

Read Gourmet of Another World

Chapter 31: Soon... The Little Store Will Be Teeming with Customers

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The scene was oddly quiet.

Ji Chengxue looked at the slightly adorable Whitey in astonishment. This iron puppet's strength was contrary to his expectations. A fifth grade Battle-King was troublesome to deal with even for him, yet this Whitey was able to strip a Battle-King and throw him out of the store.

The third prince did not expect Bu Fang to be that calm either. The sword had almost reached Bu Fang, but he managed to remain indifferent. Did he really have that much faith in that puppet?

The remaining three assassins also recovered from their shock and looked at Whitey as if they were facing their greatest enemy. They did not dare to underestimate Bu Fang any longer. There was no other reason for it aside from the fact that the puppet was able to beat their comrade half to death with two punches.

"There's a mistake with the information! There's something strange with this store!" The three assassins looked at each other and their eyes underneath the bamboo hats were extremely serious.

Without question, their assassination had failed. As an assassin, if their first strike had failed, they should immediately retreat and look for another opportunity. That was why they gave up on assassinating Ji Chengxue and ran to the entrance of the store.

However, how could the three of them escape when they were already targeted by Whitey? The three escaping figures were captured by a gigantic force and pulled in front of the iron puppet.

Whitey's mechanical eyes were blinking as it threw out three palm strikes in a row. The three of them each spat out a mouthful of blood and fell onto the floor. The bamboo hats on their heads were all torn to pieces as they helplessly lay there.

The sound of tearing rang out, then the three assassins were thrown out naked like the first one. They fell into the alleyway with only a small cloth to cover their private parts.

It was still raining heavily outside. Raindrops spilled down from the sky and rapidly formed a curtain that enshrouded the world.

After completing everything, Whitey mechanically made a fist pump. Then its mechanical eyes flashed and it seemed quite happy as it returned to the kitchen.

The coldness in Ji Chengxue's eyes gradually disappeared and they once again returned to their former refined state. The corner of his mouth held a hint of a smile as he meaningfully looked at Bu Fang.

He suddenly realized that he was unable to see through this cook, who was only a second grade Battle-Master.

"What do you want to order?" Bu Fang ignored Ji Chengxue's gaze and expressionlessly asked.

"I'll have Lees Fish. Today, I am lucky that Owner Bu was around to lend a hand. I wanted to drink in celebration but since there's no wine sold here, I can only order Lees Fish." The third prince, Ji Chengxue chuckled and nodded toward Bu Fang.

If it was not for Whitey's help, then it would've been really dangerous for him. Even he did not expect that they would be so deranged as to openly attack him within the imperial city.

"There will be good wine for sale in a few days, but there really isn't any today," Bu Fang simply said as he headed toward the kitchen. Along the way, he gently patted Ouyang Xiaoyi—who was still dumbstruck—on the head.

"Oh? There's going to be wine?" Ji Chengxue's eyes lit up, then his smile became brighter as he meaningfully glanced at the slim figure of Bu Fang entering the kitchen.

"Xiaoyi, I'll be going out for a while. Make sure to keep the Lees Fish for me when it's done," Ji Chengxue said to Ouyang Xiaoyi, who was still in a daze, as he slowly walked toward the entrance.

"Oh, eh? Why are you going out?" Ouyang Xiaoyi blankly asked.

However, Ji Chengxue did not answer her and just stepped out of the store.

Just by taking a single step, the expression on Ji Chengxue's face suddenly changed. The gentle and refined smile disappeared and was replaced by a bone-chilling killing intent.

He opened his umbrella to block out the curtain of rain falling from the sky. The rain water splashed onto his shoes and soaked his clothes.

Within the alleyway, the four assassins stood up with difficulty. They were almost unable to open their eyes with the heavy rain spraying into them. Within the fog, they seemed to see a refined figure holding an oil-paper umbrella.

Then their line of sight suddenly froze as their eyes widened.

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Ji Chengxue returned to the store and stepped into its warm interior once more. He blew into his hands and rubbed them together to disperse some of the coldness in his body. He shook off the rainwater on his robes as a gentle and refined smile reappeared on his face.

"Xiaoyi, is the Lees Fish ready?"

Ouyang Xiaoyi blinked and said, "It's not, but I can already smell the wine aroma. It should be ready soon."

Ji Chengxue nodded and returned to his seat. At his feet, rainwater with a reddish tinge slowly dripped off from the bottom of his robes. Ouyang Xiaoyi stared at the reddish puddle of water for a while without saying anything.

The third prince did not say anything either. He closed his eyes and rested, as if he was thinking about something.

After a while, a rich wine aroma drifted out of the kitchen and hovered within the store, washing away any residual killing intent.

Ouyang Xiaoyi wobbled as she carried out the plate of Lees Fish. Along the way, the fragrance continuously drifted out from the plate. She used a handkerchief to block her nostrils and forced herself not to breathe in the smell. She was staring at the Lees Fish as she placed it in front of Ji Chengxue.

"Your Highness big brother, here's your fish," Ouyang Xiaoyi said with a nasal voice.

"Haha, it's finally done. I was really craving this Lees Fish. In the entire empire, I admire Owner Bu's culinary skills the most." Ji Chengxue chuckled while patting Ouyang Xiaoyi's head.

Bu Fang walked out of the kitchen as well. He carried out a bowl of fragrant Egg-Fried Rice and placed it opposite to Ji Chengxue's seat. He pointed toward it and said to Ouyang Xiaoyi, "Here's your breakfast."

Ouyang Xiaoyi, who was still shocked from the assassination attempt, immediately calmed down. Her eyes lit up as she sat on the chair and started to gobble down the Egg-Fried Rice.

Ji Chengxue's way of eating was very elegant; it was obvious that he was very self-disciplined.

"Owner Bu, do you really have no interest in becoming the imperial chef? With your culinary skills, you can definitely become the head chef of the imperial kitchen," Ji Chengxue tried to persuade him once more.

"I am not interested in becoming anyone's chef. If the emperor wishes to eat my dishes, then get him to personally queue up," Bu Fang indifferently replied. He said as if it was obvious and was not being pretentious about it.

"With owner Bu's skills, it's a waste of your talent to stay here. If you would enter the imperial kitchen, you would surely be able to display your talents," Ji Chengxue said with a sigh.

"Who said that I can't display my talents within this alleyway? I believe that it won't be long before this place is teeming with customers," Bu Fang seriously and confidently said.

Ji Chengxue was slightly startled by Bu Fang's reply. He subconsciously said, "That's not possible. With the prices of your dishes, ordinary people wouldn't be able to afford it."

"No, it's not that they can't afford it. It's that they can't eat it. You should understand the reason why my dishes are valuable," Bu Fang simply said.

Whether it was the ordinary Egg-Fried Rice or the improved version, Lees Fish or the Fish Head Tofu Soup, the ingredients chosen were all from valuable spirit beasts and spirit herbs that were filled with spirit energy. Spirit beasts were originally valuable because they were difficult to capture; using them as ingredients for food was unbelievable. Spirit herbs were difficult to obtain and were usually used to make elixirs.

Bu Fang's dishes managed to preserve most of the spirit energy from the ingredients. Eating one of his dishes was like eating an elixir and would help in cultivation. This was the reason why his dishes were valuable and a fact that Ji Chengxue and the rest had neglected.

Bu Fang felt that he needed to remind this foolish child.

Ji Chengxue's was picking up a piece of fish with his chopsticks but suddenly stopped and his pupils constricted. He was extremely shocked, as if his heart was struck by a giant rock.

That was right! Since he had become a fifth grade Battle-King, he needed an extremely large amount of spirit energy to break through to the next level. Bu Fang's dishes were

unable to help him in that. He only came on a daily basis because of the taste of the dishes.

However, after Bu Fang's reminder, he realized that the dishes may only have a miniscule effect on him due to his cultivation level. However, it was different for the other cultivators who were only Battle-Maniacs and Battle-Spirits!

"Also, I need to remind you. In the future, there will be more and more dishes. The ingredients chosen will also be more and more powerful..." Bu Fang slowly said.

"There might be a chance... for the meat of a ninth grade sacred beast to appear!"

Chapter 32: Fang Fang's Little Store Is Going to Be Popular!

"The meat of a ninth grade sacred beast?!"

The corner of Ji Chengxue's mouth twitched as he looked toward Bu Fang, whose face was currently filled with mystery. If his view of Bu Fang had not changed due to the incident that happened earlier, he would think that Bu Fang was someone with intellectual disabilities.

What was a sacred beast? Within the entire Light Wind Empire, the strongest person that he knew was the number one great general of the empire, Xiao Meng. However, the great Xiao Meng who made the experts from the surrounding Sects despair was only a seventh grade Battle-Saint...

For the mere owner of a store—who was only a Battle-Master—within the remote alleyways of the capital to mention the meat of a sacred beast... Ji Chengxue had no idea of how strong a sacred beast was, but he could use General Xiao Meng as a comparison.

A single sacred beast should be worth at least a few dozen General Xiao Meng. A single General Xiao Meng was able to dominate over a few hundred experts from the Sects. A few dozen General Xiao Meng... could probably destroy the imperial palace with a wave of their hand.

"Owner Bu really likes to joke around. I've been to many places but I've never heard of any news of ninth grade sacred beasts," Ji Chengxue said, while faintly smiling as he finished the Lees Fish.

Bu Fang did not reply. He understood that Ji Chengxue did not believe him. However, he was not perturbed; it was natural for Ji Chengxue not to believe. After all, a sacred beast was far too terrifying.

"Actually, the higher the grade of the spirit beast, the better will be the quality of their meat. They are like natural ingredients of the highest grade. If Your Highness were to obtain any good ingredients, you could bring them to the store and I will help you cook them," Bu Fang seriously said. The system had already risen to two stars and he was able to cook ingredients brought by the customers. That was why he decided to remind Ji Chengxue.

"Oh? I can bring my own ingredients? This seems slightly interesting." Ji Chengxue's eyes lit up and he nodded.

Outside, the rain had gradually come to a stop. The dark clouds were slowly dispersing, unveiling countless rays of warm sunlight.

Ji Chengxue stood up and handed over twenty crystals from a sachet to Bu Fang. Then he rubbed the head of Ouyang Xiaoyi, who was still gobbling down the Egg-Fried Rice, and left the store while carrying his oil-paper umbrella.

After the rain, puddles of water had accumulated on the quartzite floor of the alleyway. Green moss looked as if it was stretching while rain water slowly dripped from the walls that were still wet.

The big black dog was still lying at the entrance as it sleepily yawned. Even after the rain, the fur on its body remained soft and shiny, without a single trace of wetness.

Within the majestic imperial palace, row upon row of buildings were orderly built.

