was a bit surprised by the speed at which Refiner Ru had modified the belt. He had expected it to take a bit longer, but it obviously was not.

Lin Mu took the belt from him and checked it with his spirit sense. The belt was a low grade spatial storage treasure and did not have much space in it. There were roughly two cubic meters of space in the ring.

'Hmm... this should be enough for Little Shrubby to use. Even if I would prefer a higher grade spatial storage treasure, I doubt there is any here... at least the ones that will be affordable.' Lin Mu thought.

"Speaking of spatial storage treasure, are there any shops selling Mid grade spatial storage treasures or higher in the city?" Lin Mu questioned.

"Mid grade spatial storage treasures? Hmm... there are a few shops that can get you one if you place an order but I highly doubt anyone will have them in stock, they are just far too difficult to get, not to mention highly expensive." Refiner Ru replied.

"How much do they go for currently?" Lin Mu asked curiously.

"Even the low grade spatial storage treasures cost anywhere from two thousand low grade spirit stones to ten thousand spirit stones. The mid grade ones can't even be bought with low grade spirit stones and need mid grade ones.

Even if you have the equivalent amount of the mid grade spirit stones in low grade ones, I doubt anyone will be willing to sell them. As for the high grade spatial storage treasures, you simply can't buy them.

The sect's have a monopoly on them because all the refiners that are able to make them are part of the sects. If you want to buy one, you will either need to be part of sect, barter them with a resource that is of the same or higher value or... find one with luck." Refiner Ru answered.

"Ah... I see. What about the peak grade ones? Have you ever seen one?" Lin Wu questioned again.

"In the two hundred years that I've lived, I have never heard of a peak grade spatial storage treasure being sold. But back when I was still learning from my master, he told me that his master once witnessed a peak grade spatial storage treasure being sold.

It was sold from a sect to the Emperor of the Great Zhou Empire. Nobody knows the cost though, so we can only guess. But there is no way it would have been cheap." Refiner Ru answered.

It was now that Lin Wu realized he didn't know what was the capacity of the spatial storage treasures. The belt had a capacity of two cubic meters while the ring that was repaired by Jing Wei had a capacity of about a thousand cubic meters. He knew that the ring was not comparable to spirit tools and was way beyond that, but due to being damaged, it was barely at five percent of its full potential.

"And what was the capacity of the peak grade spatial storage treasure?" Lin Mu asked.

It looked like even the old refiner was having a good time talking with Lin Mu, since he was taking an interest in the field he specialized in. He was an old man and was mostly busy in either refinement or cultivation, thus he did not get to talk with young people like Lin Mu who was also talented.

Lin Mu's cultivation was another reason why he was willing to answer so many questions of his. Besides, Lin Mu was buying a lot of things that were worth quite a large amount, thus he did not mind answering some simple questions.

"I don't exactly know, but the rumors are that it had about a thousand cubic meters of space. Seeing as low grade ones are anywhere from one to five cubic meters in size, mid grade ones ten to fifty cubic meters and the high grade ones hundred to three hundred cubic meters; it does seem close to it." Refiner Ru answered after thinking for a bit.

"I see... that's interesting." Lin Mu replied, feeling amazed at the ring that old man Jing fixed.

"I should head out now, I have a few more things to do. How much do I need to pay right now?" Lin Mu asked.

"The mid grade communication jade slip is 150 low grade spirit stones, the spatial storage belt is 2200 low grade spirit stones, the harness will be 70 low grade spirit stones and finally the prosthetic arm will be about 1250 low grade spirit stones. So the total comes down to about 3670 low grade spirit stones." Refiner Ru calculated.

"That is acceptable." Lin Mu said before taking out a pouch from his ring.

Since he could directly move items in his ring without needing to physically touch them, he moved the spirit stones to one of the many pouches he had bought back in Wu Lim city. All the miscellaneous items that he had bought were now coming in handy.

*~thud~*

The pouch made a low thud as it was placed on the table and the shopkeeper took it to check it.

"It's all there. Thank you for your patronage, sir Wu." The shopkeeper said with cupped hands.

"I'll contact you on your communication jade slip when the harness is ready. You can take the rest of the items." Refiner Ru said.

"That'll be good. I'll take my leave now." Lin Mu said before storing the new jade slip and the prosthetic hand into his ring.

He did not do the same for the belt as that would be a clear violation of the common understanding that spatial storage treasure could not be stored in other spatial storage treasures. Lin Mu tied the belt around his waist and left the shop. He casually found an empty area near the mercenary union and stored the belt in his ring there, before heading into the building.

"Ah, senior you're back!" The male clerk said.

