

Little Girl 801

Chapter 801: Cloud of Suspicion

The Three Corpses Poison on Chu Beiqing has always been a knot in Xin Lin's heart.

She initially thought that the poison was administered by Chu Tianyi.

However, understanding the toxicity of the Three Corpses Poison made her certain that Chu Tianyi did not possess the medical skill to do so.

The appearance of Young Prince Tu further confirmed this for Xin Lin.

The Three Corpses Poison can be resolved, but what Xin Lin is more concerned about is the strange seal in Chu Beiqing's mind, which she suspects was crafted by the Poison Saint.

Unfortunately, Chu Beiqing remembers nothing of the past.

Xin Lin asked several times about the Poison Saint and Tu Yuan Country, but he was clueless.

"Tu Yuan Country? Your father has no feud with Tu Yuan Country; actually, he once went to the Taiyi Sacred Institute there for further study. You, as an apprentice at the Medical Hall, might not know this, but to become an Imperial Physician, one must study at Taiyi Sacred Institute for a few years. Your father spent three years there while young, although his personality makes any offense difficult to ascertain."

Chu Tianyi recalled and remembered some past events.

He looked at Chu Beiqing.

In his early years, Chu Beiqing was brilliant in medical skills and martial arts, with outstanding talent.

However, he had a very cold personality, indifferent to his family members, except being always on good terms with Emperor Longteng.

He was not talkative, easily offending people.

In a foreign land, causing trouble wouldn't be surprising.

Ironically, after recognizing his daughter, Chu Beiqing seemed much more amiable, especially when he saw Xin Lin, he always smiled foolishly.

Chu Beiqing was squatting aside, watching a line of fruit ants crawling by; he seemed unconcerned about the previous turmoil.

For some reason, Chu Tianyi suddenly had a feeling.

Perhaps, for Chu Beiqing, the life at present is the happiest.

"Taiyi Sacred Institute..."

Xin Lin pondered for a while, and didn't say any more.

After leaving the Imperial Palace, Xin Lin did not immediately return to Qingtian Academy, but strolled around the city with her foolish father.

She sent twenty bottles of Jade Pure Spring to Jiang Qing, and then returned to the Chu Mansion to inform Ma Jingtian and the others that Chu's Restaurant could reopen.

"Little Boss, can we really reopen?"

Chu's Restaurant has been closed for over a month, and Ma Jingtian and the others were getting restless; if they waited any longer, they might have returned to their previous trades.

"Reopen today, and spread some notices around the city stating that Chu's Restaurant is reopening. For three days, there will be a 30% discount, with a daily limit of two hundred White Jade Steamed Buns and Pork Cabbage Buns. Also, deliver one hundred buns to Taichang Temple."

Xin Lin was someone who clearly distinguished between kindness and revenge.

She knew very well that besides her meticulous planning, Monk Fengxi also played a huge part in the reopening of Chu's Restaurant.

"Alright!"

Ma Jingtian and the others, hearing this, cheerfully went to prepare for the reopening of Chu's Restaurant.

Meanwhile, Xin Lin headed to Taoyao Pavilion.

With Master Ji being dismissed, Taoyao Pavilion was left without a head chef, and she needed to discuss with the owner about this issue.

Though she was already a three-star Spiritual Delicacy Master, she was still studying at Qingtian Academy, and couldn't assist Taoyao Pavilion regularly.

Xin Lin considered finding a new head chef.

As she entered Taoyao Pavilion, she heard an arrogant voice.

"De Yue Building offering 200,000 taels for Taoyao Pavilion is already considerate. If you refuse to sell, believe it or not, the Spiritual Cuisine Master Association will strip away your Four-star Spiritual Food Restaurant's title."

It's him again.

Upon hearing the voice, Xin Lin knew it was Master Chen causing trouble again.

Chapter 802: Three-star Spiritual Delicacy Master

Master Chen brought a group of Martial Artist-looking thugs, along with some Spiritual Cuisine Masters from the Spiritual Cuisine Master Association, looking aggressive, blocking the entrance of the Taoyao Pavilion.

"I've said it several times, not selling means not selling. The Taoyao Pavilion has been operating for over twenty years, and just this land is worth no less than 200,000 taels."

The usually amiable owner was also clearly displeased.

Ever since Master Ji passed away, Master Chen has been eyeing the Taoyao Pavilion covetously.

"If you won't sell, then we'll remove the Spiritual Food Restaurant's sign. In your building, two head chefs have died one after another, clearly under a curse. I want to see who would still dare to come to the Taoyao Pavilion!"

Master Chen sneered.

Although De Yue Building's reputation is bigger than Taoyao Pavilion, the Taoyao Pavilion, being both a brothel and a Spiritual Food Restaurant, actually profits more each year than De Yue Building, which made Master Chen very envious.

