

Genius 235

Chapter 235 You Can't Beat Me in Cooking Skills!_1

"Sister Qing, if you don't hurry up, my dish will be done frying, and I bet you won't even have finished chopping yours!"

Qin Fang had already taken notice of Cai Qing's hustle and had even shown off some fancy knife skills while chopping, but all he received from Cai Qing was disdain. Indeed, flashy tricks like that weren't really of much use.

"Hmph..."

Cai Qing was not the least bit polite to Qin Fang and didn't pay any attention to his words. She simply lowered her head and continued with her work. Her cold snort was just a way of expressing her disgust and hatred towards Qin Fang.

Qin Fang didn't care; to him, it was such a pity that a woman with impeccable looks and figure had such an unusual sexual orientation, although he bore no discrimination against her.

Both individuals occupied their sides of the kitchen, not interfering with one another, taking turns frying their dishes. It could only be considered complete when each person had prepared three dishes.

From the moment that exchange ended, not once did they glance at each other or take note of what the other was cooking. After each dish was finished, it was immediately covered up and brought out to Cai Pingyuan's presence in the yard.

Neither of them were very familiar with each other's tastes, but from the faint aroma of the dishes, it was not hard to tell that both of them were quite skilled.

All the dishes were ready, and Cai Pingyuan had been coldly observing all this while, looking at the pair of mismatched juniors without trying to mediate their relationship.

"Xiao Qin, how is it going? I forgot to tell you, Xiao Qing's cooking skills were acquired from the culinary master Gu Rongzhi..."

It wasn't until Qin Fang took his seat that the old man Cai Pingyuan softly dropped this hint, suddenly rendering Qin Fang speechless with surprise.

"Master, you're clearly setting me up here!"

Qin Fang said resentfully, knowing that Cai Pingyuan was aware of the facts, but chose not to stop him, probably because he wanted to see some excitement.

Culinary master Gu Rongzhi's name was very unfamiliar to most people in Ninghai, but Qin Fang knew him because the master went to Elite Salon every week to prepare three dishes. The first time Qin Fang went to Elite Salon to dine with Tang Cheng and Ning Weiqiang, he had tasted one of those dishes, and indeed it was far superior to his own intermediate cooking skills.

"I told you that Xiao Qing's culinary skills are very good. It was you who insisted on helping out..."

The old man Cai Pingyuan was quite good at deflecting blame, immediately pushing the responsibility back to Qin Fang. However, Qin Fang wondered if he really was a bit redundant in this matter after all.

"All I wanted was to show my respect for you, sir!"

Qin Fang replied with a smile, "Given that Sister Qing is a disciple of Master Gu, her culinary skills are certainly exquisite. However... it's not necessarily the case that she's better than me!"

Clearly, Qin Fang was not one to admit defeat so easily. Master Gu's culinary prowess was indeed beyond question, but whether Cai Qing had inherited a significant portion of his teachings was another matter. Whether her skills could compare to his more than 50% intermediate cooking skill was not so certain.

"Oh? That confident? Then I really must taste it for myself..."

Cai Pingyuan was also slightly taken aback, somewhat disbelieving as he looked at Qin Fang, but seeing Qin Fang looking so self-assured, he knew Qin wasn't one to boast needlessly, and must have some skill. His interest was immediately piqued.

Cai Qing, who was sitting on the side, had heard the conversation between Qin Fang and Cai Pingyuan. Yet, her face bore a cold smile, clearly showing significant dissatisfaction and anger at Qin Fang's excessive confidence.

"Alright, you two stop dawdling. Let's see what dishes you've prepared for me..."

Cai Pingyuan didn't care about the disapproving looks between the two juniors; his attention was solely focused on the six still-covered dishes.

"Grandpa, take a look at mine... These dishes are your favorites: West Lake Vinegar Fish, Stir-fried Squid Slices, and this one called Prosperous Flowers..."

Being Cai Pingyuan's granddaughter, Cai Qing naturally knew his preferences best. Although Cai Qing seldom cooked herself, it was mainly because Cai Pingyuan did not want her to work in the kitchen after being tired from practicing martial arts all day.

She had really put a lot of effort into these three dishes that were among Cai Pingyuan's favorites. Thus, in terms of appearance, aroma, and flavor, they were almost beyond reproach.

After uncovering the three dishes, Cai Qing shot Qin Fang a challenging glance, clearly very confident in her own culinary skills.

"Qin Fang, come, have a taste and see how it is?"

Master Cai seemed not to notice Cai Qing's expression at all; he was simply beckoning Qin Fang to join in with the chopsticks.