**Chapter 454 - Million Word Transference Formation**

"Yes, I brought the jade slip. Take it." Lin Mu said,

"I'll get the transfer started right away." The male clerk replied.

"Any estimate on how long it will take?" Lin Mu asked.

"It will probably take about six hours senior since there are far too many things and we lack the manpower too." The clerk answered.

"I see. That's understandable, anything you need my help with?" Lin Mu offered.

"No, no, we cannot inconvenience you, senior. If you feel like it, you can go and visit some places in the city or... since you were asking about the library you can spend your time there too." The clerk replied.

"I'll do that then. I'll be in the library till then." Lin Mu said before walking towards the library.

The clerk left as well, but just as he was about to step out of the hall, he stopped as a thought came to his mind.

'Does he know where the library is though?' The clerk thought.

"He should be able to find on his own, I guess. Since he didn't ask me, he should be fine with it." The clerk muttered to himself before leaving for the area where all the information was stored.

"Alright guys! Let's hurry up, the senior brought the jade slip." The clerk announced to the other three people who were working in another large hall that had books and documents kept everywhere.

They nodded at his words and got to work.

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Lin Mu directly went to the library since he already knew where it was due to his spirit sense. The library was rather large but nowhere near to the library that was in the myriad armament canopy abode.

He spread his spirit sense around to check the titles of the books and quickly found a few that interested him. About an hour passed before a thought came to him.

"Hmm, senior is there any way I can transfer all the information here into the jade slip as well? Like the formation that old man Jing used?" Lin Mu questioned.

"Well yes, of course. With your current cultivation base, it should be no problem. I can teach you a formation for that, but it will take you time before you are able to compile all of the information here. Also... I doubt it will fit in the jade slip you have currently, you will probably have to use the new one that you gave to them." Xukong answered.

"Hmm... that should fine. You can just teach me the formation in the meantime." Lin Mu replied.

"Alright, then. Let's begin." Xukong said before teaching Lin Mu the formation.

The name of the formation was 'Million word transference formation'. It was one of the many formations that could be used to transfer information from one type of medium to the other, but this was chiefly used for transferring information from physical items like books and scrolls to jade slips.

By the time Lin Mu was done learning the formation from senior Xukong, six hours had already passed and he was woken up by someone calling him.

"Senior! We are done." The male clerk announced.

Along with him was the female clerk, who was staring at Lin Mu with stars in her eyes. Since Lin Mu was focused on learning from senior Xukong, he had been sitting in a meditative pose and had a very tranquil expression on his face.

To the female clerk, the moment she saw him she felt as if it was an immortal cultivating in front of her. In fact, they had actually been done about an hour ago, but she did not allow the male clerk to disturb Lin Mu since he seemed to be busy meditating.

Only after an hour passed and Lin Mu showed no signs of waking up on his own, did she let him call out to him as she guessed that he must have gone deep in his mediation.

Lin Mu opened his eyes and looked at the two clerks before nodding.

"You can give it to me then, I'll spend some more time here. I found a few interesting things in the library." Lin Mu said.

"Sure senior. You can stay here as long as you want." The female clerk said excitedly.

"Thank you." Lin mu said before taking the jade slip and taking a quick look through the information.

All of the information was sorted according to chronology and if he wanted, he could even search for something specific. All he needed to do was think, and the jade slip would present the information to him.

"We won't disturb you anymore then, senior." The female clerk said before pulling the male clerk away, not letting him speak anything.

Lin Mu tilted his head in confusion at their strange actions, but forgot about it pretty quickly. The only thing in his mind currently was to transfer the information to the jade slip, now that he had learned the formation.

Lin Mu checked to see if there was anyone near the room with his spirit sense and proceeded after confirming it.

*~huu~*

"Let's begin..." Lin Mu took a deep breath.

He gestured with his hands and runes started forming in the air. He took out five low grade spirit stones and created a small arrangement with it. His spirit Qi linked them together and a formation circuit was soon formed.

"Expand!" Lin Mu said before spreading his arms wide apart.

*~Shua~*



An illusory formation circuit materialized and spread all over the area of the library. More runes appeared in the air before creating intricate patterns in the air before the new jade slip came to float right in the middle of them.

The books that were kept on the shelves all flew out and the words that were written on them started to fly out. They moved towards the jade slip and started being absorbed into it. Lin Mu sat down and focused on controlling the formation for the rest of the night.

Only when the morning arrived did he stop.

*~pew~*

"Half-way done..."

### **Chapter 455 - Wu Hei...**

*~Rumble~*

Lin Mu felt his stomach rumble and realized that he had not eaten for a few hours. Since he had already exhausted most of the energy provided by the meat that he had eaten in the past two years, he now needed to eat again regularly.