A few years ago, because of that old fellow Ji Lan holding the fort, Master Chen had no methods to make a move.

Finally, after Taoyao Pavilion had no decent Spiritual Cuisine Master left, Master Chen immediately rushed over.

The owner was looking very upset.

In a month's time, they had lost two head chefs.

There were indeed rumors in Purple Cloud City saying that the Taoyao Pavilion was jinxed, whoever associated with it was bound for misfortune.

The job advertisement had been posted for half a day, offering high pay, yet not a single qualified Spiritual Cuisine Master had shown up.

Without a Spiritual Cuisine Master, the Taoyao Pavilion couldn't operate normally tonight.

The owner was at a loss, not realizing that Master Chen would come knocking.

"Who says no one would apply."

Just as the owner's expression was troubled, Xin Lin walked in with Chu Beiqing.

"It's you again. Just a mere assistant chef, you have no business with affairs of Taoyao Pavilion."

Master Chen, upon seeing Xin Lin, flared up with anger.

"I own half of Taoyao Pavilion, so why shouldn't I have a say? Starting today, I am the head chef of Taoyao Pavilion."

Xin Lin declared loudly.

Master Chen was initially stunned, then he and his thick-skinned thugs burst into laughter.

"You're joking? Who do you think you are as head chef? A dignified Four-star Spiritual Food Restaurant like Taoyao Pavilion reduced to having an assistant chef as its head chef? If word gets out, Taoyao Pavilion might find it hard to even open its doors."

"Xin Lin, I appreciate your kindness, but as head chef..."

The owner smiled bitterly.

The owner had personally witnessed Xin Lin's cooking skills and had no doubt about them.

The Fire Emperor Auspicious Soup she made last night had received praise from the Young Prince Tu and Grand Doctor Chu.

But she wasn't a Spiritual Cuisine Master, without the qualifications, how could she be the head chef?

"Open your dog's eyes wide and see clearly if I'm qualified to be head chef."

Xin Lin said, tossing a decree to Master Chen.

The decree had several lines written clearly.

"By the Will of Heaven, Emperor Longteng decrees, Xin Lin of the Chu family, with outstanding talent and culinary skills. I hereby appoint her as a Three-star Spirit Chef to host my fortieth birthday banquet."

The decree's every word left Master Chen utterly dumbfounded.

A Three-star Spirit Chef endorsed by His Majesty?

Since when could a Spiritual Chef be bestowed by the emperor?

Even if given a few more guts, Master Chen wouldn't dare question Emperor Longteng's decree?

Emperor Longteng said Xin Lin is a Three-star Spirit Chef, so she must be a Three-star Spirit Chef, whether or not she actually is!

Master Chen opened his mouth, struggling for half a day before squeezing out a sentence.

"So what if you're a Spiritual Chef, but you're only a Three-star Spirit Chef, not qualified to be the head chef of the Four-star Spiritual Food Restaurant Taoyao Pavilion!"

Chapter 803: Spiritual Cuisine Master Manual

A three-star Spirit Chef is not qualified to serve as the head chef of a Four-star Spiritual Food Restaurant?

Xin Lin didn't even know there was such a regulation.

She looked at the owner of Taoyao Pavilion.

The owner smiled wryly and nodded.

The Spiritual Cuisine Restaurant Association has very strict regulations on the head chef and the level of the Spiritual Food Restaurant. These aren't regulations set by the Spiritual Cuisine Master Association of Zixiao alone; this applies throughout the entire mainland.

If there is any violation, it would be equivalent to going against the conventions of the Spirit Food World and would face collective resistance.

Even when Master Ji was Master Ji's own nephew, he couldn't directly take on the role of head chef.

"What's the matter, at a loss for words? In other words, among all the Spirit Chefs in Purple Cloud City, I'm the only one qualified to take over Taoyao Pavilion. Either you obediently remove the Four-star label from your Spiritual Food Restaurant and downgrade it to a Three-star Spiritual Restaurant."

Master Chen waved his hand, ordering someone to remove Taoyao Pavilion's sign.

"Wait!"

Xin Lin shouted.

Her eyes turned to the sign of Taoyao Pavilion.

The scene of Master Ji's death was vividly clear in her mind.

Master Ji had no other wishes; his only dying wish was to see Taoyao Pavilion flourish.

For Master Ji, who had no children, Taoyao Pavilion was his everything.

The three grand characters of "Taoyao Pavilion," with four shining stars beneath them, caught Xin Lin's eye, appearing particularly striking.

"What do you have to explain? Or are you saying that within today, you can find a Four-star Spirit Chef?"

Master Ji's face was full of mockery.

He had already spread the word that not just in the city, but even throughout Longteng Country, no Spirit Chefs above three-star would apply to Taoyao Pavilion.

