

Menu 1261

Chapter 1261: Dou Bao's Parents' Love! (2)

The gun was aimed at them.

Immediately, the four of them stopped in their tracks, despair on their faces.

It's over!

After exchanging glances, one of them immediately turned and knelt down.

"Lord Li, I'm willing to serve you with all my might!"

That family head said loudly.

Li Deshang didn't speak, just nodded.

A look of joy appeared on the man's face, and seeing this, the remaining three also knelt down, loudly saying to Li Deshang.

"Lord Li, we are also willing to serve you with all our might!"

Li Deshang sat there, blood gushing from his leg.

He looked at the four people in front of him.

Recalling his days in 'Mountain City', he showed a faint, mocking smile, even with a look of complete liberation on his face.

He said calmly—

"Fire!"

Bam bam bam!

Shots rang out continuously, and the four fell to the ground.

Li Deshang looked at the bodies on the ground, expressionless.

He wouldn't say he didn't want to do it.

Nor would he say he was forced to do it.

Even if that was the truth.

But when the six people still tried to deceive him, he decided not to let any of them leave the yamen.

If even one left, it would lead to endless regret.

Even with signed and stamped documents, it would be the same.

But now, they're all dead.

That made a difference.

He had a way to maneuver a bit.

As for more?

Leave it to fate.

Thinking of this, Li Deshang tried to stand up, but as soon as he moved, he hit his wound.

"Ah, the pain is killing me."

"Jia Youcai, quickly call a doctor."

Li Deshang shivered in pain, sitting in the chair like a quail, completely unlike his earlier ruthlessness.

However, Jia Youcai didn't dare to slacken in the slightest.

He knew from this moment on, the situation in Mountain City had changed.

As long as Li Deshang could endure.

Then 'Mountain City' would truly belong to the Li family.

...

"Didn't the negotiation succeed?"

Jason stood on the rooftop of his room, watching the suddenly increased guards in the city.

The guards holding torches were extremely conspicuous in the night.

Moreover, combined with the chaotic footsteps, even if Jason wanted to ignore it, he couldn't.

Watching the trajectory of the guards' movements.

Jason made a few guesses in his heart.

The assassinated Li Deshang must have both fear and anger inside him.

The latter probably outweighing the former.

Under such circumstances, Li Deshang would probably change his usual tactics, especially since the present was a good opportunity.

He had reason and an excuse.

Li Deshang was clearly going to seize this opportunity.

However, this had little to do with Jason.

He only needed to get his share from Li Deshang.

Jason felt quite confident about this.

After all, their initial cooperation was quite successful, and Li Deshang showed sincerity—

The food at Drunken Fairy Tower was quite good, especially since he was to be treated to three meals, particularly that 'Drunken Fairy Chicken'.

This time, due to the rushed reservation, there was no 'Drunken Fairy Chicken'.

The next three meals, he should be able to have it.

Thinking of this, Jason was about to turn back to his room.

But just as he was about to jump off the roof, he suddenly saw Dou Bao cautiously come out of the room, seemingly heading to the kitchen.

'Huh?'

'Going to make breakfast at this hour?'

Jason was stunned, immediately concealed himself, watching Dou Bao.

Quite different from the Dou Bao he usually saw.

Normally, Dou Bao was always cheerful.

But at this moment, Dou Bao was filled with deep worry.

Especially when passing by Jason's room, Dou Bao carefully paused, seemingly worried that his footsteps would disturb Jason, who was recuperating— 'I have a secret healing technique, which will quickly heal the injury, but I must not be disturbed.'

Jason had used these words to send away Dou Bao, who wanted to tend to him.

Undoubtedly, these words were effective.

And, beyond imagination—

"Master, don't worry."

"You focus on recovering."

"Leave the rest to Dou Bao."

Muttering to himself, Dou Bao walked quietly towards the kitchen.

'Going to make something nice for me?'

Jason thought in expectation.

Then, he was surprised to see Dou Bao take out some moldy food from a corner of the kitchen.

Moldy corn, moldy peanuts, and a porcelain bowl filled with wood ear mushrooms, but the water stinks.

Dou Bao carefully collected these moldy items.

The mushrooms were also crushed bit by bit, with the stinky water poured into a bamboo tube.

'This?'

Jason was momentarily stunned; he subconsciously realized something.

Then, before Jason could think deeply, he saw Dou Bao take out a handkerchief with an unusually special texture from her pocket, completely covering her head, face, and nostrils, leaving only her eyes exposed, and put on gloves.

Next, she began to dig in the fire pit.

A moment later, a metal plate appeared in Jason's line of sight, and Dou Bao immediately fitted a leather bag over this metal plate and slowly triggered a mechanism.

A hole immediately appeared on the metal plate.

The gas in the initially air-tight dry distillation kiln was suddenly drawn into the leather bag.

A dozen seconds later, after confirming there was no more gas inside, Dou Bao quickly tied the leather bag and placed it into a nearby water tank, revealing the dry distillation kiln with pieces of wood inside.

Most of them turned into charcoal, but Dou Bao's goal wasn't the charcoal, but the colorless, transparent liquid with an extremely pungent smell remaining on them.

She collected it bit by bit.

Then, she pulled out two containers, one made of copper and the other of lead, as well as several bottles and jars from the wall.

"Mom, you said only in dire circumstances can we use these."

"Now..."

"It's time."

Dou Bao murmured to herself while starting to pour the collected liquid into those bottles and jars.