"I'll eat first then, I guess." Lin Mu muttered to himself.

"You need to watch for the changes in the Nameless technique of the lost immortal. Who knows what kind of changes it may suddenly present to you." Xukong advised.

"I understand, senior. That is why I don't want it to trigger the hunger by holding back too much." Lin Mu replied.

"Hmm, that would be for the best," Xukong said before going silent.

Lin Mu left the library and found the female clerk to be standing nearby. It was almost as if she was waiting for him.

"Senior! Good morning." The female clerk greeted.

"Good morning. Can you tell me some good places to eat?" Lin Mu asked.

Although he had the guide, he reckoned asking a local would be better for now, as he did not want to go too far.

"Of course. There are a lot of good restaurants nearby that you can go to. Let me take you to them," The female clerk said.

"Alright," Lin Mu replied before he was attempted to be dragged by the clerk only for her to stumble.

She rubbed her head in embarrassment and let Lin Mu walk on her own.

'Damn, he's heavy... he doesn't look that heavy though...' The female clerk thought.

It was not that the clerk was weak, rather she was decently strong and had a cultivation base that was at the late stage of the Qi refining realm. If she wanted to, she would be able to lift a few hundred kilograms of weight easily.

But Lin Mu's current strength was something on a completely different level. Not only had he completed the entire body tempering realm, but he had also started to progress slightly in the Five treasures realm.

Along with his peak stage core condensation realm cultivation base, there were very few people who would be able to pull and push him around. The two of them went through the streets as Lin Mu took in the sights.

There were a variety of people living in the capital city, from commoners all the way to nobles. Lin Mu also spotted sect disciples who were going about their business. He saw plenty of cultivators who were at the core condensation realm as well. Though most of them were in the early stage and only a few were in the mid stage.

They eventually reached a wide square and in the distance, Lin Mu could see the royal palace. On its two sides, more buildings could be seen that were rather elaborate and luxurious. While walking, the female clerk was enthusiastically introducing him to the various things and telling him about them.

"And that is the new residence of minister Wu Xun, he got it recently built about six months ago. He and his family are currently residing there." The female clerk spoke.

'So that is where Wu Xun is...' Lin Mu thought after seeing one of the bigger buildings near the royal palace.

"I heard that he has two sons. Do they live there too?" Lin Mu asked.

"Umm... I think the elder son lives someplace else as he is also the son-in-law of peak master Yi Deng of Tri cauldron peony sect, but the younger son does live with them." The female clerk answered.

"I see." Lin Mu muttered.

'I need to at least see the condition of Wu Hei. I need to free him from the control...' Lin Mu thought.

"Here we are! This is the best restaurant I know of that makes amazing food. Even the nobles come here to eat." The female clerk said.

Lin Mu looked up at the building that was about five floors tall and had a wide name board that read: Big Zhao's Heavenly Delicacies.

"The name is pretty... impressive." Lin Mu said, finding it to be a tad too much.

They stepped into the restaurant, finding it to be full of people. On the first floor Lin Mu mostly saw average looking people. A majority of them were commoners, but there were also some cultivators mixed in.

A waiter spotted them as soon as they walked in and approached them.

"A table for two?" He asked.

Lin Mu saw the eager expression with which the female clerk was looking around and sighed to himself.

"Yes." Lin Mu replied.

"Please come with me then," the waiter said and was about to take them to one of the empty tables.

But then the female clerk suddenly spoke, "wait, we want a table on the fourth floor."

"Oh?" the clerk looked at the two of them with a questioning look. He could tell that the two of them were cultivators, but from their clothes, it did not seem like they were affluent enough.

"This senior is at the core condensation realm." The female clerk spoke.

Just as she said this, Lin Mu felt a spirit sense probe nearing him. His eyes darted to the source and his aura fluctuated, halting the spirit sense in its tracks. He found the spirit sense to be coming from a guard that was standing at the stairs of the next floor.

He had a surprised expression on his face and secretly gulped. The waiter seemed to have turned to look at him as well, only to see him nod and gesture something with his fingers.

The waiter's eyes went wide too, but he quickly controlled himself. Lin Mu of course, witnessed the entire interaction and wondered if they had suspected something or not.

"Forgive me, senior, please come with me. You are eligible to sit on the fourth floor." The waiter spoke and took them upstairs.

Lin Mu saw more cultivators on the upper floors, but when he reached the fourth floor he was shocked to see someone he had not expected.

"Wu Hei..."

### **Chapter 456 - Scatterbrain?**

All the way across the floor Lin Mu saw a man sitting. The man was dressed in some blue and gold luxurious robes and had a sword at his waist. He was sitting along with a few other people, some of which were disciples of sects.