"Xin Lin, why don't you just give it up for now..."

The owner sighed, trying to dissuade Xin Lin.

"Boss, boss, there's a Spirit Chef outside saying he's here to apply. He's a Four-star Spirit Chef!"

Just when Xin Lin was in a difficult spot, a Taoyao Pavilion staff member rushed in, full of joy.

A Four-star Spirit Chef coming to apply?

Everyone present was taken aback.

"Quick, quickly invite him in."

The owner was overjoyed and quickly had the staff bring the person in.

Not long after, a man in yellow walked in.

The man appeared to be in his thirties, with a heavy date-shaped face, sporting a short beard, sharp eyes, and an average build.

"I am Yang Su, from the Ancient Yue Kingdom. My family just moved to Purple Cloud City a couple of days ago, and seeing your establishment recruiting Spirit Chefs, I came to inquire."

Upon seeing everyone, Yang Su clasped his hands together, appearing quite respectful.

No wonder he came to apply; turns out he's from another country.

Master Chen snorted, unimpressed by Yang Su's arrival.

"Master Yang, I've heard you're a Four-star Spirit Chef. Do you have any proof of identity?"

The owner beamed as he stepped forward to greet him.

The Ancient Yue Kingdom is a small country similar to Longteng, located at some distance from Longteng.

However, their Spiritual Food Restaurants have quite a local flavor, making them somewhat famous on the mainland.

"Yes, this is my Spiritual Cuisine Master Manual."

Yang Su quickly brought out his Spiritual Cuisine Master Manual.

Xin Lin glanced at it from the side.

Only then did she realize she didn't have a Spiritual Cuisine Master Manual.

Only Spirit Chefs who passed the Spiritual Cuisine Master Association's assessment would have their own Spiritual Cuisine Master Manual, which records their level, personal history, specialty cuisines, and achievements.

Obviously, as the first and unprecedented three-star Spirit Chef appointed by the Emperor, Xin Lin did not have this kind of credential representing status and identity.

Chapter 804: Excessive Demands

Looks like I still have to find a way to pass the association's assessment and obtain a Spiritual Cuisine Master Manual.

With a Spiritual Cuisine Master Manual, it seems this person named Yang Su shouldn't be a fake.

Xin Lin thought to herself.

"Master Yang, our Taoyao Pavilion is currently in need of a Four-star Spirit Chef. Regarding the salary..."

After flipping through the Spiritual Cuisine Master Manual, the boss immediately changed the address to Master Yang, proving that the other party is indeed a powerful Four-star Spirit Chef.

The two of them began discussing matters related to the Spiritual Cuisine Master on the side.

Master Chen beside them almost flared his nostrils in anger.

With Master Ji gone, who knew another Master Yang would come in.

"Master Chen, as you can see, there's nothing for you at Taoyao Pavilion anymore. Moreover, Chu's Restaurant will be reopening soon."

Though it's unclear what kind of background Yang Su has.

But at least his joining can avert the star-downgrading crisis of Taoyao Pavilion, so Xin Lin didn't say much.

"Heh~ Xin Lin, don't think just because the Emperor named you a Three-star Spirit Chef, you can do whatever you wish. Without passing the Spiritual Cuisine Master Association's assessment, you're not a real Spiritual Cuisine Master. Trying to host this Spiritual Banquet is simply a fool's dream."

Master Chen gritted his teeth in resentment.

After finally taking down Chu's Restaurant, who knew Xin Lin would become one of the head chefs of the Spiritual Cuisine Banquet.

He, a dignified Four-star Spirit Chef, soon to be a Five-star Spirit Chef, actually has to host this Spiritual Banquet with an undeserved little girl. This indignation is something Master Chen cannot swallow.

However, the ginger gets hotter as it gets older, and naturally, Master Chen knows now is not the time to expose Xin Lin.

Last time's matter with De Yue Building, the Emperor still has some misunderstandings with it. Wait until this banquet is held, when other domestic spiritual culinary masters gather, he will impeach Xin Lin.

After saying that, Master Chen flicked his sleeves and left unwillingly with his people.

"Xin Lin, there's something I need to discuss with you."

Behind her, the boss coughed lightly a few times and walked over.

"Master Yang agreed to stay at Taoyao Pavilion, but he doesn't want a salary. He wants thirty percent ownership of Taoyao Pavilion and thirty percent dividends annually. Also, he needs all of Master Ji's Spiritual Food Guide. What do you think..."

Hearing this, Xin Lin slightly raised her eyebrows and glanced at Yang Su.

This person seems to look honest and simple, but unexpectedly, he's quite shrewd.

Xin Lin holds half the ownership of Taoyao Pavilion, which means Xin Lin has to give up twenty percent ownership.