When the flame ignited under that special sealed container, Jason immediately detected a faint fruity fragrance.

Jason's eyelids twitched repeatedly.

If he was pondering earlier.

At this moment, without needing to think, a term popped into his mind.

Sarin.

And the earlier answer followed.

Aflatoxin.

Jason almost instinctively wanted to jump off the roof and tell Dou Bao that he was fine, that it was unnecessary, and she was too diligent.

But Jason restrained himself.

He quietly watched Dou Bao's skilled process that had become instinctual.

Particularly those special vessels and the semi-finished products stored in the bottles and jars.

Clearly, Dou Bao's background was far more complex than imagined.

Let alone the Sarin Dou Bao was now making.

Simply making those semi-finished products in the bottles and jars is beyond what ordinary people can accomplish.

No!

It's impossible for regular people of this era to understand.

It's far beyond this era.

Even in his homeland, only large laboratories have this capability.

Yet now, it's in these bottles and jars.

"'Mystical Side' secret technique?"

"It's probably not a regular secret technique, more like an esoteric level."

"And in this alternate world, known for 'poison'..."

"Shu Capital, Tang Sect."

Jason almost instinctively recalled the words Li Deshang said that day.

So...

Dou Bao.

Should be called Tang Dou Bao.

Tang Dou Bao?

'Sugar' Dou Bao.

Good name.

Jason thought silently and then slipped back into the room quietly.

He decided not to disturb Dou Bao.

Everyone has secrets.

The current situation is clearly Dou Bao's secret.

He'll wait until Dou Bao tells him.

He won't ask further.

Sitting cross-legged on the large cushion in the room, Jason narrowed his eyes, listening to the sounds of Dou Bao concocting poison.

The sounds continued for a full hour before stopping.

Dou Bao returned to the room.

For some unknown reason, Jason felt relieved.

Then, the sound of flipping pages reached his ears.

'Returned to the room to read books?'

"Is it about poison making?"

Jason speculated.

Dou Bao was indeed reading books in the room.

But not about poisons.

Rather about mechanisms.

'Dad, I trust mom's poison skills, but I'm still uneasy—I have found the life I want, and I want to protect it, so now I can read the book you gave me.'

Dou Bao raised her hand to stroke the book her father gave her when they parted.

On the cover, it says: Luban Book.

Opening the first page—

A chubby humanoid puppet appeared on it.

Some curious terms also appeared.

Even the smart Dou Bao was baffled.

'What is a grenade? What is a Shark Mouth Cannon? What is an airship?'

Chapter 1262: Grand Ceremony!

In the early morning, the bustling 'Mountain City' finally quieted down.

People got up as usual and went to work.

For most, what happened last night was none of their concern.

They needed to run around for today's livelihood.

Of course, some chatter over tea and meals was inevitable.

At dawn, Zhao Laosi carried his wonton stand into Martial Arts Street.

Same spot as usual, he put down his stand, set up the pole, and began to make a fire.

Whew!

A breath blew onto the already glowing charcoal, instantly sparking up and leaping upwards.

Moments later, the upper layer of charcoal was half red and half black.

Zhao Laosi glanced at the charcoal, set up the pot, poured water, all in one go.

After all, selling breakfast for ten years, these had become his instincts.

Just like when he wielded a sword to kill.

Last night, someone at the 'Yu Lai Gathering' announced a hundred taels of gold bounty.

A hundred taels of gold!

Such bounties weren't unheard of.

Moreover, even higher ones were common.

But, none Zhao Laosi could ever touch.

This one is different, an injured martial artist, still familiar, and his identity was just right—as the breakfast stall owner, he had seen Mu Bai, and Mu Bai had eaten breakfast here.

They were quite familiar.

Thus, taking action would be way too easy.

As for what would happen after killing Mu Bai?

That's none of his business.

He would kill, take the bounty, and flee immediately.

A hundred taels of gold, enough for a considerably wealthy life in Zhoufu.

If he chose a more remote countryside, that would make him a local tycoon.

Upon thinking this, Zhao Laosi felt a surge of heat in his heart.

But, he wasn't impulsive.

He continued tending his breakfast stall, occasionally glancing at the tightly closed doors of the 'Mu-style Martial Arts School'.

As a killer.

Zhao Laosi understood the importance of timing and patience.

There were still two days left.

No rush.

Patiently waiting.

Zhao Laosi told himself.

Step, step step.

Clear footsteps appeared.

"Boss, a bowl of wonton, with an egg."

A voice spoke as the visitor came forward.

With the sky lightening, Zhao Laosi saw the visitor clearly.

A young man, medium build, plain clothes, ordinary face, but clean, though unfamiliar, with shoes caked in mud, and pants stained as well.

On his back, a bundle.

‘This kind of mud is from outside the city, face clean but carries a trace of irrepressible tiredness, clearly having traveled overnight, washed his face at a roadside well before entering the city.’

‘A rural person coming to ‘Mountain City’ looking for work.’

With one sweep, Zhao Laosi determined the visitor’s origins.

He had seen countless like this over ten years.

Immediately, he let down his guard.

"Two li and two."

"Three li in banknotes."

Zhao Laosi said.

Banknotes were currency the Empire introduced in recent years, but clearly, not very successful.

Compared to banknotes, people still preferred metallic coins.

Thus, under the same price, banknotes cost more.

Though from the countryside, the young man understood this, and directly took out three-cent banknotes—normally read as ‘fen’, but people of the Empire inexplicably read as ‘li’.