This man was none other than Wu Hei himself. Although he looked much different from before. He did not have the same scholarly aura that he used to have and even his clothes did not seem to suit him that much.

Lin Mu quickly withdrew his gaze from them so as to not arouse any suspicion but his spirit sense was still trained on them.

"Is there a problem, senior?" The female clerk asked seeing him suddenly stop.

"No, nothing. I was just looking around, this place is nice." Lin Mu said making up an excuse.

"I know right! This is my first time coming up here, I've only heard of how good the food is here. Back when the union was still populated by everyone, I used to hear the senior mercenaries talk about how the food here was good." The female clerk replied.

"I see..." Lin Mu said before walking to the table that the waiter had picked for them.

The table was located quite far from where Wu Hei and the others were sitting and there was even a wide window behind them, from where they could see the view of the city. Though the most prominent part was the royal palace and the beautiful garden that surrounded it.

The entire place could be seen from here, which had made this a prime spot for people. They only got the table here, since another pair of customers had just finished up their meal and stood up, vacating it for them.

Lin Mu and the female clerk sat down while the waiter gave them a menu.

"What would you like sir?" The waiter asked.

Lin Mu pretended to look at the menu, but his attention was focused on Wu Hei and the rest. It was now that he found something strange. Usually even at this distance if Lin Mu focused on something he would be able to hear them, but right now he was unable to.

'This is unusual...' Lin Mu thought.

He extended his spirit sense closer and then sensed something.

'A formation...' Lin Mu recognized.

"Hmm... seems like a sound isolating talisman which can create a temporary formation that isolates sounds. Very useful to hide your conversation when you are in a public space." Xukong informed.

"Can I find a way through it?" Lin Mu questioned.

"At your level no... if you try and fail, it will alarm them." Xukong answered.

*~Sigh~*

"I can't take that risk... at least not now. I'll just wait and watch then." Lin Mu replied before actually looking at the menu.

"Have you decided what to get senior? I'm gonna get the braised treasure duck." The female clerk spoke.

Lin Mu furrowed his brows and looked through the prices that were all written in silver coins or even gold coins. Feeling it a bother to calculate, he just decided to go ahead.

"I'll take everything." Lin Mu answered.

"Hm? I'm sorry, everything?" The waiter asked, thinking that he must have heard something wrong.

"Yes. Get me one of everything." Lin Mu spoke.

The waiter's eye couldn't help but twitch upon hearing Lin Mu's words and he was about to speak but was then interrupted again.

"No, wait. Get me one of everything and keep them coming." Lin Mu said before putting a small pouch on the table.

*~shing~*

The pouch made a clinking sound and just from the waiter could roughly tell it was filled with coins.

~gulp~

He secretly gulped before opening the pouch to take a look, only to find it filled with gold coins. There were about twenty gold coins in it, which were more than enough to buy the dishes a few times over.

"As you wish, senior." The waiter said before swiftly leaving.

He was actually scared that Lin Mu may go back on his words and take back his money. This was a lot of money for him and usually, he would get a share from each customer that he served. It was about five percent of the total cost of the meal and just from Lin Mu's meal, he was getting an entire gold coin, which was usually what he got in a week.

The restaurant was inherently expensive and as such even the positions such as those of waiters were very lucrative. There were many people among the commoners applying for jobs such as these, and the competition was tough.

Lin Mu though was completely unaware of the thoughts of the waiter and was just focused on Wu Hei and his current companions. The female clerk, on the other hand, was trying very hard to not look at him awkwardly.

'Why did he order so much? Is he gonna keep some for later?' She wondered.

Then she realized another fact.

'He didn't even think about me tagging along for a meal... now that I think of it... isn't he a bit of a scatterbrain?' She thought.

Since the start, while she had found Lin Mu to be quite handsome, he had been acting strange. He didn't mind all the expensive prices. He went and bought a mid grade communication jade as if it was nothing and he even wanted all the information that had in the union no matter how old it was. Then he went and sat in the library for the entire night.

'Hmm... he did say that he has been in seclusion for the past two years, so maybe it's related to that. No wait! He said he's a wandering cultivator, then where would he even go to seclusion at? It isn't like he just went into seclusion in a random cave, did he?.' The female clerk thought.

Unknown to her, all of her assumptions were rather accurate, but the man in front of her showed zero interest.

### **Chapter 457 - The Restaurant's Peculiarity**

Lin Mu looked around the floor to see if there was anyone else that was strong or influential here. It didn't take him long to realize that nearly everyone on this floor was a core condensation realm cultivator.