Currently, Taoyao Pavilion is short on people. The other party proposing these demands at this time seems like taking advantage of the situation.

Thirty percent ownership and thirty percent dividends are acceptable; Xin Lin doesn't oppose.

After all, these were Master Ji's, and Xin Lin picked them up without effort.

But demanding all of Master Ji's Spiritual Food Guide is going too far.

Everyone knows that for a Spiritual Delicacy Master, the most important thing is the Spiritual Food Guide, especially reaching the level of a Four-star Spirit Chef, there must be a few exclusive creations.

Master Ji's Spiritual Food Guide is in the boss's hands.

Previously, the boss had not had the chance to hand over the Spiritual Food Guide to Xin Lin.

"Regarding the Spiritual Food Guide, unless Master Ji agrees personally, no one can make decisions for him. I think it's better to burn it outright as a gesture of respect to Master Ji."

Xin Lin said solemnly.

Listening on the side, Yang Su's eyes flashed with a glimmer of gloom.

Chapter 805: The Mastermind Behind the Scenes

Xin Lin finished speaking and looked at Yang Su.

"Master Yang shouldn't have any objections, right? After all, Master Yang himself is a Four-star Spirit Chef, so logically, he shouldn't covet the deceased's Spiritual Food Guide?"

Xin Lin spoke with an innocent expression.

The latter chuckled dryly a couple of times.

"Miss Xin is right, then let's burn them."

Only then did the boss feel relieved, and immediately ordered some of Master Ji's belongings to be burned altogether.

"I've heard that Miss Xin will be helping to host the upcoming Spiritual Banquet. If there's anything I can assist with, just let me know. I will certainly give my all."

Yang Su clasped his hands and spoke politely.

"Then thank you very much, Master Yang."

Xin Lin also exchanged some pleasantries before getting up to leave.

Once outside the Taoyao Pavilion, Xin Lin looked back at its signboard. For some reason, she always felt that Master Yang was a bit peculiar.

Ancient Yue Kingdom... it seems I need to ask Jiang Qing for some information.

Thus, Master Yang became the new head chef at the Taoyao Pavilion.

On the other hand, after being closed for more than a month, Chu's Restaurant finally reopened.

At night, after a busy evening, Yang Su returned to his home residence.

The Yang Mansion had just recently moved there; Yang Su's family consisted of four members, along with three or four servants.

Besides his wife, he also had a daughter, and an elderly mother in her sixties.

After moving in for several days, the Yang family got along well with the nearby neighbors.

It seemed to be a very harmonious family.

At midnight, Yang Su returned to his room, and the lights in the room soon went out.

Outside the Yang Mansion, the people from Hei Yao Castle, who had been keeping watch, temporarily withdrew after monitoring for a whole day to report back.

Around the third watch, Yang Su suddenly sat up.

He raised his palm and brushed over his wife's sleep acupoint, and she fell into a deep, unaware slumber.

Yang Su got up and went to the wall behind the bed, lightly tapped a few times, and suddenly a door appeared on the wall, which opened.

Yang Su slipped into the wall, which closed silently behind him.

Yang Su walked through a short secret passage and entered a secret chamber.

Inside the chamber, a person stood with hands behind their back.

"Young Prince, I have already checked those Spiritual Food Guides from the Taoyao Pavilion, but there are no records. Sadly, Ji Lan's four unique Spiritual Food Guides were destroyed before I could examine them. It's all because of that Xin Lin; she's the co-owner of the Taoyao Pavilion and has certain authority. However, I believe that the chances of Master Ji having 'that thing' are very low, otherwise, he wouldn't have been so easily killed by Master Chen."

Yang Su bowed, full of respect.

The person turned around, and in the dim light, it was none other than Prince Tu.

This Yang Su, indeed not simple, turned out to be an old acquaintance of Prince Tu, and judging by his tone, he was obviously sent by Prince Tu to infiltrate the Taoyao Pavilion.

As for his intent in entering the Taoyao Pavilion, it seemed related to some Spiritual Food Guide.

"It's Xin Lin again? Have you figured out if last night's Fire Emperor Auspicious Soup was from her hand?"

Prince Tu's face was solemn.

When he first met Xin Lin, he only found her to be a somewhat cunning young girl.

But the more he interacted, especially after the incident with Chu Tianyi, the more Prince Tu became suspicious of Xin Lin's background.

"Your Highness, the host didn't explicitly say who made last night's spiritual food. However, I believe, given Xin Lin's age and her time in culinary learning, it's unlikely she could create such a Spiritual Food Soup, unless... she possesses some exceptional Spiritual Food Guide."

The latter pondered for a moment before speaking.