Troops of armor-wearing guards were patrolling with grim expressions. They were not weak; the weakest among them was a third grade Battle-Maniac, while the leader of one of the troops was a fifth grade Battle-King.

Ji Chengxue had returned to the palace. The leader of the patrol respectfully saluted when they spotted him and he indifferently nodded in their direction.

Passing through the entrance of the imperial palace, he arrived at the vast and wide Gate of Heavenly Mystery Square. There were six stone pillars erected on the plaza, and carved upon each of them were unusual images of strange beasts and rare treasures.

Ji Chengxue was standing in front of the Gate of Heavenly Mystery and looking at the wide plaza with a complicated expression. He took in a deep breath, inhaling the fresh air after a rain.

The palace of the crown prince was situated behind the Gate of Heavenly Mystery.

After passing through the Gate of Heavenly Mystery, a few dozen meters away to the left of the Great Hall of the imperial palace was the palace of the crown prince. With golden bricks and red tiles, it was magnificently and luxuriously built.

"Your Imperial Highness. According to our spies, there was an assassination attempt on the third prince in a restaurant within the imperial city," a middle-aged man with an impressive beard said—while holding a message in his hand—toward a seated young man within the palace of the crown prince.

The young man was dressed in a golden python robe[1] and had a purple crown[2] on his head. He had a pale face and long, narrow dashing eyebrows. His eyes were slightly tilted like a sharp blade, giving off a demonic yet dignified aura.

"Oh? Is he dead yet?" the man simply asked. The first thing he asked was the fate of Ji Chengxue.

"No. The third prince spent a long time battling the Sects outside our border. With his combat experience, mere assassins wouldn't be able to kill him." The refined middle-aged man laughed as he stroked his beard.

"Those who would dare to assassinate third brother would at least be Battle-Kings and third brother would definitely be injured. However, if he was injured, then the entire imperial city would know about it. If Father knew about it as well, the current state wouldn't be this peaceful." The crown prince opened his eyes, revealing dark and deep pupils.

"The third prince is indeed unharmed. That's strange. Could it be that an expert aided him?" The middle aged man pondered.

"Xushi, isn't third brother constantly going to that restaurant in the alleyway these days? Is there anything abnormal about that restaurant? Did you send anyone to investigate?" The crown prince asked.

"Your Highness... There's something weird with that restaurant," that middle-aged man called Xushi strangely said.

"Hmm? How is it weird?"

"That restaurant is the black-hearted little store from the rumors circulating within the imperial city. A bowl of Egg-Fried Rice... costs ten crystals. A bowl of dry-mixed noodles costs a hundred gold coins. The most expensive dish is the Lees Fish, which costs twenty crystals. They really are astronomical dishes." Xushi had a weird expression on his face.

"It truly is an astronomical price... Third brother has actually fallen in love with this black-hearted little store? It seems that there is definitely something about that store that no

one knows about. Xushi, find an opportunity to visit that store." The corner of the crown prince's mouth curled up with interest.

"There's two more days until Great General Xiao Meng triumphantly returns to the imperial city. The Great General Xiao Meng is truly incredible. He defeated the Heterodox Sect, Death Soul Palace, in one fell swoop and even captured their six leaders. With this, the morale of the Sects will surely suffer. This truly is the fortune of Light Wind Empire." The crown prince stood up and slowly paced around while sighing.

"If I wish to secure my position as the crown prince or even become the emperor, I will definitely need the support of Great General Xiao."

"Your Highness, the Sects are showing signs of uprising these past few years. Since His Majesty sent General Xiao to conquer the Sects, I am afraid that Xiao Meng has become a thorn in their sides. He would surely be obstructed by the Sects as he escorted the prisoners into the imperial city. There has recently been some movements occurring within the imperial city. According to our spies, experts from the five great Orthodox Sects and the three great Heterodox Sects have already infiltrated into the imperial city," Xushi said with a frown.

"Unrest? It's better when there's unrest. There are some things that are easier to do when there's unrest. Isn't that what my second brother is thinking? Otherwise, why would he send assassins after third brother? However, he probably did not anticipate that third brother would return without any injuries." The crown prince chuckled with his hands behind his back as he looked into a distance.

Xushi was stunned and did not say anything else. He was only an advisor; he would only speak when he should speak and would remain silent when he should not speak.

"It's fine, I already know about third brother's matter. I am not worried about him. The one that I am concerned about is second brother. However, there's indeed something strange with the assassination this time. Send someone... No, you should personally visit that black-hearted little store. That store is indeed quite interesting," the crown prince said.

Xushi nodded, then withdrew after performing a fist and palm salute.

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King Yu's manor.

The second prince, Ji Chengyu, expressionlessly destroyed the letter in his hand.

"A mere restaurant dares to obstruct me. It looks like there's a need to visit this restaurant. I'd like to see who's hiding inside that would actually dare to kill four of my fifth grade Battle-King assassins," King Yu coldly said.

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Within an hour of the third prince's assassination attempt, the high ranking officials and influential factions within the imperial city had received the news. Whether it was the Xiao manor or the Ouyang manor, they were shocked by the news. An assassination attempt on a prince was not a small matter.

Naturally, other than the fact that there was an assassination attempt on the prince, Fang Fang's Little Store had entered the line of sight of these bigwigs as well. Many of them were extremely curious about this store that sold a bowl of Egg-Fried Rice for ten crystals.

Consequently, various factions sent out their men to visit the store.

At that moment, the owner of that store was leisurely curled up on a chair. The warm sunlight after the rain was enveloping his body, causing him to comfortably yawn.

He may not know it yet, but a huge group of bigwigs was approaching.

[1] Python Robe(蟒袍) - It was a robe worn by court officials in the past, named for the python sewn on it.

[2] Purple Crown(紫金冠) - It was also known as "Crown Prince Helm". It was generally worn by princes and young generals.

Chapter 33: Very Well, You Have Been Blacklisted

"Welcome to Bu Fang's Little Store. The menu is on the wall. Tell me when you've decided on your order."

As Xushi stepped into the store, a likable voice rang out. An adorable loli was staring at him while blinking her eyes.

"The young lady from the Ouyang family?" Xushi raised his eyebrows and was slightly surprised. Even though the intelligence from his spies had already mentioned Ouyang Xiaoyi's presence, he was still amazed when he actually saw her.

"Why would the princess of the Ouyang family actually demean herself by becoming a waitress of this little store? Did she become stupid?"

At the entrance, a slim and tall young man wearing a chef's uniform slowly got up. He was cracking his neck as he lazily walked toward the kitchen.

"That's the owner of this store? His cultivation level is really low... How is it possible that he's only a second grade Battle-Master? To be able to kill four Battle-King assassins, he should be at least be a sixth grade Battle-Emperor."

Xushi thought as he stroked his beautiful, long beard while staring at Bu Fang's back in astonishment.

"Hey, what are you ordering?!" Ouyang Xiaoyi unhappily asked. She was annoyed that this old fellow was not paying attention to an adorable loli like her and was staring at the smelly boss instead. Was her adorable charm inferior to that of smelly boss?

Xushi awkwardly smiled as he turned his attention back to her and looked toward the menu on the wall. With this look, his pupils suddenly constricted.

"The rumors were true. The number one shady store in the imperial city is indeed true to its name..." Xushi sucked in a breath of cold air and muttered to himself. Even though he was following the crown prince's orders to investigate this store, he was still bewildered when he saw the astronomical prices on the menu.

"I'll have... Fish Head Tofu Soup." Xushi was not someone who lacked money. He glanced through the menu and selected his favorite one, the Fish Head Tofu Soup.

"Please wait a moment." The little loli snorted and headed toward the kitchen. She did not like this old fellow that paid more attention to the smelly boss than to her.

Xushi found a seat and sat down. The store was not big and there were four tables. It was cozy and compact, while the environment was quiet and clean. The overall feeling that it gave customers was good.

Da da da.

A series of footsteps came from outside. Several people approached from a distance and stepped into the store.

"Hmm? Xushi?" A voice lightly exclaimed. Xushi was puzzled as he turned toward the entrance and saw a middle-aged man.

"Great Secretariat Su, I didn't expect to see you here," Xushi stood up in surprise and did a fist and palm salute while slightly bowing. The middle-aged man in front of him was the great secretariat from the imperial court. Xushi was shocked that such a person would personally come to this little restaurant.

Even though the Light Wind Empire was a martial country, there were still civil servants. After all, considering both martial and civil aspects was the true way of governing a country.

Su Yuanqing recognized the man with the beautiful, long beard in front of him. Xushi, the favorite person of the crown prince, was well known within the imperial court.

Since Su Yuanqing and Xushi were not familiar with each other, they took separate seats after exchanging greetings. Su Yuanqing ordered Egg-Fried Rice.

Bu Fang was already busy cooking in the kitchen. "It seems that there's a lot of new customers today. What's going on? Could it be that someone within the imperial city is helping to advertise the store?"

Even though Bu Fang was puzzled, his hands did not stop. He scooped up a third grade Thunder Silver Carp and started to remove the scales. After the intestines were discarded, he rinsed the fish with water and chopped off the head.

Keeping the head, the rest of the fish was thrown into Whitey's stomach area to be recycled. Then Bu Fang took out the sparkling Ice-crystal Jadeite Tofu from the freezer and began to cook the Fish Head Tofu Soup.

While the Fish Head Tofu Soup was being simmered, Bu Fang took out a white egg that was as big as his fist from the freezer.

It was the first egg laid by a fifth grade Deep Sea Foal Eagle and was rich with spirit energy. Bu Fang heavily tapped it against a blue and white porcelain bowl and managed to crack the egg into the bowl with one hand.

While he was preparing the dishes, Fang Fang's Little Store was already packed with people.

"I'll have the Egg-Fried Rice."

"Give me the Dry-Mixed Noodles! And hurry up!"

"I want the Lees Fish."

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Watching as the customers squeezed into the store, Ouyang Xiaoyi was slightly dumbfounded. "When did this store of ours... become so popular?"

She counted at least a dozen customers. "Oh my heavens! Is this really the store that was completely deserted a few days ago?!"

"Everyone, calm down. There's too many people, so queue up first," Ouyang Xiaoyi loudly said. There was nothing else she could do. Since it was really inconvenient for the customers to squeeze into the store, she had to make them queue up. The space within the store was too small.

"Queue up? Little girl, do you know who I am? I am the housekeeper of Lord Zhang! How dare you make me queue up! Hurry up and let your boss serve me my food," A middle-aged man wearing a silk robe unhappily scolded Ouyang Xiaoyi.

"So what if you're the housekeeper of Lord Zhang! Little girl, do you know who I am? I am the main housekeeper of the Director of the Board of Rites!"

"Is a housekeeper of the Director of the Board of Rites that impressive? I am the personal bodyguard of King Mu!"