'The clerk said something about the floors being different, didn't she?' Lin Mu thought and looked at her, but then realized another thing.

'Wait, what's her name?' Lin Mu wondered.

"I just remembered I never asked your name. What is it?" Lin Mu questioned.

The female clerk was a bit startled by his question and even she realized that never had he asked her for a name and had just been speaking directly. In fact, now that she thought of it, he had not asked anyone for their names.

"My name is Tongguo Bing." She answered.

"Tongguo? That's a rather rare surname. I don't think I've met anyone that had that surname before." Lin Mu replied.

"Hehe~ Yes senior, my surname is indeed rather uncommon. Even I haven't met anyone that had the same surname except for my father." Tongguo Bing said.

"I see... oh yeah, tell me more about this restaurant. I saw that they have different floors for different people, what's that about?" Lin Mu asked.

"Oh, that? The restaurant basically gives different privileges to cultivators depending on their cultivation base.

The commoners and normal warriors usually sit on the first floor, while some weak cultivators may also join them there. Cultivators that are in the late stage Qi refining realm to peak stage can sit on the second floor.

Then cultivators who are at the early stage of the core condensation realm to mid stage can sit at the third floor. Then here at the fourth floor, only those that have a late to peak stage core condensation realm cultivation base can stay." Tongguo Bing answered.

"I see. But what about the top floor? There's a fifth floor too, right?" Lin Mu questioned.

"The fifth floor is a bit special in that it is reserved for the Royalty or if it so happened a Nascent Soul realm cultivator." Tongguo Bing replied.

"Has any royal ever visited here? Or even a Nascent Soul realm cultivator?" Lin Mu asked curiously.

"Not recently, but it does happen sometimes. The last time was about a year ago, I think. Umm... it was the prince that visited the restaurant with some of the other young masters of the influential clans, if I remember correctly." Tongguo Bing replied.

"So royalty, huh? Does that mean the son of a Minister will also be qualified to sit on the fifth floor?" Lin Mu questioned.

"Of course. Being the son of a minister does make them royalty, though not blood related." Tongguo Bing replied.

"I understand." Lin Mu said before his perception moved back to Wu Hei.

'Why would Wu Hei sit here if he could be on the fifth floor and have more privacy? It couldn't be because of his companions though, as it seems like it only takes one person to fulfill the condition to let their companions join them. If it was not like that, the restaurant wouldn't make sense.' Lin Mu thought.

Now that Lin Mu thought about it, Wu Hei's actions seemed to be much strange than before. He didn't know if it was due to him being controlled or something else, but a smart man wouldn't make a mistake like this.

If he bothered to set up a sound isolating formation, then they may have as well sat at the fifth floor that was definitely empty.

"You should probably observe him for longer, as even I'm feeling it to be strange. Perhaps after they deactivate the isolation formation, you can check him with your spirit sense better." Xukong suggested.

"Yes senior." And just as Lin Mu responded, the waiter had returned.

But this time, he was not alone and was accompanied by six more waiters. The rest of the people sitting on the floor couldn't help but look at the number of dishes that were being carried by the waiters. Each of them was carrying a large tray that had multiple plates and bowls of dishes placed on them.

This would not have been unusual if the waiters were going to different tables, but in this case, they were all going to the same table, which only had two people sitting on it. No matter how they looked at it, the amount of food was simply too much.

Tongguo Bing also noticed the gazes of the people being directed towards them and felt a bit embarrassed. Lin Mu on the other hand, was feeling amazed by the aroma of the dishes, so much so that his mouth couldn't help but water.

'Oh no, don't start right now.' Lin Mu said to himself as he could feel a rumble in his stomach.

He didn't want the nameless technique to suddenly activate in a full blown manner here, as that would mean he would pretty much eat like a beast.

"Here are your dishes sir, as for the rest of your orders, just gesture to us and we will bring them as well." The waiter said, after covering the entire table with the platters.

"Okay, I'll do that." Lin Mu said before starting his meal.

What happened next could only be described as bizarre. Tongguo Bing and the rest of the people on the floor that were watching Lin Mu eat were left dumbfounded. It had not even been five minutes before all of the dishes on the table had been swiped clean.

Tongguo Bing on the other hand couldn't even begin to fathom how something like this could be possible. She was so shocked that she hadn't even touched the food she had ordered.

"Wh-what? What kind of a man is that? How is he even eating that much food?" Someone on the floor questioned in a low voice.

They knew speaking out loud would be rude and no one on this floor was someone they could afford to offend willy-nilly.

It was now that even Wu Hei and his companions, who were keeping to themselves, noticed Lin Mu.