Certainly not everyone.

But, most times it’s like this.

Not a regional difference, even in the Northern Capital, some couldn’t differentiate.

A cognitive error.

Yet it didn’t affect life, as the face value on banknotes didn’t change, people just lived with it.

Taking the banknotes, Zhao Laosi placed them into the money box nearby.

Started boiling wontons.

Until the wontons neared readiness, then added an egg.

Not in the big pot, but the small pot within the big pot.

Knowing that if egg foam got into the big pot, the wonton soup wouldn't be clear.

"Scallions and cilantro?"

"All of them."

At the bottom of the bowl lay some seaweed, salt, without shrimp; recently not only pork prices rose, even fish and shrimp prices, Zhao Laosi removed shrimp a month ago, or his wontons would have to be priced higher.

"Vinegar and chili are there."

Zhao Laosi handed the wontons to the young man, pointing to the corner of the stall where vinegar and chili lay, below were a few low stools.

There wasn't a table.

Sitting on a stool, holding a bowl of wontons, was the greatest comfort.

If you arrived later, not even a stool would be available.

Then one could only eat standing.

The young man sat on a stool, first sipping the soup, then slowly savoring.

Unlike a man's eating style.

A bit like a young woman.

This made Zhao Laosi look over at the young man once again.

A hint of red appeared on the young man's face.

Maybe because of the hot wonton soup.

Maybe due to embarrassment.

But inexplicably, with redness, the young man looked better, had an elegant feel, even with half the face hidden by the bowl, Zhao Laosi could confirm, this was a high-quality piece.

Immediately, he sensed business coming.

"Young man, here in Mountain City looking for work?"

"Need me, your older brother, to introduce you?"

Zhao Laosi spoke proficiently.

He had done this countless times, already skilled.

"No need."

The young man smiled subtly and waved his hand.

"No problem."

"Young man out in the world, not easy."

Zhao Laosi spoke as he circled the wonton stand, raising his hand toward the young man's wrist.

Chapter 1263: Grand Gift! (2)

According to Zhao Laosi's plan, he grabbed the opponent's wrist and then swiftly knocked him out, stuffing him into a small house in the back alley. The deal was done—the small house was rented by him, ostensibly for storing some miscellaneous items, nobody lived there, but in reality, it was where he stored his 'goods'.

'Ten silver coins in hand!'

Zhao Laosi thought to himself, feeling a sense of unexpected joy.

Who doesn't like unexpected surprises?

Zhao Laosi was no exception.

But then Zhao Laosi was stunned.

Because he grabbed at the air.

Not only did he miss, but the young man's palm also silently pierced into his chest.

"You?!"

Zhao Laosi was taken aback.

The surprise turned into shock.

The prey became the hunter.

The young man continued to eat dumplings with one hand while crushing Zhao Laosi's heart with the other, muttering indistinctly: "Is the Double Absolute here?"

Then, the bowl was put down.

The hand was withdrawn.

Not a drop of blood flowed from the chest cavity, and the young man's skin became even more fair.

He looked down at Zhao Laosi's corpse.

The next moment, he carried it into the alley.

A few minutes later, 'Zhao Laosi' came out again, once more standing in front of the dumpling stand, skillfully handling everything on the stand just like before.

Even when he saw a carriage escorted by soldiers passing by, he muttered just as 'Zhao Laosi' used to.

"Life is hard!"

The customer who got up early couldn't help but laugh when he heard it.

"Zhao Laosi, you say that every day, yet I've never seen you go hungry."

In response to the teasing, 'Zhao Laosi' replied with a self-satisfied tone.

"A cook won't starve even in a ten-year drought."

"But why did the government office's carriage come to Martial Arts Street so early?"

Zhao Laosi looked puzzled.

"You don't know yet, do you?"

The customer lowered his voice, and immediately, not only Zhao Laosi but also several customers who had just grabbed a seat came over.

"Something big happened in Mountain City last night!"

Seeing everyone attracted, the customer spoke in an even lower voice.

Moments later, exclamations echoed, and these people's eyes couldn't help but look towards the direction of the carriage.

"Them?"

Li Deshang, supported by Jia Youcai, frowned.

Last night's events couldn't be hidden.

However, as long as the core part was kept hidden, it was fine.

The rest?

Li Deshang wished it would get as big as possible.

Only, for some reason, when being watched by this group of people, he always felt uneasy.

It was a feeling like walking alone in the wild, being stared at by wolves.

This made Li Deshang uncomfortable.

That's why he asked.

"Just some idle people."

"I also recognize that breakfast stand owner."

"He's been in 'Mountain City' for over ten years."

Jia Youcai explained.

"What about those diners?"

Li Deshang continued to ask.

"That

Jia Youcai found himself in a difficult position. While he patrolled the streets, he wasn't familiar with everyone; he knew Zhao Laosi because Zhao Laosi had a fixed stall.

As for the rest?

He honestly couldn't recognize them all.

Li Deshang evidently knew this was asking too much.

"Go find a few people and investigate those diners thoroughly—do it discreetly."

Li Deshang instructed.

Having just slaughtered the big families of 'Mountain City', Li Deshang was very aware of his current situation.

Danger lurked everywhere?

That was putting it mildly.

In serious terms, any carelessness could lead directly to being shattered into pieces.

It wasn't just him; his parents, wife, and children wouldn't escape either.

Northern Li Family?

At this time, they definitely wouldn't care about his survival.