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Ouyang Xiaoyi expressionlessly looked on as the group of customers endlessly quarrelled. Every one of them had self-important expressions on their faces.

Even though the loli was amazed that the subordinates of the bigwigs would come to eat at a store located in an alleyway, she was very upset about how pompous they were.

Xushi lightly shook his head as he listened to the argument behind him and thought that it was quite ridiculous. He clearly understood the reason why this group of people was there because they had the same objective as him.

It was laughable that the crowd actually did not recognize the identity of the girl and wanted to jump the queue by announcing their background.

Among these people, the waitress was the one with the scariest background. However, he could not be bothered to point it out to them.

Just then, a rich fragrance drifted out of the kitchen. The smell was like a piece of silk rubbing across their cheeks. Everyone within the dining area went into a daze as they subconsciously breathed in the fragrance.

The eyes of both Su Yuanqing and Xushi lit up. The smell was... very fragrant! There was a reason why the price was so high.

Bu Fang was carrying the Egg-Fried Rice out of the kitchen when he saw the crowded situation in the dining area. He was stunned for a moment and was slightly unable to accept the fact that the store suddenly became popular.

However, he remained calm and the astonishment only lasted for an instant before he became expressionless once more.

"Everyone has to queue up accordingly. Each customer can only order each dish once. Takeout is not allowed. Cutting in line is not allowed. Anyone who violates the rules will

be blacklisted and service will no longer be provided to them," Bu Fang simply said. His voice was not loud but was able to overwhelm the noise.

Then, within an instant, the entire store erupted into an uproar.

These people were sent by their masters to investigate the store. They were used to lording over others outside, so how could they tolerate so many rules from a tiny store like this? They instantly started to clamor.

Bu Fang expressionlessly placed the Egg-Fried Rice in front of Su Yuanqing.

"Here's your improved Egg-Fried Rice, please enjoy your meal," Bu Fang said.

Su Yuanqing's sight was already attracted by the Egg-Fried Rice. He nodded and no longer paid any attention to Bu Fang.

"Be quiet! Don't make such a racket!" Bu Fang coldly shouted while frowning.

"Gosh, darn it! You brat, don't push your luck! I am giving you face by eating here! I am the subordinate of Lord Zhang! I am not someone you can afford to offend!" The housekeeper angrily scolded while pointing at Bu Fang.

The others were also pointing at Bu Fang while indignantly swearing.

The store that was quiet for a moment became noisy once more.

Ouyang Xiaoyi rolled her eyes and then saw the irritable expression on Bu Fang's face. She suddenly decided to silently observe these people for a moment. Of all the places they could act conceited in, they had to come to Fang Fang's Little Store...

With a series of mechanical sounds, Whitey's gigantic figure appeared behind Bu Fang with its mechanical eyes flashing.

"Oh my! Do you think that you're invincible just because you have an iron puppet? Is this where your confidence is coming from?!" When the housekeeper saw Whitey, he was amused for a moment. He had seen plenty of puppets before and knew that they were all just a bunch of junk.

Bu Fang narrowed his eyes and pointed toward the housekeeper of Lord Zhang.

"Very well, you've been blacklisted."

Chapter 34: If You Double the Price Again, I Will Definitely Beat You Up

"You're going to blacklist me? A lowly cook like you?"

Lord Zhang's housekeeper was startled by Bu Fang's actions and started to laugh out loud. He was laughing so much that tears were almost coming out.

The people around them could not help but snicker as they looked at Bu Fang with ridicule and contempt in their eyes. Was this young cook an idiot? Did he not know who he was speaking to? That was the housekeeper of Lord Zhang!

Lord Zhang was a noble and renowned bigwig within the imperial city, and his housekeeper was naturally well-known as well. For the cook of a little restaurant located within an alleyway to shamelessly boast that he would blacklist the housekeeper of Lord Zhang, it was the biggest joke in history.

"Do you know how easy it is for me to tear down this restaurant? The fact that I am eating here is giving you face. You should be happily serving my food to me. Who gave you the courage to be conceited in front of me?"

The housekeeper snorted while haughtily crossing his arms.

Bu Fang was expressionlessly looking at the housekeeper as if he was looking at an idiot.

"Housekeeper? Is that something impressive? Even a prince was rejected by me, do you think I would care about a housekeeper?"

Bu Fang did not even bother to reply and just lightly patted Whitey's wide belly. Ouyang Xiaoyi's eyes lit up and she was overjoyed to see Whitey in action again.

Whitey's mechanical eyes suddenly lit up and flashed red as it mechanically said, "Troublemaker, you will be stripped as an example to others."

Lord Zhang's housekeeper was startled. Putting his hand over his ear, he stretched out his neck and taunted, "What? What are you going to strip?"

"Say it again, what are you going to strip?"

Whitey's mechanical head slightly rotated and locked on the housekeeper. Its mechanical arms instantly reached out and grabbed him.

"Hmph! How impudent!" Lord Zhang's housekeeper coldly snorted with a sullen expression. As a third grade Battle-Maniac, there was no way that he would be afraid of a piece of junk that did not even have the slightest spirit energy.

"I will turn you into scrap metal! Take this, Bone Breaking Palm!"

With a loud shout, the housekeeper imposingly gathered true energy within his body and struck Whitey's mechanical arm with his palm.

Bang!

The result was very different from his expectations.

The fierce palm strike by Lord Zhang's housekeeper was like a drop in the ocean as it made contact with Whitey's arm. Whitey did not even budge from the attack.

"Gosh, darn it!"

The housekeeper's body stiffened as he awkwardly raised his head and made eye contact with Whitey's mechanical eyes. Then, Whitey proceeded to slap the housekeeper into the ground like it was slapping a fly.

The true energy within his body was dispersed in an instant...

The sound of cloth tearing rang out as the housekeeper's clothes were being torn off. After there was only a loincloth left to cover his private parts, he was then thrown out of the store in a parabolic arc.

Everyone in the store was dumbfounded while their eyes were transfixed by the housekeeper's body. As they watched it sail through the air, their entire bodies shuddered.

Zhao Ruge only just arrived at the entrance when a human figure flew out of the store and landed at his feet... For some reason, there was a sense of déjà vu about the situation.

It seemed that every time he went to the store, there would be someone flying out naked.

"I'll say it again, queue up accordingly and do not make any noise. Any violators will be blacklisted," Bu Fang simply said as he swept his eyes over the now silent crowd. Then he turned around and returned to the kitchen.

Ouyang Xiaoyi was standing behind him with her fist clenched. "The smelly boss is really impressive!"

Zhao Ruge shuddered as he recalled his previous nude streaking experience. His original intention to jump queue disappeared as well and he obediently lined up at the back of the queue.

When the Minister of the Left, Zhao Musheng, found out that there was an attempted assassination on the third prince, he sent out his son, Zhao Ruge, to investigate the

store. In the beginning, Zhao Ruge flatly refused. However, when his father promised him a fifth grade Spirit Gathering Pill as a reward, he shamefully compromised.

Xushi was gravely staring at Whitey. Even a fifth grade Battle-King like him felt a slight pressure from it. "This puppet isn't simple."

Great Secretariat Su Yuanqing was pensively nodding his head as well. "This must be the hidden expert of this restaurant."

The two of them looked up and smiled at each other. Then, they lowered their heads and continued to gobble down the food. It was simply too good!

Intimidated by Whitey, the subordinates of the bigwigs were much more docile. The cultivation level of Lord Zhang's housekeeper was considered quite strong among them. However, he was still helplessly stripped naked by Whitey.

Without a doubt, they would only end up the same way if they tried anything. They could only be docile if they did not want to end up naked.

Ouyang Xiaoyi haughtily glanced at them as she memorized their orders and reported them to Bu Fang.

Xishu and Great Secretariat Su reluctantly finished their food with enraptured expressions. There was a reason for the expensive prices of the dishes. The taste was even better than food from the imperial kitchen. Also, the two of them could feel the true energy within their body had increased. It was obvious that the dishes were extraordinary.

As they hurriedly left the store, the people at the start of the queue took their seats. Bu Fang's cooking speed was fast as well, so they did not have to wait for too long.

Without a doubt, everyone who tasted Bu Fang's dishes was completely subdued.

Zhao Ruge's appetite was being triggered as he breathed in the fragrance drifting from the store and watched the customers—that had finished eating—reluctantly leave.

It was his third time coming to the store, but he was unable to taste the dishes the previous times. From the looks of it, they seemed pretty good. He was looking forward to trying them out.

When someone satisfactorily left the store, a joyful expression immediately appeared on Zhao Ruge's face. He elegantly walked into the store and gracefully stopped in front of Ouyang Xiaoyi.

"Oh, it's you, sissy Zhao," Ouyang Xiaoyi looked up and said while pouting. She obviously knew Zhao Ruge.

"For the princess of Ouyang family to humbly become a waitress, what a waste. Tsk, tsk, tsk. I'll have Lees Fish," Zhao Ruge ordered after glancing at the menu. If he had to eat, he would eat the most expensive dish.

"That's none of your concern!" Ouyang Xiaoyi snorted while scrunching her nose.

She turned around and walked to the entrance of the kitchen to report the order. However, before she could shout it out, Bu Fang expressionlessly walked out of the kitchen.

"Today's business hours is over. Customers who haven't eaten, come back tomorrow," Bu Fang simply said.

With his words, the eight people in the queue started to clamor.

"What? We've already waited for close to an hour and you're telling us that you're not cooking anymore?"

"Owner Bu, this is unfair to us! It's still early, so you should continue cooking. We want to taste your dishes."

.....

Bu Fang was unfazed while facing the countless complaints by the crowd.

"I'll say it again. Today's business hours is over. If you want to eat, come early tomorrow. Oh, and please don't make a racket," Bu Fang expressionlessly said.

Behind him, Whitey's mechanical eyes were shining red as they locked on the people who were clamoring. Immediately, these people went silent as if they were being strangled.

With Whitey keeping watch, they could only swallow their anger and resentfully leave while thinking about how to report to their masters.

Zhao Ruge felt as if a countless amount of invisible arrows had pierced his chest. "Damn it, business hours is over again?! Could you not be so punctual?"

"Owner Bu, I'll pay five times the price... I want to order!" Unwilling to give up, Zhao Ruge tried to persuade Bu Fang.

"I refuse. You've already tried to tempt me the previous time," Bu Fang simply said.

"Rules are determined by humans, Owner Bu! Ten times! How about ten times the price? Today, I definitely must try out your dishes," Zhao Ruge gnashed his teeth and said while ominously glaring at Bu Fang.

"No." Bu Fang's heart was bleeding as he resentfully rejected Zhao Ruge. "If you raise your offer once more, I will definitely beat you up!"