Chapter 806: A Special Spiritual Food Guide

Unlike Spiritual Practitioners or Martial Artists. To quickly acquire skills, one can rely on elixir pills or modify one's spirit veins and martial meridians.

Spiritual Chefs cannot be trained hastily.

A good Spiritual Chef, apart from talent, requires countless times crafting spiritual food to pave the way from being a Beginner to become a master-level Spiritual Chef.

From the owner's words of Taoyao Pavilion, Master Yang could largely guess that the Fire Emperor Auspicious Soup was made by Xin Lin.

In fact, earlier when Xin Lin was still an Assistant Chef, she had helped Master Ji successfully craft the Fire Emperor Auspicious Soup, and maybe due to that experience, it led to last night's creation of the Fire Emperor Auspicious Soup.

It is precisely because of that Fire Emperor Auspicious Soup that Young Master Tu set his sights on Taoyao Pavilion.

Although Chu Tianyi's misconduct is vigorously concealed, it naturally cannot be hidden from Young Master Tu's attention.

Chu Tianyi was fine while drinking with him last night, but suddenly went wildly after entering the palace, indicating there is something suspicious about it.

But if we were to say something is amiss, Young Master Tu also had the spiritual food yet remained unharmed.

Afterward, Young Master Tu also assigned Yang Su to check the ingredients at Taoyao Pavilion last night, proving that the four-star spiritual cuisine contained no problems.

This case becomes even more perplexing.

Chu Miaoyun wept as she sought Young Master Tu, insisting that the matter be thoroughly investigated. Young Master Tu, annoyed, had to send people to infiltrate Taoyao Pavilion.

One reason Young Master Tu let Yang Su sneak into Taoyao Pavilion was to uncover the matter.

As for another reason...

"Oh? You mean to say that Xin Lin has some issues? Do you mean the Dragon Bait is with her?"

Young Master Tu curled his lips, looking intrigued.

This Xin Lin is quite interesting indeed.

It seems his trip to Purple Cloud City is well worth it.

"Young Master Tu, your words are mistaken. The Dragon Bait is just a legend for now; whether it truly exists is still in question. As for Xin Lin, she needs further investigation. Young Master Tu is here for the feast, with plenty of opportunities to investigate secretly. I will definitely help investigate thoroughly whether the Dragon Bait is hidden within Purple Cloud City's Spiritual Food Restaurant."

Yang Su said.

"If the Dragon Bait can truly be found, awakening the True Dragon is just around the corner. You should do well, on the day of success, I definitely won't forget you and will grant you the Taotie Blood to elevate your Spiritual Chef cultivation further."

Young Master Tu laughed.

"Thank you so much, Young Master Tu, I will certainly give it my all to find the Dragon Bait."

It's unclear when rumors began spreading across the mainland about the existence of a True Dragon in Longteng Country, and its resting place is in Purple Cloud City.

Recently, there have been tales of many foreigners entering Purple Cloud City, but unfortunately, none have returned.

Following the disappearance of several groups of foreigners, another rumor emerged on the mainland.

As long as one possesses the Dragon Bait, the True Dragon can be awakened.

Simply put, the Dragon Bait is a kind of spiritual delicacy.

This spiritual delicacy is rumored to be hidden within a Spiritual Food Restaurant in Purple Cloud City, disguised as an ordinary dish in the Spiritual Food Guide.

This news spread swiftly, explaining why Emperor Longteng's Spiritual Banquet attracted so much domestic and international attention.

Unbeknownst to Emperor Longteng, the host, and the tumultuous Purple Cloud Spiritual Food Realm, they were completely unaware of this entire matter.

Even Xin Lin remained entirely in the dark.

Chapter 807: Meticulous Schemes

Xin Lin returned to Qingtian Academy and at the gate, she encountered Chu Miaoyun.

Chu Miaoyun, accompanied by several maids and attendants, was walking out of Qingtian Academy with large and small boxes in tow.

Tears still marked her face, and upon seeing Xin Lin, she revealed a look of resentment.

"Xin, don't get too smug. One day, I'll make you pay."

Chu Miaoyun was there to drop out.

How big is Purple Cloud City? The news of Chu Chutian being dismissed had already spread throughout the entire city.

As soon as Chu Miaoyun returned to the Academy, she was met with many cold remarks.

Spoiled since childhood, she had never suffered such mental indignation.

In a fit of anger, she dropped out of school.

After all, having apprenticed under the Poison Saint, she wouldn't be able to learn much in a place like Qingtian Academy, and she'd be better off directly going to rely on her Senior Brother, the Young Master Tu.

Chu Miaoyun blamed it all on Xin Lin.

Although there was no direct evidence, Chu Miaoyun firmly believed that this matter was related to Taoyao Pavilion and Xin Lin.

"Then I'll just wait and see."

Xin Lin shrugged.