He understood this principle long ago.

Therefore, one couldn't be too cautious.

"Understood, sir."

Jia Youcai also grasped this principle.

Immediately, he gestured and quietly instructed two soldiers.

After completing all this, Jia Youcai leaned into the carriage, took out a box, and then, with one hand holding the box and the other supporting Li Deshang, walked towards the Martial Arts Hall gate.

Not leaving it to others, Li Deshang personally knocked on the door.

Clack, clack.

The lion-shaped door knocker banged on the metal plate, creating a series of crisp sounds.

"Coming."

Dou Bao's voice came, followed by the opening of the door.

"Dou Bao girl."

Li Deshang immediately cupped his fists.

However, Dou Bao didn't show a pleasant expression.

But she didn't obstruct Li Deshang.

Because, Jason had instructed her.

"Come in, the master is up."

Dou Bao stepped aside to let them through.

Jia Youcai helped Li Deshang walk into the martial arts school, the soldiers behind them didn't come in but instead split into several squads, firmly guarding the outside of the school.

They didn't enter the main hall.

But went into the backyard.

Li Deshang immediately saw Jason sitting at the kitchen dining table.

His complexion was fine, he sat there still towering like a mountain.

Nothing wrong?

Li Deshang instinctively thought.

But he quickly shook his head.

The Celestial Demon Dissolving Technique, although he hadn't heard of it, just from the name he knew it wasn't simple, the reason Mu Bai, in front of him, seemed fine was likely because he had taken the 'Tiger Blood Strong Yuan Powder' and 'Nourishing Essence Pill' I sent him earlier.

Li Deshang, after imagining this, did not say much, instead directly asked Jia Youcai to place the box he was holding in front of Jason.

"These are the secret medicines I confiscated."

Small Nourishing Essence Pill' three hundred pieces."

Nourishing Essence Pill' one hundred pieces."

"I couldn't find any major medicine that can replenish yuan and extend life."

"I also couldn't find secret medicines like 'Tiger Blood Strong Yuan Powder' or 'Ginseng Toad Pill'."

"However, in the Li family I found two portions of 'Jade Pure Powder', the effect is not as good as 'Ginseng Toad Pill', but it's about the same as 'Tiger Blood Strong Yuan Powder'."

Mountain City' is still too small."

"This is the limit."

Li Deshang said and shook his head.

Immediately, this manager of 'Mountain City' assured Jason: "Brother Mu, rest assured, I will get more secret medicines for you as soon as possible. Last night at the gathering in the local Yue Lai Inn, someone took all the secret medicines, but there will definitely be some in Red Fragrance Alley, if not

there, I will write to Northern Capital Li Family asking for help, after all I am also a Li, as long as the price is right, major medicines that replenish yuan and extend life may not be certain, but other kinds should be ensured.”

As he said this, Li Deshang’s voice became smaller.

Obviously, even Li Deshang himself felt a lack of confidence.

To this, Jason didn’t mind.

He glanced at the box in front of him.

‘Small Nourishing Essence Pill’ three hundred pieces.

‘Nourishing Essence Pill’ one hundred pieces.

And two portions of ‘Jade Pure Powder’.

Even without ‘Jade Pure Powder’, just the ‘Small Nourishing Essence Pill’ and ‘Nourishing Essence Pill’, taking an average value it’s 2500 points.

Whew!

Jason silently let out a sigh of relief, his satiety level is finally going to recover to above 3000 points.

It's really not easy.

"Thank you."

Jason expressed his gratitude.

"Brother Mu, you got injured because of me, otherwise, with yesterday's situation, if you wanted to leave, who could stop you?"

"So, don't say thank you."

"These are what I should do."

Li Deshang said earnestly.

"Okay."

"Brother Gousheng, your leg?"

After slightly nodding, Jason's gaze shifted to Li Deshang's leg.

Although it looked fine externally, Li Deshang needed Jia Youcai's support when walking, and the faint smell of blood and herbs made Jason suspect something.

Jason asked, Li Deshang did not hide.

Immediately he explained everything from the beginning.

"So that's how it is."

Jason looked at the wooden box on the table.

No wonder Li Deshang could bring out so many secret medicines, he actually looted the prominent families of 'Mountain City'.

Although Jason had already suspected this before.

But only when Li Deshang spoke, was it confirmed.

And seeing Jason's unchanged expression, Li Deshang secretly breathed a sigh of relief.

He worried Mu Bai might disagree with him because of this matter.

Now it seemed, it was unnecessary.

'That's good!'

'That's good!'

Li Deshang repeatedly thought to himself.

He was really afraid of falling out with Mu Bai over this.

He could now only rely on Mu Bai.

If Mu Bai became distant, having no 'Martial Artist' to rely on, he would truly become a skeleton in a grave.

And now?

Li Deshang looked at Jason with increasingly intimate eyes.

"Brother Mu, tomorrow will be the martial arts tournament, shall I represent you to delay it for a few days?"

"No need."

"With these secret medicines."

"Handling the martial arts tournament is more than enough."

Jason said while pointing to the box on the table, then, he picked up the box, walked towards his room, speaking as he went

"I need to train behind closed doors."

Chapter 1264: Additional Options!

Outside the door, the sounds of Li Deshang and Jia Youcai saying goodbye and Dou Bao seeing them off could be heard.

The voices gradually faded away, and Jason shifted his gaze to the box in front of him.

‘Small Nourishing Essence Pills’, three hundred pieces.