Zhao Ruge was so depressed that he wanted to vomit blood. He coldly glanced at Bu Fang, then angrily snorted and stormed out of the store.

Ouyang Xiaoyi's face was filled with admiration as she looked at Bu Fang. She always thought that Bu Fang was a greedy person. She did not think that he would be so principled.

"Smelly boss, the way you rejected that sissy was so handsome!" Ouyang Xiaoyi gave him a thumbs up.

"Haha," Bu Fang expressionlessly smiled.

...

On the next two days, Fang Fang's Little Store was always teeming with people. There were new customers arriving every day. Xushi and Great Secretariat Su would come every single day and were completely subdued by Bu Fang's food.

On the other hand, the Xiao siblings and the third prince, Ji Chengxue, did not appear during that time. Of course, Bu Fang was slightly surprised but did not pay any heed.

And so, the third day arrived.

It was also a very important day in the imperial city.

The number one expert in the imperial city, Great General Xiao Meng, was triumphantly returning after battling the clans outside the empire borders. He was escorting the six leaders of the Heterodox Sect, Death Soul Palace, that he took as prisoners back to the imperial city.

That day, the imperial city was filled with opportunities as the city gates were laid wide open.

Chapter 35: Unsealing the Jar of Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine

In the main street of the imperial city.

Troops in armor were clearing the way and blocking the spectating crowd on both sides of the street. There were crowds of people gathered making a racket. The noise was so loud that it seemed that it was going to capsize the imperial city.

The people were all focusing their attention as they curiously and expectantly looked toward the city gate.

As the icy cold autumn wind blew, the dead leaves on the main street of the imperial city were blown into the air. Since the first group of soldiers entered the city, the mood of the imperial city was somber. The spectating crowd was absolutely silent as hundreds of blood-red flags marched past. It was like a sea of blood as the flags fluttered in the wind.

The troops in armor were marching in step and every single step was filled with a chilly metallic sound as it resounded throughout the imperial city.

Within the troops, the leader was a middle-aged man riding a reddish-brown horse. His sharp gaze and handsome features gave off a commanding aura.

This man was the number one expert in the Light Wind Empire, the Great General Xiao Meng, who was triumphantly returning after battling the Sects.

Within the long and narrow rank of troops, there were six steel prisoner carriages being escorted. The exterior of the cages were splattered with blood, that filled the air with a pungent smell. The carriages were being pulled by gigantic spirit beasts and each step they took made the ground tremble.

Even though the heads of the prisoners within the carriages were lowered and they were barely breathing, their identities were shockingly well-known outside of the border. They were the six leaders of the Heterodox Sect, Death Soul Palace and every single one of them was a sixth grade Battle-Emperor.

Each of them used to be influential and eminent individuals but were now reduced to prisoners.

The carriages were generating a lot of noise as the wheels rolled over the quartzite flooring of the imperial city. The crowd was also loudly cheering after their initial silence.

They were always enthusiastic toward soldiers that returned in triumph and such a victory would definitely be celebrated. As a country became stronger, the citizens would be proud as well. This was the so-called patriotism.

The hardened and disciplined troops were indifferent to the cheers of the crowd. They continued to orderly march toward their destination, the majestic palace.

A tall platform was built at the Gate of Heavenly Mystery Square, in front of the palace. Colorful flags were set up in the surrounding area and were fluttering in the autumn wind.

The palace guards neatly surrounded the Gate of Heavenly Mystery Square to ensure order.

"We welcome the triumphant return of Great General Xiao!"

As the troops stepped into the Gate of Heavenly Mystery, the sharp voice of a eunuch—accompanied with true energy—resounded throughout the entire city and could almost be heard in every nook and cranny. It was soon followed by another round of cheers.

On the platform, an elderly man wearing a dragon robe^[1] was smiling. He gently looked at the homecoming troops and nodded from time to time.

Not far from the elderly man, the crown prince, Ji Chengan, was leisurely standing there in his python robe. On his right was the heroic-looking King Yu, Ji Chengyu, and the third prince, Ji Chengxue.

On the sides of the tall platform, the court officials were standing with their hands in a fist and palm salute. Below the platform, members of the Xiao family were excited as they watched the slow approach of the homecoming troops and were unable to suppress their joyful feelings.

Xiao Meng took off his helmet and walked onto the tall platform. Then he stopped in front of the emperor, knelt down on one knee, then put his hands together in a fist and palm salute and said, "Your servant did not fail Your Majesty's orders. We eliminated over ten thousand members of the Death Soul Palace, killed hundreds of Death Soul Palace experts above third grade Battle-Maniac, captured six of their leaders alive, and triumphantly returned."

"Good! Good! Good! My dear subject, you are truly the pillar of the Light Wind Empire. As long as you are around, my empire is safe!"

The Emperor Ji Changfeng laughed and did not hesitate to give praises.

Soon, a few rituals were neatly and tidily carried out. Everyone meticulously completed their jobs.

"The welcome ceremony has ended. We will now move to the Great Hall to enjoy the celebration feast," the sharp voice of the eunuch resounded throughout the city once more.

...

Bu Fang opened his sleepy eyes. He woke up earlier than usual that day, mainly because he was woken up by the two shouts of a eunuch that came out of nowhere.

After Bu Fang finished washing up, he went into the kitchen and started his daily cooking practice. He took a portion of his practice dishes and served it to the big black dog at the entrance.

As he expressionlessly watched the big black dog gobble down the food, he suddenly had a strange feeling: he felt that he was treating the dog like it was a lord.

After opening up to the store for business, Bu Fang yawned, grabbed a chair and sat down, then started to wait for customers to arrive.

However, after an hour passed... the store was still deserted and without any customer. It was slightly unbelievable for a store that was teeming with customers in the past few days.

"There's something strange going on today. Why isn't there even a single customer? Normally, Fatty Jin and his fat army would have already finished eating and would be paying the bill by now.

"And the little loli did not turn up for work as well. Did the waitress and the diners disappear at the same time or something?"

Bu Fang was silent for a moment, then finally went into the kitchen. He suddenly remembered that Xiaoyi seemed to have mentioned that "Xiao-something" was returning to the imperial city and that she needed to apply for leave.

However, why were the customers missing as well? That was what Bu Fang was concerned about.

The truth was that the customers who ate at his store were all people with status. To celebrate the triumphant homecoming of Xiao Meng, the emperor set up a celebration feast at the Great Hall and invited every renowned and influential person in the imperial city. As Fatty Jin and the rest had all gone to the palace to attend the celebration, it was natural that they were not at the store.

Bu Fang opened up the environment simulation cupboard, then took out an earthen jar—that had half a human's height—and placed it in the middle of the kitchen.

"It takes three days for the wine to be completed, and it has been three days since I placed this jar into the cupboard. This Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine should be ready." Bu Fang suddenly remembered that he was still brewing a jar of wine. He originally planned to take it out that night, but since there were no customers, he decided to take a look.

Taking out three small earthen jars prepared by the system, he was ready to unseal the jar and filter the wine.

In the same instant as he removed the cloth cover that was sealing the earthen jar, a burst of wine aroma gushed out of the jar and rushed into his face.

After deeply inhaling the wine aroma, Bu Fang was slightly shaking as a soft redness appeared on his face.

"The aroma is rich but does not irritate the nose, and strong but not overwhelming..." Bu Fang already had made an evaluation and was slightly joyous.

Taking out a bamboo ladle prepared by the system, Bu Fang reached into the earthen jar and scooped out half a ladle of wine. The exterior of the ladle was verdant while the interior was a yellowish beige. The wine itself was as clear as water, without any impurities to be seen.

As expected of the wine produced by the magnificent Nine Brewing Method, the Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine was true to its name and was as clear as the water found in deep ravines.

Bu Fang brought the ladle closer to his nose and took a deep breath. The rich and thick wine aroma immediately filled his nasal cavities. Before he even drank a single sip of the wine, he was already salivating and slightly intoxicated.

As he poured the wine from the ladle into a blue and white porcelain wine cup, the stream of wine was pristine and transparent, like top-quality wine.

Bu Fang eagerly lifted up the wine cup and brought it to his lips. As the wine entered his mouth, it enveloped his tongue and instantly flowed down his throat. A cold feeling spread through his entire body, then in the next moment, it was like a raging fire was burning in his stomach. Just when the flames were going to overwhelm him, he felt a cold feeling reappearing once more. The heat and the cold were constantly alternating...

"What a fine wine!" Bu Fang smacked his lips with his face filled with enjoyment. Even though he was not knowledgeable when it came to wine, it was the best wine that he had ever tasted.

However, even though the taste was delicious, the aftereffect was too strong. After all, with its complicated brewing process, it was natural that the aftereffect would be strong.

Suppressing the urge to continue drinking, Bu Fang filled up the three small earthen jars and covered them with cloth covers. After pasting a rectangular red paper with the character, "Ice", written on it, the work was finished.

After especially keeping a jar of wine for himself, Bu Fang placed the earthen jar back into the environment simulation cupboard. He was holding the wine cup in his hands as he happily walked back to the front of the store, planning to slowly enjoy it on his own.

However, when he left the kitchen, he discovered someone standing at the entrance. It was a man in black clothing with a black-veiled bamboo hat and a long sword—wrapped in a rag—on his back.

A hoarse voice came out of the man's mouth, with a trace of yearning.

"Shop owner, do you have any fine wine in here?"

[1] Dragon robes(龙袍) - This can only be worn by emperors and as its name implies, images of dragons are sewn on top of it.

[2] Black-veiled bamboo hat (黑纱斗笠) - It's basically a bamboo hat with a veil hanging from the edges to hide the face of the users.

Chapter 36: He Drinks the Bejewelled Nectar, I Taste the Ice Heart Jade Urn

The hoarse voice contained a slight chill and was rough like sandpaper.

Yearning and eagerness could be detected from the other party's tone.

"There's wine, of course," Bu Fang nodded and said. He wanted to slowly enjoy the wine, but since there was a customer, he put down the wine cup from his hands.

That man delightedly stepped into the store, sat down at a table, and hoarsely said, "Owner, give me a jar of wine."

Bu Fang expressionlessly acknowledged with a nod. Then he turned to look at the menu and there was a new dish on it.

"Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine, fifteen crystals per jar."

"It's only fifteen crystals? It's really not expensive." Bu Fang was startled, but quickly understood the reason. Even though the Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine was a fine wine, the ingredients used were not that expensive compared to the other dishes.

It's only selling point was the tedious manufacturing process of the Nine Brewing Method. As for the ingredients, they were considered ordinary. The rice used was a superior type of spirit rice, but was not much better than the Pearl Rice used in Egg-Fried Rice.

"System, isn't the price too cheap?" Bu Fang silently asked the system.