Chu Miaoyun stomped her foot and left in embarrassment.

Xin Lin returned to the small wooden house number 24 and took out the imperial edict.

"Chu Tianyi, Poison Saint... everything has just begun."

Taking down Chu Tianyi was something Xin Lin had planned for a long time.

She just hadn't found the right opportunity, and this time, the Fire Emperor Auspicious Soup was something she came upon by chance.

Whether it was the Young Master Tu or the Emperor Longteng, no one knew why Chu Tianyi went mad, or rather, why he went mad in the Imperial Palace.

Xin Lin, in no rush, took out that book, "Spiritual Delicacies."

On the third page of "Spiritual Delicacies," was the two-star spiritual food, Imperial Longjing Tea.

Imperial Longjing Tea is a spiritual tea brewed using the finest Nanshan Hot Spring Water and post-rain Longjing Tea leaves.

This tea was also Chu Tianyi's favorite, and usually only available at Longteng Palace.

Whenever he went to the palace, he was sure to drink several cups of it, all information Xin Lin had diligently gathered earlier on, regarding Chu Tianyi's personal preferences.

This tea, when drunk alone, poses no issues; on the contrary, it is known to prolong life.

However, when drunk with Fire Toad Ginseng, it's a different story; within 24 hours, it stimulates the medicinal effects of the ginseng, turning it into a ferocious force, the more Imperial Longjing Tea consumed, the stronger the effect.

Upon hearing that Chu Tianyi and others were coming to Taoyao Pavilion, Xin Lin specially prepared a portion of Fire Emperor Auspicious Soup, as she knew the Emperor Longteng had been searching for a Spiritual Delicacy Master, and Chu Tianyi was a sycophant; the moment he found a suitable Spiritual Delicacy Master, he would certainly report it to the Emperor Longteng.

Sure enough, Chu Tianyi entered the palace overnight.

As Emperor Longteng's favored minister, he was naturally entertained by the eunuchs with Imperial Longjing Tea.

And that drink led to an incident.

The calculations were precise; even a half-step off would not have worked.

The reason why others couldn't see through it was because the conflict between Imperial Longjing Tea and Fire Toad Ginseng's effects was something Xin Lin had never seen documented in other spiritual cuisine recipes.

Only in her copy of "Spiritual Delicacies" was it recorded.

If Xin Lin hadn't accidentally seen it earlier, she wouldn't have been able to seize this opportunity.

Chu Tianyi's misconduct made it clear that returning to the Imperial Hospital was impossible for him.

"With Chu Tianyi's removal, his allies surely won't rest. To avoid long-term troubles, I must start brewing the antidote for the Three Corpse Poison as soon as possible, preferably before the Emperor Longteng's grand birthday celebration. Unfortunately, I'm still quite short on the Heaven-defying Value."

Contemplating, Xin Lin realized that everything was ready except for the lacking Heaven-defying Value. She thought for a moment and decided to wait a few more days until the Spiritual Delicacy Buns and Spiritual Spring were sold, which would yield enough Heaven-defying Value to start the alchemy process.

Chapter 808: Rumors of the Eagle Chick Conference

However, Xin Lin, with her meticulous planning, still made a miscalculation. Despite her shrewd calculations, things went contrary to her expectations, and she encountered a setback midway.

The next day, Xin Lin went to the Cultivation Center as usual for classes.

With Chu Miaoyun dropping out, the number of people who were hostile towards Xin Lin in the Spirit Institute significantly decreased.

As she walked along, many students came forward to greet her.

They all wanted to tell Xin Lin that they had no personal grudge against her but had believed the malicious words spread by Chu Miaoyun and Tuoba, which led to their misunderstanding of her.

Xin Lin didn't hold a grudge against them for it.

"These people are just fence-sitters. It's only because Sister defeated Chen You that they are now suddenly being friendly."

Little Xinzhuo came over, his injuries fully healed, and his cheeks even looked rosier during his recovery.

Seeing those people's faces, he couldn't help but pout, showing his discontent.

"Ah Zhuo, the world is fickle, and human warmth varies; it's just how it is. These people aren't truly bad, so there's no need to mind them."

Xin Lin patted Little Xinzhuo's head.

Little Xinzhuo is very smart, but he still lacks experience in social dynamics.

He hasn't truly been involved in the struggles of the Imperial Family; compared to that, the turmoil in Qingtian Academy is just a drop in the ocean.

"Sister, are you really going to participate in the Eagle Chick Conference?"

Little Xinzhuo nodded firmly.

He didn't understand much else, only knowing that he wouldn't be wrong if he listened to his sister.

"Who said I was going to participate?"

Xin Lin raised an eyebrow.

"Everyone is saying so, even the director of the Spirit Institute announced publicly that we will send representatives to the Eagle Chick Conference this year."