‘Nourishing Essence Pills’, one hundred pieces.

Plus two portions of ‘Jade Pure Powder’.

Though he had long expected Li Deshang to prepare a big gift for him, he didn’t anticipate it would be this grand.

Moreover!

This wasn’t everything!

‘Truly a pleasant cooperation!’ Jason thought to himself as he opened the box he had already checked multiple times.

Instantly, countless wax-sealed medicine bottles appeared before his eyes.

These bottles were easy to recognize, with red paper labels and ink inscriptions indicating their names.

Without any hesitation.

Jason popped open one bottle after another, pouring the contents into his mouth.

Just like eating candy beans.

The sour three hundred 'Small Nourishing Essence Pills', the hundred sweet and sour 'Nourishing Essence Pills' all went into his mouth and down into his stomach.

Immediately, a surge of enhancement washed over him like a tidal wave.

Ultimately, it settled at—

2521 points fullness!

'No inferior quality, mostly average, a few excellent.'

'Is it because the pill-makers are different?'

‘Are those pill-makers individuals? Or are they a group?’

As Jason looked at his fullness, which had recovered to 3771, his thoughts couldn’t help but wander.

Then, he quickly shook his head, reining in his scattered thoughts.

There was too little information to think about now—it was useless.

Might as well inquire Li Deshang when the time comes.

As for now?

Jason’s gaze landed on those two portions of ‘Jade Pure Powder’.

According to Li Deshang, the effects of ‘Jade Pure Powder’ were not as potent as ‘Ginseng Toad Pill’, but comparable to ‘Tiger Blood Strong Yuan Powder’.

Just unsure of the taste?

With that thought, Jason popped open the stopper and tipped it into his mouth.

A cool sensation.

Sweet.

Somewhat like mint candy.

Very refreshing.

[Consumed Jade Pure Powder x2]

[Physical Strength, Vitality, and Injuries Overly Restored!]

[Fullness +60X2]

[Fullness: 3891]

...

'Nice taste.' Jason praised.

Adding 10 more points of fullness than 'Tiger Blood Strong Yuan Powder'.

Although compared to Jason's current fullness it merely accounted for 1/319th, Jason did not underestimate any single point of fullness.

Because this was his Talent.

Earned bit by bit through eating.

Accumulated bit by bit.

To disdain any point of fullness was to disregard his efforts.

Jason certainly wouldn't do so.

Anyone may underestimate oneself.

But oneself should never underestimate oneself.

Jason had long understood this principle.

Similarly, he also understood the importance of tackling easier tasks before harder ones.

Hence, the next moment he took out 'Iron Fist Vigor', 'Mountain Shaking Fist Energy', choosing 'Iron Fist Vigor' — from beneath the large meditation cushion.

Previously, due to insufficient fullness, the plan to add extra options to [Barehanded Combat] had long been unsuccessful.

Now that he finally had enough fullness, he certainly wouldn't miss the opportunity.

Moreover, 'Iron Fist Vigor' required the least fullness.

Should there be any issues, with his current fullness reserves, his Talent was sufficient to cope.

[Detected special inheritance item 'Iron Fist Vigor', evaluating...]

[Evaluation of Barehanded Combat reaching Master level, evaluation passed!]

[Consume 30 points fullness to list it as an extra option?]

...

‘Yes!’

Finger touch, the option appeared again.

This time, Jason didn’t hesitate, giving a confident answer.

Immediately a picture appeared before his eyes—

A large pot full of yellow millet, he stood before the pot, using his fists and palms continuously pounding the millet day and night, as the light outside the window changed incessantly.

Over time, the whole millet had been pulverized into powder.

Next, millet turned into mung beans.

Again and again, when the mung beans were also reduced to powder.

Iron sand appeared in the pot.

Just as before.

The iron sand too was crushed into finer powder bit by bit.

But, just as the iron sand was about to be completely pulverized.

Whoosh!

A furnace appeared beneath the iron pot, with blazing flames leaping over a meter high, swiftly turning the pot and iron sand red hot.

The scorching aura made Jason raise his hand to shield his face, instinctively retreating two steps.

As he came to his senses, the pot and iron sand had already liquefied.

Transforming into a pool of molten iron.

The molten iron rolled in mid-air, gradually forming.

It was a pair of hands!

Large, glowing red, emitting hot air currents.

Behind the hands, the phantom of an angry Vajra gradually took shape.

[Evaluating extra option for Iron Fist Vigor...]

[Evaluating Vajra Palm for integration into Iron Fist Vigor...]

[Consume 300 points fullness for integration...]

...

'Yes!'

Jason did not hesitate.

Though the surprise before him exceeded his expectations, the imagined death did not occur, rather more integration and extra options appeared, but why had he accumulated so much fullness?

If not for times of such unexpected occurrences?

Following Jason's affirmative reply.

The screen in front continued.

The angry Vajra phantom turned solid.

The large hands thrust straight at Jason.

No evading!

To dodge was to fail!

Inexplicably, this understanding settled in Jason's mind.

In the next moment, Jason raised his hands to meet them.

Poof!

With no resistance, Jason was blasted.

His substantial defense, under the angry Vajra's fiery red large hands, offered no resistance at all.

However, Jason was not dismayed but delighted.

Chapter 1265: Modified: 25 Additional Options! (2)

The familiar feeling is back!

This is what he really wants!

This is the mode in which his talent truly opens!

In a breath, Jason appeared in his original spot.