#### **Chapter 458 - Following Wu Hei**

"Someone you know?" One of the men that were sitting along with Wu Hei asked.

"No..." Wu Hei shook his head.

"Hmm... he is indeed quite strange. If I had not sensed his peak stage core condensation realm cultivation base, I would have just assumed it was some random cultivator taking advantage of their host.

Even his clothes look rather similar to those of the peasants." Another man commented.

"He's at the peak stage? What?" A man who was wearing a Grey shirt spoke.

His body was relatively muscular than the others sitting here, and he had a hammer strapped to his back. He squinted his eyes as his spirit sense spread towards Lin Mu. He didn't directly probe him though, and merely sensed the faint fluctuation coming from his body.

His brows furrowed as he fiddled his fingers.

"Anything wrong?" His companion asked after seeing his reaction.

"While his spirit Qi is quite apparent... I cannot sense the vital energy within him." The man with the hammer replied.

"That's normal though, if you have not directly probed his body, you wouldn't be able to check his vital energy, anyway." The companion replied.

"I know that. But I am not speaking in that sense. There's this feeling... I can't explain it fully, but it's like his aura... it is that of a predator hiding in his den, ready to attack at the first sight of provocation." The man with the hammer explained.

After hearing the words of the man, the rest of them couldn't help but take another look at Lin Mu, who had now finished the second round of dishes and was asking for the next round.

"We should finish up here, Master has ordered us to complete the check up quickly. The next shipment should not be delayed." Wu Hei urged.

"Yes, we cannot waste master's time." The others chimed in and returned to their previous discussion.

While Wu Hei's companions were busy in the discussion, Wu Hei secretly glanced at Lin Mu again.

'Is that...'

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Lin Mu was now on his fourth round of dishes, and the people in the restaurant had gotten used to it. They just put him as an anomaly. It wasn't as if there were no cultivators who ate that much, it was just that they were quite rare and they thus ended up considering him as one of them.

As long as Lin Mu was paying the cost of his meal and not bothering them, they had no right to speak about it, anyway.

Tongguo Bing had also gotten numb to Lin Mu's appetite after the third round and was now eating her own food little by little. Unlike Lin Mu, who was looking to just stuff his mouth, she wanted to enjoy and savor the flavor of the dish she had ordered.



The dish was actually quite filling and all of the dishes they had ordered contained some low grade spirit herbs and meat of spirit beasts. This could not be found on the lower floors and was exclusive to the fourth floor and above.

Those on the third and second floor could only enjoy some food with low grade spirit herbs but no spirit beast meat, while those on the first floor could only eat normal vegetables with body tempering realm beast meat.

Lin Mu ate a total of five rounds of dishes and only stopped because he noticed Wu Hei and his group were about to leave. He quickly wiped his face with a napkin and stood up.

"You're going senior?" Tongguo Bing questioned.

"Yes, you can continue eating and if you want to order more." Lin Mu said before looking towards the waiter. "There's still more money left in the tab right?" he asked.

"Ah, yes sir. She can order more food if she wants." The waiter hurriedly responded.

"See, now you can enjoy more. I have a few tasks to do so I'll be heading off." Lin Mu said before leaving the restaurant.

Lin Mu had ensured that Wu Hei and his companions were a bit ahead of him, so that they wouldn't find him to be suspicious of following them. Lin Mu's spirit sense was extended fully as he kept an eye on them all.

He had known when the companions of Wu Hei and him were looking at him back at the restaurant. He had done this intentionality as he wanted to see if they would be bothered by him, or if Wu Hei would recognize him. Lin Mu got the idea that while the rest of them were a bit interested in him, due to how he was eating, Wu Hei himself had only taken a couple of glances.

Spying on people was now quite easy for Lin Mu as he simply sank into the ground using Phase while his spirit sense kept observing them. With his increased cultivation base, it was no problem for him to hide for days on end using phase if he needed to. He simply had a lot of spirit Qi.

Wu Hei and his companions soon split up and went on their own ways after a short distance and Lin Mu continued after Wu Hei. He didn't want to give up on him right now and knew from the way they were conversing at the restaurant, he was the one leading them.

If he could get Wu Hei, it wouldn't be a problem for Lin Mu to get the rest of his companions either. Lin Mu followed after him for about fifteen minutes, after which he had reached a rather empty area. They were currently near the city wall of the southwestern part.

This area was a bit less developed than the other parts of the city, but it was still quite better than the northern town. Lin Mu's spirit sense checked the area but above the ground and below it but did not find anyone here.

"This makes it a bit easy for me." Lin Mu muttered and decided to act.