"The price set by the system is reasonable. It is determined by the combination of ingredients, process, and time. The Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine is still a mundane wine after all, so the price won't be too high. Compared to fruit wine and spirit wine made from high grade ingredients, there'll still be quite a difference in price. Fifteen crystals is already the maximum for a mundane wine," the system solemnly explained.

Bu Fang nodded to indicate that he understood.

"The Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine will cost fifteen crystals per jar," Bu Fang expressionlessly said to the man wearing the bamboo hat.

"Fifteen crystals?" The man seemed to be slightly surprised. It seemed slightly ridiculous for a jar of wine to cost fifteen crystals. However, when he looked at the menu, he became silent.

After a while, he said, "I'll have a jar. When I passed by the alleyway earlier on, I was suddenly attracted by the smell of a rich wine aroma that was drifting out. I hope the wine here is worthy of its price."

Quality goods did not need advertising. The corner of Bu Fang's mouth slightly curled up.

"You won't be disappointed by my wine," Bu Fang confidently replied. Then he walked back into the kitchen and took out a jar of Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine from a cupboard.

The small earthen jar was actually not that big and was even smaller than the ordinary jars used to store wine. Bu Fang placed the jar of wine in front of the man wearing the bamboo hat and simply said, "Here's your wine."

The man nodded, then slowly took off his black-veiled bamboo hat and finally unveiled his face.

Bu Fang was slightly surprised by the other party's facial features. Just from looking at the profile, the man seemed familiar to him.

As the other party took off the bamboo hat, a beautiful with a refined aura was revealed. He had a handsome face with eyes as bright as stars and a mouth that smiled naturally.

"That's right! This guy actually resembles that sissy, Xiao Xiaolong!"

"Owner, why are you looking at me like that?" The man chuckled and hoarsely asked.

"You look familiar, that's all. Enjoy your drink," Bu Fang expressionlessly replied. Then he sat down and began to enjoy his own cup of wine.

The man was unconcerned as well. His throat slightly moved as he removed the cloth cover of the wine jar.

A rich wine aroma instantly gushed out like the eruption of a volcano and rushed through his nostrils into the depths of his heart. He was wholeheartedly indulging in the aroma.

He started pouring the wine into the blue and white porcelain wine cup given by Bu Fang. The crystal-clear wine was as pristine as clear springs found in deep mountains and was not murky in the slightest.

"Good wine!" the man was unable to suppress his joy as he softly exclaimed. Then he carefully lifted up the wine cup and slowly drank from it.

As the wine flowed down his throat, it instantly opened up the pores in his body. He violently exhaled as his eyes lit up and were filled with incredulity.

He was completely captivated by the rich aroma and the ice and fire feeling of the wine.

"Good wine! It's comparable to the Bejewelled Nectar Wine from the imperial palace!" the man praised it once more.

It was strong, mellow, and aromatic! It was even able to stimulate the true energy within the body! It was definitely worth more than the fifteen crystals!

"Haha! I didn't think that I would be able to find such a fine wine, I am really lucky! They're drinking the Bejewelled Nectar in the palace, while I am tasting the Ice Heart Jade Urn here. I am not losing out at all." The man laughed and poured another cup of wine. Drinking it down in one go, the spiciness in his throat caused a touch of redness to appear on his fair skin.

Bu Fang was much more refined as he pleasantly sipped from the wine cup. His drinking capacity was not that good, so he only filled a small cup of wine.

"Owner, do you have any dish that goes well with wine?" the man finished a cup of wine, then turned to Bu Fang—who was sipping from the wine cup—and asked.

"No," Bu Fang simply replied.

A slight disappointment appeared on his face, but quickly disappeared as he continued with his drinking.

"Why are you still open for business today? Why didn't you go to watch the homecoming of the Great General Xiao Meng?" the man asked Bu Fang. He was much more talkative after drinking a few cups of wine.

"What does his homecoming have to do with me?" Bu Fang calmly replied.

The man suddenly went into a daze, then started laughing and seemed to be really happy.

"The owner is a hot-blooded person. Let me give you a toast." The man laughed and drank down a cup of wine.

Bu Fang remained expressionless as he continued to leisurely sip from his wine cup.

Someone once said that there were two methods to drink wine. The first method was purely drinking the wine. It was just pouring the wine into the mouth and tasting the mellowness.

The other method was drinking emotions instead of wine. Drinking wine when having different emotions would produce different tastes. That was how a person who truly knew wine would drink.

When someone drank when he was in love, he would be overjoyed. When someone drank when he was angry, he would be daunting even if he was not angry. When someone drank when he was sorrowful, he would become melancholy. When someone drank when he was happy, he would not be able to stop drinking.

"That's right, what does his homecoming have to do with you? No matter how glorious he is, he's still an executioner with blood-stained hands. He's still just a sharp blade in the hands of Ji Changfeng." The man suddenly became melancholy as he rapidly drank cup after cup.

"This is someone with a story," Bu Fang blinked and thought as he continued to sip from his wine cup.

After that, the man spoke very little as he continued to constantly pour and drink the wine. Soon, a jar of Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine was finished and the man seemed to be slightly intoxicated as his eyes turned cloudy.

The intensity of the Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine was unimaginable for Bu Fang. He might be able to drink half a jar of ordinary wine, but he would only be able to drink three cups of the Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine at most.

However, this man was able to completely finish the entire jar and was only slightly intoxicated. His drinking capacity was truly shocking.

"Owner, there's no more wine! Get me another jar," the man said with a frown.

"Each person is limited to one jar," Bu Fang simply replied. He was also finished with the cup of wine in his hands and his face was slightly flushed.

The man banged on the table with his hand and lightly belched as dozens of crystals appeared on the table. "Owner, the amount of crystals is not a problem. Get me another jar."

"The store's rules: each person is limited to one jar," Bu Fang remained unmoved as he expressionlessly replied.

The man frowned, then his hand suddenly banged on the table and the sword that was wrapped up in a rag immediately came out of its sheath.

The cry of the sword incessantly resounded like a dragon's roar within the store.

The man was holding the sword with one hand as he pointed it at Bu Fang. The tip of the sword was only an inch away from Bu Fang's nose and he could even feel the chill emanating from it.

Faint goosebumps instantly covered Bu Fang's entire body, but he remained expressionless.

"Do you know who I am? Do you really dare to not provide wine to me?" The man teasingly said with a smile.

"Why should I care who you are? Are you trying to cause trouble?" Bu Fang simply replied. Even though the tip of the sword was only an inch away, he remained unmoved by it.

The man watched Bu Fang for a while, then sheathed the longsword and wrapped it back in the rags. The sword energy that was raging within the store moments ago vanished.

"The owner is truly a strange person. Here is thirty crystals, I am reserving tomorrow's Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine," the man said with a laugh. Then he put on his bamboo hat, slung his longsword behind his back and headed toward the entrance.

As he reached the entrance, he asked, "Does the owner really not know who I am?"

"I don't know and there's no need for me to know. Anyone who enters my store is a customer. I'll welcome anyone as long as they don't cause trouble," Bu Fang seriously said.

"Hahaha! Good! I, Xiao Yue of the Void Sword Pavilion, acknowledge you as a friend!" The man laughed as he suddenly stepped out of the entrance and disappeared into the windy autumn.

"Xiao Yue? His surname is Xiao..." Bu Fang pondered. However, he pursed his lips and muttered to himself, "What an egoistic fellow. Who acknowledged you as a friend?"

As he finished muttering, the voice of the system suddenly rang out in his mind...

Chapter 37: Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs and Meteor Cutting Technique

"My host, congratulations for earning five hundred crystals and completing a short-term objective, you shall soon receive the system reward. The system reward is being released..."

The system's solemn voice rang out in Bu Fang's mind, startling him and waking him up from his slight intoxication.

He did not even realize that so many days had passed and he had already earned five hundred crystals. Even Bu Fang's expressionless face twitched and a smile appeared as the corners of his mouth curled up.

"Young man aiming to become the God of Cooking, congratulations for completing a short-term sales mission. You have once again taken a step to achieving your goal. Reward: Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs cooking method, Meteor Cutting Technique training method, and one fragment of the God of Cooking Set."

"Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs?!"

When Bu Fang heard the solemn voice of the system say this phrase, he subconsciously swallowed his saliva. He was very familiar with this dish, because it was one of his favorite dishes back on Earth.

Bu Fang was joyous that he finally unlocked a new dish and it was even the Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs. He was so excited that he was walking on air.

A delicious dish of Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs would be extremely fragrant and the meat would be tangerine in color. The taste would be sour-sweet and would be crispy on the outside while remaining tender in the inside. As one bit down on it, the rich fragrance of the meat would create an aromatic explosion in their mouths and mesmerize them.

The Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs was a dish that captivated people.

Bu Fang endured the urge to immediately start cooking the Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs and checked the training method for the Meteor Cutting Technique instead. Strictly speaking, he was not an amateur when it came to handling knives. After all, he had been cooking for many years and had grasped his own set of cutting techniques.

"Meteor Cutting Technique training method: As a young man aiming to become the God of Cooking, you need to be superb with your cutting techniques. The cutting technique training mode will now be activated. Completing the daily cutting technique training will

award you with cutting technique experience points and improve your cutting technique. When you master the Meteor Cutting Technique, your knife will be as swift as a meteorite as you precisely and perfectly cut any ingredient into equal pieces."

Bu Fang was startled, then the character panel naturally appeared in his mind.

Host: Bu Fang

True Energy Cultivation Level: Third Grade (Has already achieved the ability to manifest true energy outside of the body. As the God of Cooking in the fantasy world, you will definitely need to make use of true energy when cooking. Work hard, young man.)

Cooking Talents: Yet to be unlocked

Skills: Level One Meteor Cutting Technique (0/100)

Tools: Fragments of God of Cooking Set (3/4)

God of Cooking overall rating: Apprentice Chef (You can finally cook ingredients with your true energy. Practice your cutting technique and the road to becoming the God of Cooking will open for you. Work hard, young man.)

System Level: Three Stars (Conversion ratio is at twenty-five percent, customers are allowed to bring ingredients lower than fourth grade.)

After Bu Fang finished reading the updated panel, he took a deep breath and exhaled to calm his agitation.

As he lifted up his hand and exerted his will, he felt a snake-like burst of energy swiftly flowing through one of the meridians in his body and gushing out from his palm like a stream of white gas.

Manifestation of true energy! That was the manifestation of true energy! Bu Fang's mouth was wide open in shock. He felt as if he was an expert in the novels and it felt unreal to him.

In order to become a third grade Battle-Maniac, he needed the energy of a hundred crystals and he had earned five hundred crystals. The conversion ratio, when the system level was Two Stars, was at twenty percent. After conversion, the true energy he gained was worth a hundred crystals. Thus, he was able to break through and become a Battle-Maniac.