The furious-eyed golden-arm Buddha swung his palm again, and Jason raised his hand to meet him once more.

Puff!

He was blown up again.

But Jason was not discouraged.

If once doesn't work, then twice.

If twice doesn't work, then two hundred times.

Eventually, his body would adapt.

That's the experience he had previously summarized.

In fact, the experience summarized through physical training is real and reliable.

After dying a hundred more times.

The furious-eyed golden-arm Buddha's glowing red palm turned into a dark iron palm, and his angry eyes changed to kind and gentle eyes.

He joined his hands in prayer, and this Buddha vanished.

The text in front of Jason began to emerge—

[Judgment Passed!]

[Strength, Agility, Constitution +0.1]

[Barehanded Combat gains additional talent options: Tenacity, Sharpness, Searing]

[Tenacity: Your hands have been thoroughly tempered with secret techniques, becoming as tough as iron armor, Effect: Your hands possess 'Bullet' level defense.]

[Sharpness: Your hands have been thoroughly tempered with secret techniques, becoming even sharper than ordinary blades, Effect: Your hands possess 'Bullet' level cutting power.]

[Searing: During the tempering with secret techniques, a mishap granted your hands this ability, Effect: Your hands possess 'Bullet' level searing power.]

...

Three additional options appeared under [Barehanded Combat (Master)].

However, what caught Jason's attention more was the increase in attributes.

If the increase in additional options was expected, the increase in attributes was an unexpected delight.

'It actually increased attributes?'

'Is it a coincidence?'

'Or

'Will there be an increase every time?'

Thinking about this, even Jason found his heart beating faster.

If his speculation was correct, he seemed to see a broad avenue to quickly enhance his strength.

However, not all news is good.

With the addition of three extra options, the [Barehanded Combat] upgrade from master level to peerless level increased the consumption from 25 points of satiety and 3 points of Excitement of Feast to 50 points of satiety and 5 points of Excitement of Feast.

Jason had experienced something similar before; it wasn't a surprise.

Besides, he had planned accordingly long before this.

Regardless of the increased satiety and Excitement of Feast for upgrading [Barehanded Combat] from master to peerless level, for him, it was advantageous.

His additional options couldn't increase levels actively; they could only be promoted by the level-up of [Barehanded Combat].

Simply put, by integrating more additional options, each upgrade of [Barehanded Combat] resulted in an increase in Jason's strength, and if enough options were integrated, every upgrade would be a qualitative leap in his power.

And now?

This is just the beginning!

Looking at the remaining 3261 points of satiety, Jason decided to continue.

[Discovered special inherited item 'Mountain Shaking Fist Energy', judging...]

[Judging Barehanded Combat reached master level, judgment passed!]

[Yes/No to consume 40 satiety to add it to the additional options?]

...

'Yes!'

After the first time, Jason became quite adept.

As the image in front of him changed, he quickly adapted.

This should be a martial arts training ground.

Similar to the training ground in the courtyard of his martial arts gym, but much larger, with numerous sandbags the size of flour bags hanging in mid-air; he was punching these sandbags continuously with his hands and arms.

One, two, three...

Soon, a total of ten sandbags were swinging.

And he squeezed between the sandbags, pounding them with even faster speed.

Bang bang bang!

The sound of striking grew more frequent, and the speed of the swinging sandbags also increased.

Finally, a slight tremor was transmitted to his body from his fists colliding with the sandbags.

He was overjoyed.

Then—

Boom!

A sandbag hit his back, causing him to stumble.

Before he could recover, a sandbag struck his chest heavily.

Then, more sandbags came crashing.

Boom boom boom!

He had been hitting the sandbags.

Now?

The sandbags were hitting him.

By the time the sandbags' kinetic energy dissipated and came to a halt, he was already lying on the ground lifeless.

However, the next moment, he got up.

His face had no expression.

No fear and no pain.

For Jason, compared to the pain of dying explosively, this pounding felt like mere itching, although the consequence was still death, the process wasn't painful.

This was enough for Jason.

Ten times!

After dying ten times consecutively!

Jason stood in the middle of the sandbags once more, he swung another punch.

Boom!

This time, the sandbag didn't swing again.

Instead, it was directly blown apart.

Succeeded!

[Judgment Passed!]

[Barehanded Combat gains additional talent option: Shockwave]

[Shockwave: You've mastered a secret technique for secondary attacks; when your fist or palm strikes the opponent, they not only endure the expected force but also withstand an additional 'Bullet' level defense-bypassing vigor.]

...

'No attribute points increase?'

‘Is the accumulation insufficient?’

‘And!’

‘With the sandbag collision in the recent scene, even if I were standing still, there shouldn’t be any problems, but I actually died ten times in that scenario!’

Chapter 1266: Extra Options! (3)

‘Were these ten deaths necessary because I skipped the accumulation of time?’

‘Or, did the change in satiation mature this secret technique into an additional option for me?’

Jason contemplated.

If his hypothesis was correct, it was clear that satiation functioned like a skill point.

It’s just that...

‘Why can’t it be like a skill point, with just a click, but rather I have to immerse myself into the character to experience this feeling.’

‘Is it so I can better master this technique?’

‘Or... are all my choices similar to the experiences of these owners and creators of the “legacy items”?’

Jason speculated.

The reason he referred to them as similar experiences was because Jason was sure that these owners and creators did not die when they wrote down these secret techniques, but there should have been people who practiced poorly and died around them.

This would definitely have a huge emotional impact on the owners and creators.