Qin Fang smiled, took the chopsticks, and picked up a slice of fish to taste, "Hmm, the color, fragrance, and flavor are all impeccable... but if there were just a bit more vinegar, the taste would be even more delicious."

Cai Qing's smile instantly stiffened, just as she was about to make a sarcastic remark, she saw Qin Fang start on the second dish, stir-fried sliced squid.

This dish was a signature dish of the Ninghai Hotel, and speaking of the best person to make this dish in Ninghai, it was none other than Cai Qing's culinary mentor, Master Gu Rongzhi, who was a top-class chef at the Ninghai Hotel before he retired.

Therefore, Cai Qing's skill in this dish was clearly much stronger. Qin Fang took a bite and seemed very pleased, even Cai Qing couldn't help feeling a bit proud.

"Sister Qing's stir-fried sliced squid is beyond reproach, it's just a pity that the ingredients were a bit lacking. The orchid petals weren't fresh enough, and the squid slices were a bit too dry... Of course, this isn't Sister Qing's fault!"

"You..."

Cai Qing was enraged and would have slapped Qin Fang dead if Master Cai weren't there, "Since you're so eloquent, I'd like to see how well you cook. If it's not up to par, hmm..."

After tasting these two dishes, Qin Fang did feel a little regret for making things so tense, "As you wish! Master, it's my turn now..."

Qin Fang revealed the dishes he had prepared with a beaming smile. The first was a refreshing dish of tofu mixed with green onions, a seeming simplicity evident by the hint of green onion within the white tofu.

The second dish was a soup, with thin, colorful strands of radish visible inside.

And the third one was...

"Hiss~~"

Both Master Cai and Cai Qing couldn't help but gasp when they saw the third dish.

The third dish was an intricately carved and lifelike pine and crane design, which seemed to be made entirely from various kinds of radishes on closer inspection.

The green pine stood tall, a white crane carrying a branch mid-flight, both the pine and the crane exquisitely carved. If it weren't for its small size and the option for closer inspection, you would believe it was real.

"Master, this is my gift to you, wishing you longevity like the pine and crane, health and long life..." Qin Fang said with profound respect.

"You're getting on in years, and it's better to eat less of the greasy stuff. These lighter foods are more suitable for you! Try them and see..."

Qin Fang respectfully served Master Cai the dishes and poured the soup for him to taste, and of course, he didn't forget Cai Qing, "Sister, please..."

The grandfather and granddaughter both tried the dishes. Though simple, the more straightforward the dish, the more it tested one's skill. After tasting them, Cai Qing was reluctant to admit it, but Qin Fang's dishes clearly surpassed hers, and even more so with the vivid pine and crane design, leaving her no choice but to concede defeat.

Of course, no one would verbalize this. Cai Qing wouldn't bow her head, Qin Fang wouldn't speak up, and the old man, Master Cai, who was clever, would only play peacemaker. It would be more difficult for him to say it out loud than anything else.

This silent competition commenced unexpectedly and ended just as abruptly. Although a result had been reached, it was as if there was no result at all.

The three of them didn't make small talk but quietly ate their meal. Master Cai was very happy that day and shared a few drinks with Qin Fang. The master and disciple were enjoying themselves, which made Cai Qing, sitting to the side, quite envious, yet she truly had nothing to say.

"Ah, Qin Fang, I find myself becoming more reluctant to let go of a disciple like you by the day! Be it martial arts, medical arts, or culinary skills, you are nearly unparalleled. If those old coots found out about you, I bet they would fight tooth and nail to snatch you away from me..."

Master Cai was obviously very happy today, and after a few drinks, he became more talkative. However, his praise for Qin Fang came sincerely.

For his part, Qin Fang could only respond with humility. On the side, Cai Qing gritted her teeth, clearly dissatisfied with her inability to surpass Qin Fang in culinary prowess. But Master Cai's judgment was fair. Setting aside the other dishes, the craftsmanship of the pine and crane alone had already greatly exceeded hers.

Even Cai Qing felt that none of Master Gu's apprentices might match Qin Fang's skill in carving, so as uncomfortable as she was with Qin Fang, she was quite responsible when it came time to admit defeat, not disguising her own loss at all.

The meal went smoothly among the three, with Master Cai greatly pleased, Qin Fang satisfying his filial duties, and although Cai Qing was somewhat depressed, Qin Fang's efforts to please his grandfather left her unable to find fault. She, too, wished for her grandfather's health and longevity, so overall, it ended on a happy note for everyone.

After the meal, Master Cai wanted to ask Qin Fang to stay over, but Qin Fang declined. He did not want to risk being stealthily sliced up by Cai Qing in the middle of the night. He slowly drove away from the Xingyi Martial Arts Hall.