Bu Fang had just become a second grade Battle-Master a few days ago, and now, he had just broken through once more. Even he found it to be slightly difficult to believe.

If someone else was to witness this, they would be even more astonished.

However, Bu Fang's astonishment did not last long and he quickly calmed down. He was different from the others. Even though his true energy level was at third grade, if he were to fight against Xiao Xiaolong, he would be easily defeated. That was to say that his cultivation level might be high, but his fighting prowess was worthless.

"However, so what if I am useless at fighting? I have Whitey," Bu Fang thought.

"System, how much true energy do I need to reach fourth grade?" Bu Fang asked.

"Fourth grade Battle-Spirit requires a thousand crystals. Fifth grade Battle-King requires ten thousand crystals. Sixth grade Battle-Emperor requires a hundred thousand crystals." the system solemnly replied to Bu Fang.

Bu Fang clutched his chest as he resisted the urge to vomit blood... How frustrating! How many plates of egg-fried rice would he need to sell to get a hundred thousand crystals? It was definitely more than enough for him to sell until his old age.

"It looks like my hopes of covertly acting conceited using my cultivation level in the future is dashed..." Bu Fang regretfully said with a sigh.

"If a sixth grade Battle-Emperor needed a hundred thousand crystals, then a seventh grade Battle-Saint would need a million crystals... My heavens, a million crystals! If it was piled into a mountain, it could even crush me to death.

"If I continue calculating, an eighth grade War-God... Good heavens!"

Bu Fang shuddered and did not dare to continue thinking about it. He calmed down. Whatever seventh grade or eighth grade was something completely unrelated to him at this point. There was no need for him to think about it right now. Bu Fang felt that his current life was not bad.

After the opening hours was over, Bu Fang immediately closed the store's entrance and headed into the kitchen to do some research on the tantalizing Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs.

...

Great Hall of the imperial palace.

The doors of the majestic Great Hall were wide open as row upon row of slim and beautiful court ladies entered while carrying delicious dishes into the hall.

As the sound of the pipa^[1] resounded in the air, the sound of the se^[2] responded in kind.

The scene within the Great Hall was filled with festivity.

At the highest point in the Great Hall, the emperor was sitting on a gold-colored wooden zen chair[3]. The table in front of him was filled with delicious dishes while two beautiful court ladies were gently waving a fan.

Seated below the emperor, on the left was the handsome and talented Great General Xiao Meng and the smiling crown prince, Ji Chengan. On the right was the second prince, King Yu, and the third prince, Ji Chengxue; the mood between the two princes was slightly cold and awkward.

Further below them were the court officials of the Light Wind Empire and the prestigious guests invited to the feast.

The family members of the Xiao and Ouyang families were seated together. Ouyang Xiaoyi was sitting next to Xiao Yanyu and was chatting with her.

Xiao Xiaolong, on the other hand, was excitedly staring at a sapphire jar that was storing the wine, the Bejewelled Nectar.

Like Xiao Xiaolong, the three barbarians of Ouyang were licking their lips as they stared at the wine jar.

There was a similarity between the two families and that was the dishes in front of them, which were relatively untouched. It was a strange sight within the Great Hall.

These dishes were all personally prepared by the imperial kitchen's chefs. The taste was definitely delicious and it could be said to be the most delicious food within the Light Wind Empire. However, the Xiao siblings and Ouyang siblings all stopped eating after they each took a single bite.

"This dish tastes really bad. It's far worse than the smelly boss' food..." Ouyang Xiaoyi said as she disdainfully used her chopsticks to play around with a piece of fish. She had no appetite at all.

Even though the same disdainful look did not appear on Xiao Yanyu's beautiful face, there was no sign that her chopsticks were going to move. She was only calmly watching the scene within the Great Hall.

"The only reason that we're here is for the Bejewelled Nectar Wine. If it wasn't for the fact that Owner Bu's store doesn't have wine, I wouldn't even bother to come to the feast today. These dishes can't even compare to Owner Bu's Egg-Fried Rice!" Xiao Xiaolong said with a sigh.

When the three barbarians of Ouyang heard what he said, they fiercely nodded and Ouyang Zhen said, "Owner Bu's Lees Fish is truly delicious, even people like us with bland taste buds were subdued!"

"Tch! You're just exaggerating. How could a lousy store like that have any delicious food?" Zhao Ruge was just elegantly sitting nearby. When he heard the conversation, he immediately sneered at them.

"What are you laughing at! If I say it's delicious, then it's delicious!" Ouyang Zhen said while angrily staring at Zhao Ruge.

"The chefs of the imperial kitchen were personally selected by His Majesty from among famous chefs within the empire. They went through numerous strict screening to become an imperial chef. How could a mere chef from a restaurant in an alleyway compare to them? If you're praising him, are you suggesting that His Majesty is unable to discern talent?" Zhao Ruge simply said.

Even though Ouyang Xiaoyi felt that the smelly boss was a terrible person, she did not like it when someone said bad things about him. Her large eyes were staring at Zhao Ruge as she poutingly said, "Have you eaten smelly boss' dishes? If you haven't eaten it before, then be quiet!"

Zhao Ruge's expression froze and he felt as if an invisible arrow had pierced into his chest.

"The next dish, the Bejewelled Nectar Wine!"

Just when Zhao Ruge was about to retaliate, the sharp voice of a eunuch resounded out. Then all of the guests started cheering as the climax of the feast finally arrived.

Zhao Ruge snorted, then pointed toward the sapphire jars that were stacked together and said, "Do you see the Bejewelled Nectar Wine? Just this wine is enough to compare against all of the dishes in that entire restaurant!"

Bejewelled Nectar Wine was the number one wine in the Light Wind Empire... He was that confident in it!

[1] Pipa(琵琶) - It is a Chinese string instrument that is also known as Chinese lute.

[2] Se(锦) - It is a Chinese plucked zither.

[3] Zen chair(禅椅) - It's a short wooden chair with a low back, where people would sit cross-legged on it.

Chapter 38: A Loli with a Venomous Tongue Would Not Be Able to Get Married

"What did you say?!" Ouyang Xiaoyi was very unhappy as she yelled and stared at Zhao Ruge while pouting her lips.

"How could the Bejewelled Nectar Wine compare to the smelly boss' entire restaurant? Is this Zhao Ruge an idiot? Does he really understand the smelly boss' restaurant? Even though the Bejewelled Nectar Wine was expensive, a jar was only five hundred gold coins. That's not even comparable to a plate of ordinary Egg-Fried Rice!" Ouyang Xiaoyi thought.

"Ouyang Xiaoyi, did I say something wrong? How much could a store located in a godforsaken alleyway be worth anyway?" Zhao Ruge said with a sneer as he ignored the loli's furious gaze.

"Hmph! Your words just exposed the fact that you've never tasted the smelly boss' dishes!" Ouyang Xiaoyi snorted and disdainfully turned her head. "If you had really tasted them, then you wouldn't have said that. You can try asking anyone who has tasted Owner Bu's dishes and see if their answer is as ignorant as yours."

"Ignorance isn't scary. What's scary is that you're acting conceited when you don't know anything!"

Zhao Ruge's handsome face turned sour and was so exasperated that he almost vomited blood. How did he not realize before that this Ouyang Xiaoyi had such a venomous tongue! A loli with a venomous tongue would not be able to get married!

When Xiao Yanyu and the rest saw the disgraced Zhao Ruge, they could not help but burst out laughing. This made Zhao Ruge's face turn ever more sour and he felt as if the entire world was laughing at him.

And like he thought, Xiao Yanyu and the rest were laughing at his ignorance.

"Young masters, this is the Bejewelled Nectar Wine bestowed by His Majesty. Please give it a taste." Several slim and beautiful court ladies with voices as soft as foam were carrying sapphire jars as they slowly approached each table and carefully poured out the wine.

"The Bejewelled Nectar Wine is so in demand that even the imperial city is only supplied with two thousand jars each year at most. This time, His Majesty took out five hundred jars to celebrate General Xiao's victory. You people should properly taste such a fine wine that you would never be able to taste in that pathetic little store!" Zhao Ruge lifted up the wine cup and sneered.

Xiao Xiaolong and the three barbarians of Ouyang were already captivated by the appearance of the wine.

"Hmph! Who told you that the smelly boss doesn't have any wine? He's brewing it right now!" Now wanting to admit defeat, Ouyang Xiaoyi said.

Zhao Ruge's eyes lit up. "Oh, then let's have a wager. How about we bet whether the wine in that store can compare with the Bejewelled Nectar Wine?"

"Wager? Are you trying to bet with our little sister?!" Before Ouyang Xiaoyi could accept the bet, the three barbarians of Ouyang were infuriated.

The Ouyang family had always been paying close attention to the ideological education of their descendants and were especially strict with Ouyang Xiaoyi. Normally, they would be urging her to practice martial arts and embroidery to develop her into a virtuous, beautiful, intelligent, athletic young woman.

"The first thing this Zhao Ruge mentioned was a wager; is he trying to misguide our little sister?"

"I'll accept your wager," the three barbarians of Ouyang were able to prevent Ouyang Xiaoyi from accepting the bet, but the quiet Xiao Yanyu suddenly opened her delicate, red lips and softly said.

Everyone was shocked that the goddess, Xiao Yanyu, would accept the wager with Zhao Ruge.

"Excellent! And if the goddess loses, you will be accompanying me for moon-viewing aboard a boat for a night. How about it?" Zhao Ruge was elated. He just realised that even the reserved and cool-headed Xiao Yanyu could be impulsive at times.

Xiao Yanyu faintly smiled. Her beautiful face was as pretty as a picture and captivated anyone who was looking at her.

"Fine, but if you lose, you'll give me a fifth grade Spirit Gathering Pill," Xiao Yanyu indifferently said. Her voice that was as beautiful as the song of birds sounded like thunder as it resounded in Zhao Ruge's ears.

"This... A fifth grade Spirit Gathering Pill is a little..." Zhao Ruge was slightly hesitating. Honestly speaking, wagering a Spirit Gathering Pill was not something he could afford to do.

"You bastard, you were so full of it when you were trying to wager with my sister. Now that the goddess is wagering with you, you're acting like a dog? Are you looking down on my sister or something?" Ouyang Zhen shouted while pointing at Zhao Ruge.

"He's afraid of losing," Ouyang Xiaoyi said with a sneer as she crossed her arms across her chest.

Lose? Would he really lose? Would the calculating Zhao Ruge, who devised a strategy to kill a fifth grade Battle-King—when he was only a third grade Battle-Maniac—really be afraid of losing... No, would he really lose?

"I accept! There's no way that kind of store would have any decent wine at all," Zhao Ruge said with a snort.

...

As the celebration feast was ongoing in the Great Hall, Bu Fang was merrily sharpening his knife in the kitchen.