Little Xinzhuo looked full of anticipation.

Isn't the Ying Chu Conference the same one Sikong Ran participated in?

Sikong Ran gained significant fame in Longteng Country by getting into the top ten at the Eagle Chick Conference. If Sister could also make it into the top ten, wouldn't that overshadow Sikong Ran?

"Do you really think the Martial Arts Academy has no one? Don't forget, every class in the Martial Arts Academy has its leader, including those who have participated in the Eagle Chick Conference. What happens next year, we will discuss next year. More pressing right now is your father's Spiritual Banquet."

Xin Lin mused over the situation.

The Spirit Institute Director's big mouth really couldn't stay shut.

She offended the Martial Arts Academy, and Governor Huang, along with Long Qingchen and others, certainly wouldn't let the matter rest.

On Empress Feng's side, there hasn't been any movement yet, but Xin Lin sensed an impending storm.

All morning, Xin Lin felt somewhat distracted.

After class, Mu Chen called Xin Lin, reprimanding her with a stern face.

"Xin Lin, what happened to you today? Don't think that because you beat Chen You and earned 500 Performance Value for the Academy, you can become complacent. Look at your Gathering Spirit Effect this morning, it's even worse than that of most new students."

Xin Lin's cultivation speed in condensing Fire Spirit was rapid.

Mu Chen once suspected whether Xin Lin was truly like the rumors said, incomplete in her Five Meridians.

Once she reached a certain level of cultivation in condensing Fire Spirit, Mu Chen instructed Xin Lin to gather other Spiritual Energies.

But upon trying, she found that Xin Lin was less proficient than most students in gathering the other Spiritual Energies.

Xin Lin remained silent.

Indeed, she was somewhat absent-minded this morning, and there was a reason for it.

Chu's Restaurant officially opened its doors for the first time this morning, and she only received a dozen satisfied reviews.

Given the efforts she put into reviving Chu's Restaurant, and to quickly accumulate Heaven-defying Value for refining the Antidote to the Three Corpse Poison, this morning she had specially given up her cultivation time to personally make two hundred buns, a hundred White Jade Steamed Buns, and a hundred cabbage pork buns, asking Master Mo to deliver them to Chu's Restaurant.

Chapter 809: Crisis at the Bun Shop

This means that nearly forty percent of the buns sold by Chu's Restaurant this morning were made by Xin Lin.

One would think she should have received hundreds of Heaven-defying Value satisfaction ratings.

But there were only a little over twenty points.

This definitely means there was some issue with Chu's Restaurant.

Xin Lin was preoccupied with the matter of Chu's Restaurant and naturally couldn't focus well on Gathering Spirit.

Seeing Xin Lin unusually not retorting, Mu Chen found it strange.

He glanced at Xin Lin.

"Don't think that since you've become a three-star Spirit Chef, you can neglect your academic duties. A chef is a chef, no matter how you say it, it's hard to compare with a true cultivator. If you keep going like this, I'll go straight to Emperor Longteng and help resign your position as head chef."

The fact that Xin Lin was conferred as a three-star Spirit Chef was known among the supervisors at Qingtian Academy.

Opinions were divided among the supervisors into two factions over this.

One faction believes that being a Spirit Chef is a good career, and if one has the talent and cultivates diligently, it's feasible to become a master Spirit Chef.

The other faction considers a chef a low-grade profession, and only students who can't break through the Xuan Transformation Realm or become Great Spirit Masters would switch careers to become Spirit Chefs.

Xin Lin, due to not having complete Five Meridians, changed careers to be a Spirit Chef, which is basically not doing her proper duty.

A student is a student, and during the time at the Academy, shouldn't be moonlighting as a Spirit Chef.

Mu Chen neither agrees nor disagrees with these viewpoints.

But Mu Chen was quite annoyed that Xin Lin was neglecting her cultivation.

Finally, under the stimulus of Xin Lin, the students of Shaking Light Class started working hard on their cultivation, but now Xin Lin, the leader, was starting to slack off.

"Master Mu, don't worry, being a Spirit Chef is only my side job. After completing this Spiritual Banquet, I will resign from the head chef position. But today, I need to take a leave of absence."

Xin Lin thought for a moment but still felt uneasy and decided to go to Chu's Restaurant to see what exactly was going on.

After saying that, Xin Lin turned and walked away.

"Deduct your own performance points."

"You!"

Master Mu looked frustrated.

He calculated Xin Lin's personal performance and gave a light exclamation.

"Who would have thought, this little rascal, despite all her mischief, actually has quite high personal performance. She ranks in the top three of the entire Spirit Institute. At this rate, she has a chance to participate in the inter-academy competitions. I must grab her next time and get her to focus on cultivation and preferably get her to undertake an Academy task, can't disgrace our Shaking Light Class."