Perhaps, it was precisely this immense emotional impact that turned these recorded secret techniques into the so-called ‘legacy items.’

‘Human emotions?’

‘There is great terror between life and death!’

‘And there are great opportunities!’

‘Then, it allowed me to have an immersive learning experience.’

Jason shook his head as he thought about it.

Although there was nothing wrong with this way of learning, the manner of death was really a bit hard for him to accept.

Can martial arts be practiced to such a frenzied extent?

To the point of not caring about one's life?

Recalling the various events just now, Jason sighed.

He couldn't quite understand it.

However, this didn't stop him from picking up the secret technique of 'Iron Chariot.'

After spending 60 points, Jason experienced this 'legacy item.'

Da da da!

The sound of horse hooves echoed.

He was fully armored, holding a long spear.

Before him was a peak resembling a bull's head, extremely steep, allowing only one person to pass.

At this moment, he was riding his horse on this path.

Before he could come to his senses—

Rumble!

A four-wheeled iron chariot with dozens of sharp blades and loaded with a thousand-pound stone charged down the slope.

Instinctively, he raised his long spear to strike at the base of the iron chariot.

Bang!

The spearhead stuck at the base, but a massive force like an avalanche pressed down, crushing him to death before he could react.

Materializing again, Jason was still on the warhorse.

Again, it was the iron chariot.

Again, he was crushed to death.

Compared to the hammer blows in the sandbag formation earlier, this time it hurt a bit more.

After ten consecutive times, he stopped the rushing iron chariot for the first time in the true sense.

However, the warhorse underneath him neighed and collapsed to the ground.

He was crushed to death once more.

Upon reviving again, this time Jason jumped off the warhorse and faced the iron chariot.

The iron chariot slid down, and he was crushed to death.

Without the warhorse's assistance, he died even faster.

But even with the experience of the warhorse's lack of strength, he didn't choose the warhorse again.

He chose to trust himself.

The difficulty unconsciously increased again.

A full thirty times.

Once again, Jason used the long spear to brace against the iron chariot, and then, with a powerful lift.

It didn't move.

The iron chariot continued.

He was crushed to death.

Time and again.

Another thirty times.

Clang!

This time, Jason thrust his spear like a dragon, pinning the iron chariot solidly, and all the muscles in his waist, back, spine, and limbs were activated.

"Rise!"

With a loud shout, the iron chariot was lifted and tumbled off the cliff.

He was unscathed.

Whoosh, whoosh.

Seemingly due to excessive exertion, he panted heavily. In a daze, he heard the sound of war drums, turned back, and vaguely saw an army appearing at the foot of the mountain.

Amidst the waving banners, a commander's flag stood in the middle of the ranks.

Written on it was—

Yue!

Chapter 1267: Wonton Stand

Flags danced, the military formation stretched endlessly.

The morale was like a rainbow, unstoppable.

The command flag moved.

The entire army moved.

With a single charge, the mountain peak was flattened.

The command flag swiftly reached Jason's side.

Under the command flag, a figure sat mounted on a horse.

However, Jason couldn't clearly see the person's face.

It seemed the person was smiling.

Yet it also seemed the face was solemn.

All these feelings were present, yet weren't complete.

In the end, only a radiance remained.

Under this radiance, a unique charisma involuntarily drew Jason's gaze.

It was a spirit steadfast in loyalty.

It was a willingness to bleed dry for the land below and the people on the land.

'His blood permeated into the veins of our nation, passing down through generations!'

Mysteriously, such words welled up in Jason's heart.

At the same time, the figure seemed to be saying something to him.

Yet just like the figure's appearance, he couldn't hear clearly.

All there was, was the mountain wind howling.

All there was, was the soldiers shouting.

In the wind, in the shouts, the voice gradually became clear—

Smoke rises from the wolf beacons, the nation gazes north.

The dragon flag unfurls, horses neigh long, Sword Qi like frost.

...

Listening to that heroic voice, Jason blinked.

Instantly, everything before his eyes vanished, leaving only his room in the martial arts academy.

He was still sitting in the secret chamber.

However, his hand was raised, as if wanting to grasp something.

Sitting there in a daze, recalling the mesmerizing scene just now.

Jason remained dumbfounded for a long time before regaining his senses.

In front of him was still a line of text—

[Determination Passed!]

[Physique +0.1]

[Barehanded Combat acquired additional Talent options: Leverage, Striking Force]

[Leverage: Having gone through multiple life-and-death experiences, you have mastered this exceptionally special skill. When you use your hands to parry your opponent's attack, you can neutralize impacts not exceeding a bomb-level force (excluding energy attacks).]

[Striking Force: When the 'Leverage' additional option is activated, you can return the opponent's Vigor with your attack]

...

'Leverage Striking Force?'

Gazing at the two newly appeared additional options, Jason was somewhat astounded.

Then, he recalled the scene of just breaking the cart.

When his feet landed, it seemed not just brute force anymore.

No!

It was still brute force!

However, this brute force was no longer just in the arms but the whole body.

Using the strength of the whole body to shift the opponent's center of gravity, followed by a critical strike.

Unable to bear it, Jason stood up and threw a punch.

Although hitting only air.

But the air in front of the punch seemed as though it was cut by a sharp blade, shivering continuously. When the shiver reached an extreme, it scorched and distorted the air.

Finally—

Bang!

A low thud reverberated in the room.

"This punch..."

Jason frowned slightly.

Air is different from a tangible object; some subtleties are imperceptible.