He took out an ingredient prepared by the system from the freezer.

The part of the boar used in the Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs was the meat near the spine. The spine would first be chopped into pieces and starch would be applied to it. Then, each piece would be deep fried in a wok filled with oil. Finally, a special sweet and sour sauce would be poured onto it to complete the dish.

The prime rib placed on the chopping board was not the same as the one used in the Golden Shumai, the Flame Boar. The fat and tender ribs were filled with spirit energy and the marbling was clear like a piece of drawing. It was obviously not an ordinary piece of pork.

"This pork comes from a fifth grade spirit beast that roams in Mount Tiandang, the Flying Cloud Boar. It was named for the white patches on its black fur that resembled clouds and its fast movement speed. The Flying Cloud Boar has strong and muscular thighs that taste terrible. However, the meat around the area of its spine is not only fresh and tender, but is filled with spirit energy as well. The quality of the meat is excellent."

"The meat of a fifth grade spirit beast... This is very precious." Bu Fang's eyes lit up as he picked up a kitchen knife and tried to chop up the prime ribs. Surprisingly, the ribs remained intact and the rebound force even caused Bu Fang's arm to go numb.

"As expected, the meat of a fifth grade spirit beast is truly extraordinary..." Bu Fang said with a sigh, then he continued to persevere in chopping and tenderizing the meat...

After separating the prime ribs into individual ribs, he placed them into starch paste that he had just prepared. The source of the starch paste was remarkable as well. It was made from a spirit potato found in the central wastelands of the Light Wind Empire.

After all of the pieces of meat were coated in starch, Bu Fang began to prepare a wok filled with oil. He used a high quality oil to fill up half of the wok and waited for the temperature to rise.

Holding his palm above the surface of the oil, he could feel the heat coming from it. When the heat was just hot enough to scald his hand, Bu Fang placed all of the starch-coated ribs into the wok.

Pssst!

As the pieces of meat were quickly turning within the oil, the starch on the exterior started to rapidly turn light yellow...

Bu Fang was using a long chopstick to constantly turn each piece of meat. He was skillfully ensuring that every single piece was being perfectly cooked to ensure they all had the same taste.

As the starch on the exterior of every piece started to turn into a darker shade of yellow, Bu Fang scooped all of them up and placed them into a big pottery bowl. There was still oil seeping out from the starch on the surface.

Bu Fang was experienced with making the sweet and sour sauce. The system had already prepared the needed ingredients and the amount used was left up to him.

Very quickly, the tangerine sweet and sour sauce was prepared and the pieces of meat inside the big pottery bowl had also slightly cooled down. Even though there was still steam coming from them, oil had stopped seeping from the starch. He poured the sweet and sour sauce into the big pottery bowl, then stirred it for a while and was ready to place it on a plate.

From pouring the sweet and sour sauce to lightly mixing the pieces of meat, the entire process should not exceed thirty seconds. This really tested Bu Fang's skills, as he needed to be fast to ensure that each piece was evenly coated with the sauce.

Placing the pieces of meat onto the oval blue and white porcelain plate, a delicious, aromatic, tantalizing plate of Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs was completed.

A sweet and sour fragrance was drifting in the air and was continuously rushing into his nasal cavities, making him unable to help but swallow his saliva.

Grabbing a pair of bamboo chopsticks, Bu Fang carried the plate of Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs to the dining area. As he walked, the fragrance would constantly drift to his face, causing him to salivate and increasing his eagerness to taste the dish.

The fragrance of the Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs was very rich and was a mixture of sweet, sour and meat.

The big black dog lying at the entrance was sleeping, but its eyes suddenly opened. They were so bright that it was like a light bulb was turned on in the darkness. Within an instant, the dog disappeared into the store.

And so, as Bu Fang was about to send a piece of Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs into his mouth, he realized that a pair of bright doggy eyes was staring at... the piece of meat clasped between his chopsticks.

Chapter 39: Slicing a Thousand Radishes

They were as bright as a full moon in darkness and as clear as a white spot in black ink.

The eyes of the big black dog were staring straight at the steaming piece of ribs—coated with the tangerine sweet and sour sauce and exuding a tempting fragrance—between Bu Fang's chopsticks.

The craving bursting out from the eyes of the dog made Bu Fang jump up in shock.

"My gosh! Blacky, do you know how frightening it is when you suddenly appear like that?" Bu Fang's hand trembled and almost dropped the piece of Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs.

Blacky's tongue was hanging out of its mouth as it stared at Bu Fang.

"Do you want to eat this?" Bu Fang expressionlessly waved the piece of Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs around and Blacky cooperatively nodded its head with its tongue hanging out.

Bu Fang's stiff face was unmoved as the corner of his mouth widened into a smile. Then he opened his mouth and shoved the fat and tender Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs into his mouth in one go.

His entire mouth was bulging with the Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs as he started to bite down and chew. There was even some tangerine sweet and sour sauce stains on his lips.

Blacky's eyes had been staring at that Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs. When it discovered Bu Fang was about to eat the piece of rib, its eyes turned dark and lost its will to continue living as it felt the entire sky was about to collapse.

"How infuriating! This human is definitely doing this on purpose!" Blacky thought.

For the sake of that piece of rib, Blacky was enraged. Its hackles were raised as it bared its teeth while staring at Bu Fang.

Bu Fang, at that moment, did not have the time to care about Blacky. The extremely good taste of the meat of the Flying Cloud Boar was bursting out from within his mouth. The rich fragrance of the meat was like a bomb as it instantly exploded and completely collapsed his taste buds.

The perfectly-done sweet and sour sauce flawlessly mixed with high-grade pork was neither too sour nor too sweet.

The texture of the meat was not hard and after a perfectly controlled deep-fry, it became appropriately crispy. The taste of the starch coating mixed with pork was extremely delicious.

The pork used was the meat near the spine and had become soft and tender after Bu Fang had sufficiently tenderized it. There was even some crunchy cartilage mixed inside, which made creaking sounds when chewed and also slightly increased its tastiness.

Bu Fang's eyes completely lit up as his chopsticks picked up another piece of Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs and shoved it into his mouth with lightning speed. His eyes were narrowed as he enjoyably chewed the ribs in his mouth while being captivated within the sea of fragrance.

The big black dog was furious! It was shaking its tail as it paced around. Its doggy eyes were filled with conflict as it thought, "Should I directly snatch the ribs from this foolish human?"

"No, what if this human refuses to feed this handsome dog later? This handsome dog's taste has already been spoiled by the foolish human's cooking!"

"Should I snatch it? Or should I not snatch it?" As the amount of Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs rapidly disappeared from the blue and white porcelain plate, Blacky felt as if its heart was constantly being emptied...

Finally, there was only a single piece left on the plate.

Bu Fang's chopsticks had already slowly landed on that final piece of rib. As the chopsticks clamped onto the meat, the sweet and sour sauce coated on it splattered everywhere and filled the air with a fragrant scent.

Blacky's eyes were almost filled with tears as it stared at the final piece!

Bu Fang's mouth was still chewing; his expression was both comical and hilarious, and might be his most colorful expression ever.

"Here, take it. It looks like I am still too kind-hearted." Bu Fang simply said as he handed over the final piece to Blacky.

Blacky was immediately overjoyed. Its doggy eyes were filled with an inexplicable light as it ate the piece of rib in one bite.

The rich aroma of the meat bursted out within Blacky's mouth and its entire body shivered. With a face filled with pleasure, it lightly howled out.

Bu Fang was dumbfounded... How did it turn from a dog into a wolf just by eating a piece of meat?

After swallowing the piece of rib, Blacky was still slightly unsatisfied. However, that heinous Bu Fang had already finished all of the ribs. It could only helplessly return to the entrance and resume its sleep.

Bu Fang leisurely cleaned up the plate and went to bed.

The next morning, Bu Fang got out of bed early.

He went into the kitchen after washing up. He specially got up earlier that day in order to practice the Meteor Cutting Technique mentioned by the system. From the sound of it, it seemed pretty impressive.

The moment Bu Fang entered the kitchen, his line of sight was immediately attracted by a kitchen knife that was both thick and big.

"Please slice a thousand radishes using this custom-made kitchen knife within an hour. Every single piece should be exactly the same. After finishing, you shall be awarded with ten points of Meteor Cutting Technique Proficiency," the system solemnly said.

Slicing a thousand radishes within an hour and each piece had to be exactly the same... It was almost an impossible mission for an ordinary chef, but it was not that difficult for Bu Fang.

However, when he grabbed the thick and big custom-made kitchen knife, his entire face darkened.

The kitchen knife made from unknown materials was extremely heavy. When using a single hand, Bu Fang could only lift it up. It would be too difficult if he had to use this kitchen knife to complete the mission.

"System, are you deliberately making things difficult for me?" Bu Fang asked the system with a cold expression.

"As a young man aiming to become the God of Cooking, are you telling me that you can't take a little hardship? The road to becoming the God of Cooking isn't easy. Young man, you need to learn to endure hardships. The system thinks highly of you, work hard," the system seriously encouraged him, causing Bu Fang to be dumbfounded.

He knew that arguing with the system was pointless, so he could only train according to the requirements.

Retrieving a white and plump radish, Bu Fang lifted the kitchen knife and started to skillfully dice it. The radish was only an ordinary white radish, but the quality was extremely good and was both succulent and plump.

After the first radish was done, Bu Fang expressionlessly grabbed the second one and immediately started dicing it. Since he had already started the training, then he would wholeheartedly engage in it. A cutting technique was actually a type of skill that needed attentiveness and paying attention was the only way to perfect the skill.

And so, the sound of a kitchen knife colliding with a chopping board rang out from Fang Fang's Little Store since early in the morning.

...

"Eh? Smelly boss didn't open the store for business today?"

As Ouyang Xiaoyi and the rest arrived at Fang Fang's Little Store, they discovered that there was already a group of people queuing up at the entrance. Many of them were trying to peek into the store with faces filled with doubt.

"Hmph! Don't tell me he found out about our wager and is afraid of opening for business?" Zhao Ruge, dressed in white, was elegantly sneering.

"Owner Bu is afraid? Are you here to make jokes? You just have to obediently wait and hand over the fifth grade Spirit Gathering Pill to elder sister Yanyu!" the little loli snorted in reply.

The three barbarians of Ouyang and the Xiao siblings were there as well. They were also baffled by the fact that the store was not open for business yet.

"It could be that Owner Bu was delayed by some matter." Xiao Yanyu gently said with her beautiful voice, "Let's wait for a while."

Just as her voice faded, the entrance of the store suddenly opened and Bu Fang expressionlessly appeared in front of their eyes.

"The store is open for business," Bu Fang simply said, then turned around and went back in.

There were only eight people in the queue and even after adding Zhao Ruge and the rest, there were only fifteen customers.