#### **Chapter 459 - A Teleportation Talisman**

But before Lin Mu could proceed any further, he felt strong spatial fluctuations appear in the area.

'WHAT!' Lin Mu internalize shouted.

He sensed them and felt them to be a bit familiar.

"A teleportation formation? But I didn't see it before here?" Lin Mu wondered.

"He used a teleportation talisman. They can be used to teleport to a fixed direction or randomly in any point in a set radius." Xukong informed.

"Did he find out that I was following him or something?" Lin Mu asked.

"That seems unlikely. The most probable thing is that their meeting place is someplace secret that can only be accessed by that teleportation talisman." Xukong replied.

"I see... but I'm not letting him go this easily." Lin Mu said with determination.

*~Shua~*

Wu Hei disappeared into thin air, but Lin Mu didn't panic. He activated his spatial perception and saw the black dots appearing in the area. He easily caught the one that was moving and knew that was Wu Hei's traveling through the void.

"Fade..." Lin Mu muttered before appearing in the parallel world.

Here he could sense the black dot much easily and flew behind it. His speed had increased by quite a bit and even with the short span that Fade lasted for he was already outside of the city by now.

Thankfully, since he had entered the city formally the first time, he didn't need to worry about the formation as much now. Unless someone specifically searched for him at this right exact moment, they wouldn't even know where Lin Mu had gone to.

He appeared in the real world after the duration of Fade ended and continued after the black dot which was speeding up now. Lin Mu didn't worry about him missing the black dot, as the trail of spatial traces that it left behind was enough for him to go after.

After a few minutes, the black dot was no longer in the sights of Lin Mu and he had to follow the trail. It took him about ten more minutes before he reached the end point of the spatial traces.

"It is a cave of course... I should have expected." Lin Mu muttered after seeing the location.

The cave was located underground and had no entrance from the surface. As Xukong had said, the only way to get into it was to use the teleportation talisman. The cave was also located quite deep, such that one would not find it by simply digging into it.

But this was a problem for normal people and not Lin Mu.

"Let's see what they are up to..." Lin Mu muttered before skiing into the ground.

His spirit sense was extended to check for the area and he quickly found that there were around twenty people in the cave right now. The cave was quite big and divided into halls and rooms according to their uses.

"Perhaps even Gu Yao may be hiding here... though that seems unlikely. I don't sense that uncomfortable aura here." Lin Mu muttered to himself.

Lin Mu found that the people here were wearing a variety of outfits and it didn't seem like they belonged to any particular organization. They didn't even seem to belong to the Gu Legion.

"Gu Yao has probably expanded his circle of control to a more vast group of people. I don't think many of them are even being controlled." Xukong said.

"What do you mean, senior?" Lin Mu questioned.

"Controlling each and every person would be too much for Gu Yao. The more efficient and manageable thing would be to control the higher ups and leaders of the organizations. That way he can simply give orders to their members and make them work for him. They will oblige without thinking much since they are working for their leaders, unaware of what's truly happening." Xukong explained.

"But won't they question some things that are straight up wrong? Like killing random people? Gu Yao would need them right, if he wants to increase the number of people he's controlling?" Lin Mu asked.

"You think too highly of those cultivation sects and other organizations. They won't mind something like this as they do things like these on their own too. Though not as often. Besides, if someone really does question them, they can simply frame that person as a traitor or working for the enemy.

As for the victims, they can do the same thing. They can just tell their members that the victims were their enemies as well, and that they were secretly working against them. It wouldn't be that difficult for them to fabricate evidence either." Xukong answered.

"I see..." Lin Mu muttered as a cold look appeared on his face.

He focused back on the situation at hand and looked for Wu Hei. He had to be careful not to touch anyone or their spirit sense, or he would be found out. He could tell that there were a lot of core condensation realm cultivators here, and he did not want to start a battle without the proper information.

He soon found Wu Hei to be sitting in one of the private rooms and working on some documents. Lin Mu moved deeper into the ground before reaching the room. He did the same thing he had done back at the Tri caution peony sect's courtyard at the Wu Lim City and spied on him from the top.

He slightly popped his head out and watched what was written on the documents.

'The current shipment of resources will be sent by next week at the latest and the master should receive it in fifteen days. Make sure that all the herbs are properly packaged and do not lose their potency.

A shipment of spirit stones will be arriving from the Cloven Sea sect by tomorrow and will join in the main shipment mid way.

As for the human cultivators, they are to be transported to Master in batches of ten every ten days. Make sure to have extra stock in case of an emergency.'

"What the hell..." Lin Mu exclaimed internally.

## Chapter 460 - Wu Hei Is Not Controlled?

Lin Mu had not expected that he would directly find a clue about Gu Yao's whereabouts. He had been prepared to search here for a while but this was quite unexpected.