Last time, Xin Lin won 500 Academy Performance Value, and according to the rewards, she could earn a 20% reward, which is 100 Performance Points, converted into triple personal performance, is 300 points. She took some leave last time, which deducted some, but she previously treated Chen Gang and others, earning some rewards again. Calculating all these, she left with almost 300 performance points.

Additionally, due to errors made by Tuoba, Chen You, and other leaders this year, Xin Lin's personal performance shot up, entering the top three in the Spirit Institute and the top ten of the entire Academy.

Xin Lin didn't have much concept about personal performance and didn't realize that her performance value could provide her more cultivation resources.

She left Qingtian Academy and headed straight to Chu's Restaurant.

As soon as she reached the familiar entrance of Chu's Restaurant, she saw Ma Jingtian and others dejectedly guarding baskets of unsold Ultimate Lingxiu Buns.

"Little Boss, I was just about to find you, really useless of us, the buns... failed to sell."

Ma Jingtian looked frustrated, not daring to meet Xin Lin's gaze.

After inquiring, Xin Lin found out that this morning, the people coming to Chu's Restaurant to buy buns were few and far between.

Chapter 810: The Recovered Signboard

The taste of the baozi is perfectly fine.

The people are still the same.

The only difference is that Chu's Restaurant no longer has its signboard.

So, where could the problem be?

Xin Lin pondered for a moment and immediately consulted the Heaven-defying Book.

After deducting 10 Heaven-defying Value, the Heaven-defying Book replied.

"Life Book Tip: Chu's Restaurant is ranked 100th among all Spiritual Food Restaurants in Purple Cloud City, 204th in the entire city, with 0 regular customers and 0 reputation."

The response from the Heaven-defying Book made Xin Lin's heart sink to the bottom in an instant.

Just a mere month of closure, and it went right back to square one?

This was exactly like the situation when Xin Lin first took over Chu's Restaurant.

"The old customers haven't returned. The baozi sent to Taichang Temple was declined because the Minister of Imperial Sacrificial Worship is not around lately. They've found another place to get vegetarian baozi, which is donated for free and is just as good as ours."

Ma Jingtian scratched his head in distress.

Customers forget much more easily than Xin Lin expected.

A month of not opening, they can't just stop eating baozi, so they all went to the new baozi shop.

Especially since Ma Jingtian mentioned another baozi shop.

For a baozi shop that can be accepted by Taichang Temple, it must not be simple.

"Don't worry for now. You take some people and look around the city to see which baozi shop it is. Also, don't waste the remaining baozi; give them to the beggars, the elderly, and children, and say they're gifts from Chu's Restaurant."

Although Heaven-defying Value is not much, Xin Lin still has a considerable amount of silver taels.

The act of the baozi shop giving out free baozi gave Xin Lin an idea.

To revive Chu's Restaurant, some strategies are needed.

Upon hearing this, Ma Jingtian took several gang members and went out for a walk.

Xin Lin picked up a White Jade Steamed Bun, took a bite; it tasted as it always had.

The new baozi shop that made her old customers disappear piqued her curiosity.

Xin Lin thought for a while, packed a few baozi, and headed towards the city.

It was already noon, and most of the shops in Purple Cloud City were open.

Xin Lin first went to the Alchemy Hall and handed today's batch to Jiang Qing.

"I heard that Chu's Restaurant has reopened. Congratulations, congratulations. I don't have much to offer, so I had a signboard made for you."

Jiang Qing had someone make a signboard for Xin Lin.

"This signboard?"

Xin Lin was taken aback when she saw the signboard.

Isn't this... a coffin board?

Xin Lin widened her eyes, staring at the signboard.

Although the words on it were re-engraved, the material and size were indeed a Phoebe Wood Sign?

Wasn't it hanging in the De Yue Building? How did it end up in Jiang Qing's hands?

"You recognize it? I bought this signboard from De Yue Building. A few days ago, Master Chen sent this signboard to be auctioned at the Black Shining Market, priced at five thousand taels. Seeing that the material was excellent and knowing your shop would reopen soon, I bought it. However, the omen might not be good, so I had the high monks of Taichang Temple recite scriptures over it for a few days to consecrate it. If you don't mind, you can accept it."

Jiang Qing was meticulous and knew that someone like Master Chen wouldn't part with any good stuff easily.

There must be something wrong with this signboard.

But the signboard was indeed of good quality. After some thought, he decided to take the risk and buy it back.

A consecrated signboard?

Xin Lin looked at the Phoebe Wood Sign, and the surrounding Ghost Energy had indeed faded somewhat. This could be considered regained.

As Xin Lin hesitated, a familiar cold snort reached her ears.