Ouyang Xiaoyi eagerly ran in to help while taking the opportunity to conveniently inquire the smelly boss about the status of the wine brewing.

"Eh? Smelly boss, why does your hand keep shaking?" Ouyang Xiaoyi curiously stared at Bu Fang's hand that was continuously twitching.

Bu Fang glanced at her and simply said, "It's nothing, it'll be fine after a while."

His hand was shaking because he had been slicing radishes with that heavy kitchen knife for over an hour... It would be shaking even if he had used an ordinary kitchen knife, not to mention that heavy custom-made kitchen knife.

Soon, the system manipulated a stream of gentle energy to flow into Bu Fang's arm, causing the numbness and the spasm to disappear.

Fatty Jin and his buddies excitedly ordered their dishes and Xiaoyi did not immediately inform Bu Fang about the wager. After Fatty Jin and company were satisfied, it was finally the turn of Zhao Ruge and the rest who had just stepped into the store.

As Zhao Ruge stepped into the store, he suddenly had an inexplicable urge to cry... He would finally be able to taste the store's dishes!

"Smelly boss, this fellow is wagering that your wine is inferior to the imperial palace's Bejewelled Nectar!" As Zhao Ruge and the rest entered, Ouyang Xiaoyi loudly said to Bu Fang.

Bu Fang was slightly startled, but then expressionlessly replied, "Bejewelled Nectar Wine... is nothing."

Chapter 40: Compared to my Wine, the Others Are Garbage

"The Bejewelled Nectar Wine is nothing?!" The moment those words were said, the mood within the store slightly froze.

The three barbarians of Ouyang and Xiao Xiaolong were staring at Bu Fang. They were wine lovers and the Bejewelled Nectar Wine was the best wine they had ever tasted. However, when coming out of Bu Fang's mouth, it was... nothing?

"Haha! Smelly boss, the way you said it was really handsome!" Ouyang Xiaoyi happily exclaimed while clapping her hands. She liked the kind of self-confident feeling that Bu Fang had.

"Tch, he's just a country bumpkin. Has he even tasted the Bejewelled Nectar Wine? He's only speaking nonsense." Zhao Ruge disdainfully snorted and pursed his lips. How could the owner of a little restaurant like Bu Fang know the taste of the number one wine in the Light Wind Empire that was personally picked out by the emperor from tens of thousands of wine?

Bu Fang knitted his eyebrows and looked toward Zhao Ruge. He was very familiar with this fellow, only because Zhao Ruge had tried to bribe him with money over and over again.

"Compared to my wine... the other mundane wines are garbage."

Bu Fang simply said with bursting self-confidence. He was absolutely confident of the Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine.

"Owner Bu, you have wine here?" Xiao Xiaolong's eyes lit up and a slight redness appeared on his fair face from agitation.

Bu Fang just pointed toward the menu behind him and did not say anything.

Everyone understood what he meant and turned their heads to look toward the menu...

"Sss~"

This sound was made by Zhao Ruge. It was his first time stepping into the store and his first time seeing the menu. Even though he had heard much about the astronomical prices of the dishes, he still sucked in a breath of cold air when he personally saw the prices.

Ouyang Xiaoyi and the rest immediately rolled their eyes at him. What a country bumpkin... Was there a need to act so surprised?

"Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine, fifteen crystals per jar," Xiao Xiaolong softly read out.

"As expected, Owner Bu's dishes are expensive as usual," Xiao Yanyu let out a beautiful exclamation. Fifteen crystals per jar of wine was far more expensive than the Bejewelled Nectar Wine, which only cost five hundred gold coins.

With such a comparison between the two solely based on their prices, Bejewelled Nectar Wine was truly... nothing.

"Fifteen crystals per jar? Have you gone crazy? Are you sure your wine is worth this price?" Zhao Ruge could not believe it. Five hundred gold coins per jar for the Bejewelled Nectar Wine was already considered an astronomical price. Fifteen crystals... was practically insane!

"Owner Bu! There's no need to say anything else, I want a jar! Thankfully, my incredible foresight had already predicted that Owner Bu's wine would definitely not be cheap so I brought a lot of crystals," Xiao Xiaolong excitedly said toward Bu Fang.

"Owner Bu, the three of us want a jar as well! If the Lees Fish is already so delicious, then this wine is surely good as well!" Ouyang Zhen carefreely said.

Zhao Ruge raised his eyebrows as he looked toward Xiao Xiaolong and the three barbarians of Ouyang in surprise. They actually bought such an expensive wine... Could it be that the wine was really that good?

Immediately, Zhao Ruge made up his mind. He gritted his teeth and said, "I want a jar as well!"

"Hmph! I'd like to see for what reason a wine from such a place could actually sell for fifteen crystals!" Zhao Ruge thought.

"Excuse me, there's only three jars of Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine for sale per day. If you want to order it, you'll have to come again tomorrow," Bu Fang indifferently glanced toward Zhao Ruge and expressionlessly said.

Zhao Ruge froze for a moment and his eyes were immediately filled with anger as he thought, "You're rejecting me again! Do you have a grudge against me?"

"Didn't you say that there are three jars per day? Since Xiao Xiaolong and the Ouyang brothers are buying two jars, isn't there one more jar left that you can sell to me? Are you looking down on me?"

Zhao Ruge was infuriated.

Facing the somewhat exasperated and furious Zhao Ruge, Bu Fang was slightly baffled and puzzled. However, his face was still indifferent as he replied, "The last jar is already reserved."

"Reserved? An excuse... That's definitely an excuse!" Zhao Ruge thought. Looking at that Bu Fang's expressionless face, he was tempted to throw his shoe at him. That face definitely deserved a beating!

"Then tell me, who reserved the third jar of wine? I'll go and throw money at him until he gives it up!" Zhao Ruge said with a gloomy expression.

"Oh, that's up to you. I don't care as long as you're not causing trouble within the store," Bu Fang simply said, then turned around and headed toward the kitchen. However, when he reached the entrance, he suddenly turned back and curiously asked, "Are you not going to order other dishes? Are you only going to drink?"

"I'd like to have Golden Shumai," Xiao Yanyu softly said.

Xiao Xiaolong was grinning as he ordered the improved Egg-Fried Rice. The three barbarians of Ouyang ordered a portion of Lees Fish as usual since that was the only dish they could taste.

"What about you?" Bu Fang's gaze landed on Zhao Ruge.

Zhao Ruge narrowed his eyes and said, "Give me the Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs! If I am going to eat, I'll eat the most expensive dish!"

The others were surprised and that was when they realized that there was actually a new dish on the menu. Their attentions were all attracted by the Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine just now.

"Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs? Hmm, alright." Bu Fang nodded and went into the kitchen.

The Sweet 'n' Sour Ribs, which cost fifty crystals, was the most expensive dish within the store so far.

"Zhao Ruge, did you bring enough crystals?" Ouyang Xiaoyi could not help but ask. Even the princess of the Ouyang family was slightly shocked by the price of fifty crystals for a dish.

"I don't lack money, so what if it costs fifty crystals? You better not forget about our wager. Yanyu, just wait for our moon-viewing boat trip." Zhao Ruge confidently smiled. As the son of the Minister of the Left, he had his personal properties within the imperial city. Fifty crystals was truly nothing to him.

Actually, when cultivators reached the level of fifth grade Battle-King, the crystals they needed for their cultivation were in the thousands. In order to achieve a breakthrough, they would even need to accumulate up to tens of thousands of crystals.

That was the reason why crystals were nothing to higher level cultivators. Even though Zhao Ruge was not a high level cultivator, he had a lot of properties. There was also the fact that the target market for his businesses were cultivators, so he did not lack crystals.

Zhao Ruge was faintly smiling as he sat down on a chair. He took out the sapphire jar, that contained the Bejewelled Nectar Wine, which he brought. He also brought his own wine cups and started to fill them. Then he beckoned toward Xiao Yanyu and the rest, and said, "Come and sit down. Let's taste the Bejewelled Nectar Wine first."

There was a reason why the Bejewelled Nectar Wine was selected by the emperor to be the royal wine and was rated as the number one wine in the Light Wind Empire. As soon as the cups were filled, a rich wine aroma instantly diffused into the air.

Xiao Xiaolong and the three barbarians of Ouyang were already close to losing their restraints on themselves.

However, just when they were about to taste the Bejewelled Nectar Wine, a figure slowly stepped into the store. It was as if the composed footsteps were filled with a strange magic.

Everyone's gaze was attracted by that figure at the entrance.

Dressed in a black robe, he was carrying a longsword wrapped in a rag and wore a black-veiled bamboo hat. His tall and slim figure was exuding a mysterious aura.

The moment that person stepped into the store, it seemed as if the atmosphere had turned slightly colder.

The muscles on the three barbarians of Ouyang suddenly constricted as they alertly looked at the mysterious man wearing a bamboo hat. They could feel an extremely terrifying aura from him.

The aura caused the true energy within their body to automatically circulate... That was the self-defense mechanism that occurs during a crisis.

Xiao Yanyu and Xiao Xiaolong were startled for a moment and they started to closely watch the man as well. They felt the gaze behind the black veil seemed to have landed on them.

"Who are you?!" Zhao Ruge knitted his eyebrows and coldly asked. He felt that the man was slightly strange.

With the current unstable situation within the imperial city, many experts from the sects were hiding within. Perhaps... this man was an expert from the sects as well.

"Me? I am just a diner." A hoarse voice like sandpaper rang out. The mysterious man directly sat down at the table near the entrance and placed the longsword wrapped in a rag onto the table.

The rag was slightly decrepit and had lost its color and become stiff after numerous washing.

"You... What are you ordering?" Ouyang Xiaoyi shyly asked. She was frightened by the man's aura.

"I reserved a jar of Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine from Owner Bu yesterday. I am specially here today to retrieve the wine," the man continued to speak using a hoarse voice.

"Retrieve the wine?!"

Everyone was surprised for a moment, then weirdly looked toward Zhao Ruge. That fellow seemed to have said that he would throw money to buy the last jar of Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine from the person who reserved it.

Zhao Ruge was startled, then the corner of his mouth curled up. He elegantly sat down opposite to the man and confidently said, "Sell the Ice Heart Jade Urn Wine to me. I'll give you three times the price."

"I am not selling," the man indifferently replied.

Zhao Ruge frowned and continued to say, "Five times the price."

"I said, I am not selling."

"Do you know who I am? Are you trying to offend me?" Zhao Ruge threatened with a cold expression. After his two consecutive offers were rejected, Zhao Ruge was furious as well.

Finally, the man seemed to lift his gaze and look at Zhao Ruge. His hoarse voice, as alarming as the sound of thunder, sounded out.

"Even if the Minister of the Left was here, he wouldn't dare to speak to me that way. Who... do you think you are?"