"Senior if I break Wu Hei out of Gu Yao's control somehow, will Gu Yao know?" Lin Mu questioned.

"Hmm... unless he is in the range of his direct control I doubt it. We already saw back at the cloud chamber below the ancestral temple that he needs to give his servants verbal commands. He can't communicate with them telepathically.

So as long as they are at a sufficient distance from him, there shouldn't be a problem. The real problem will happen afterward if Gu Yao or that person gets close to him." Xukong replied.

"This will make it a bit more difficult then..." Lin Mu replied.

"Wait a minute, I think not. Look at Wu Hei," Xukong suddenly said.

Lin Mu directed his focus back onto Wu Hei and saw that he had taken out another sheet of paper from his desk. This sheet was blank but was of the same type as the one on which the document was written on.

He then started copying down everything from the document while making certain changes. The changes he made were in the part where it mentioned the sending location of the cultivators.

"Huh? Why did he change this location?... no wait... is he?" Lin Mu said feeling shocked.

"Looks like we didn't have to worry about him as much... he's not in the control of Gu Yao." Xukong said with a chuckle.

"But how?" Lin Mu wondered.

"Well, why don't you ask him afterwards and see for yourself?" Xukong replied.

Lin Mu nodded his head and decided to wait and watch. He still had his doubts about Wu Hei being controlled, and was wondering if this was just something he was doing on his own.

After Wu Hei finished writing the forged document, he rolled it up and called a person.

"Send this to the next outpost," Wu Hei ordered.

"Yes!" the person replied before leaving for his task.

He activated the talisman, which was actually a bracelet that they were all wearing under their sleeves. Lin Mu had not seen it before, but now he had a clear sight of it.

~shua~

The man disappeared into thin air and Lin Mu could sense the spatial fluctuations moving farther away. After the man was gone, Wu Hei slumped down on his chair and let out a sigh, rubbing his temple. He didn't even speak a word and just rested his eyes.

Seeing them use teleporting talismans had also confirmed another thing for Lin Mu; their links to the Northern Tribes.

As far as he knew, the northern tribes had the knowledge about teleportation formations, and while the people in the Great Zhou Empire had also learned of it, they did not have the same expertise.

Making a teleportation formation required skilled formation masters and making a talisman was even more difficult. Most of them were fixed formations, which made it easier to establish a teleportation channel.

If a talisman was used, the point of teleportation would change often, which would lead to the channel changing as well. This would end up using more energy and resources which would only make the process expensive.

To make this process cheaper was something that was lost with the disappearance of the Grand northern Alliance. Lin Mu reckoned that Gu Yao was having the backing of northern tribes or making so many teleportation talismans, that too multiple use ones would have been very expensive.

"I'll take a look around the rest of the area." Lin Mu muttered before moving.

One of his spirit sense tendrils was still focused on Wu Hei so he didn't miss his actions, while he moved around in the cave. He memorized the appearances of each and every person here and also went on to check the rest of the things kept here.

Most of the place was empty, which seemed strange to him, but he assumed that they kept their communication to the minimum so as to keep it secret and avoid leaking.

The things that were kept in the cave were mostly resources, such as spirit herbs and some spirit stones.

"Seems like this is their shipment..." Lin Mu guessed.

"But their quantity is less than mentioned in the document, looks like they are waiting for more." Lin Mu muttered to himself.

He was going to look more around the cave, but then Wu Hei woke up. He touched the bracelet in his hand and teleported again. Lin Mu instantly used Fade and followed behind him.

"Is he going to end up in the same place where he came from? Or will it take him someplace else in the city?" Lin Mu wondered.

Another thing Lin Mu noticed was that the speed at which the spatial fluctuations were moving at was slower than before.

"Why is it slow now?" Lin Mu questioned.

"It's likely a limitation on the teleportation talisman. Even if it is a multiple use teleportation talisman, the number of times he can use it in a day must be less. So far we have seen him use it twice, so we can put that as the minimum number.

Though we don't know if it depends on his own spirit Qi to operate or has a separate store of spirit Qi store." Xukong answered.

"I understand senior." Lin Mu said, continuing his journey.

This time due to the teleportation being slower, Lin Mu didn't lose track of Wu Hei and was able to follow behind him rather easily. They soon reached the capital city and Lin Mu used fade to enter it again.

As Lin Mu had guessed, Wu Hei appeared in the same desolate alley from where he had teleported at the start. Wu Hei spread his spirit sense around and checked for any people in the area.

Seeing that there was no one there, he was about to leave, but then a voice stopped him.

"Wu Hei..."