Immediately, Jason opened the door to test it out in the martial arts training ground.

Not to spar with anyone.

Just to hit a wooden dummy.

By this time, Dou Bao had once again guided the nine disciples of the martial arts academy in finishing their martial exercises.

The nine disciples conducted their respective training while Dou Bao provided guidance.

When Jason came out, all the disciples' attention was drawn to him.

Everyone in the martial arts academy naturally knew what happened last night.

At this moment, there was an extra layer of inquiry in the gaze directed at Jason.

How severely was their academy master injured?

Each disciple speculated.

Dou Bao, however, felt a sense of concern.

But in front of these disciples, Dou Bao couldn't show more, as it would affect their morale.

In fact, when the disciples arrived this morning, they subtly inquired about it.

For Dou Bao, the martial arts academy was the foundation of the academy master.

It must not come to harm.

Therefore, she straightforwardly informed the disciples that the academy master was fine, just lightly injured.

The rumors outside were mere hearsay.

However, when Jason came out, Dou Bao immediately grew concerned.

Not for fear of her lie being exposed.

But worried about Jason's well-being.

"Academy Master?"

Dou Bao asked softly.

Jason smiled and nodded but did not stop walking, heading straight toward the wooden dummy at the side of the martial training ground, then threw a punch—

Bang!

The fist struck tightly against the wooden dummy.

Everyone saw this punch deeply embedded into the wood.

Hiss!

The nine disciples drew a breath; they knew perfectly well how tough these wooden dummies were from daily practice. Never mind fists, even blades and swords would only leave shallow marks.

Yet now, their academy master left a mark with a single punch.

Should this strike an actual person, it would likely result in broken bones and tendons.

But even more astonishing events continued.

The struck wooden dummy vibrated fiercely, as if the ground itself were quaking.

A moment later,

Boom!

The wooden dummy exploded just like that.

Amid the splintering fragments, the wood was charred black, as though it had been filled with explosives.

"This?!"

Everyone was stupefied.

Including Dou Bao.

Being the closest to Mu Bai, Dou Bao naturally knew Mu Bai's strength. The previous punch hardly surprised her, as Mu Bai could sometimes achieve it in private practice.

However, this punch was definitely unattainable.

Could it be...

'Is it the 'Neither break nor establish' that Mom talked about?'

'The academy master not only avoided leaving hidden injuries from the previous wounds but also advanced a step further?'

With this thought, Dou Bao's eyes brightened.

"Academy Master, you?"

Dou Bao tentatively asked.

"Hmm."

"Just happened to have some insights."

Chapter 1268: Dumpling Stall (2)

Jason nodded in response, then turned his gaze to the martial arts school disciples who stood there stunned, and said in a deep voice, "Why aren't you continuing?"

"Yes, Master."

"Understood, Master."

The disciples snapped back to reality and began practicing again, one by one.

Compared to before, the disciples were now more dedicated in their performance.

Jason glanced once and then turned his gaze to Dou Bao.

"I just had some insights. I'm going for a walk."

Jason said.

"Alright, Master, you go ahead."

"Make sure to come back for lunch."

Dou Bao reminded him.

"Sure."

Jason's mouth curled into a smile as he turned and walked out the martial arts school's door. He found Dou Bao's attentiveness impressive, especially the meals, which made him feel reluctant to leave.

'The scene just now should be enough.'

Jason recalled the expressions of the disciples and was confident that by the afternoon, the news of him not only being unharmed but having greatly improved his skills would spread throughout Mountain City.

These disciples were only paying to learn martial arts, not personal disciples.

Naturally, they wouldn't keep any secrets for him.

In fact, they were likely coming today with ulterior motives.

However, this didn't matter.

Others paid money, he paid with fists.

He could also spread some news, truly killing two birds with one stone.

Jason was confident that once the news spread, some people would believe it, but this group would be small, while more would disbelieve, even thinking he was deliberately creating a smokescreen.

Then!

His own bounty's allure would become increasingly enticing.

'Bring more of them on!'

'It's best if they come with 'food'.'

Jason thought with anticipation.

He had already harvested from the affluent in Mountain City, so naturally, the 'scattered' ones needed attention too. A true win-win.

'The reputation from the main task has already reached 80, thanks to last night's assassination, it has skyrocketed again.'

'Reaching 100 faster than expected... Huh?'

Jason scanned the main task and suddenly his eyes focused.

He saw a wonton stand.

A middle-aged man with a weathered face was standing behind the carrying pole, cleaning up.

Apparently, he was preparing to close down.

Jason had seen the owner of this wonton stand once, and his appearance and figure had not changed, but previously he did not have this 'aura of death' around him!

With his [Death Sense], Jason could confirm that this wonton stand owner had just killed someone.

Moreover, the body was in the alley behind.

‘Did he come for the bounty?’

‘Or was it

‘An accident?’

Jason stood in front of the wonton stand, thinking.

"Master Mu, would you like a bowl of wontons?"

Zhao Laosi, who was packing up, looked up with a sharp smile.

He seemed to be pleased that his leftover wontons could finally be sold.

"Yes."

Jason nodded.

"Alright, give me a moment."

"Would you like an egg with that?"

Zhao Laosi asked.

"Yes."

Jason confirmed, and then stood at the wonton stand watching Zhao Laosi bustle about.

It was already morning, people were hurrying by on Martial Arts Street, but upon seeing the tall and muscular Jason, they would slow their pace, curiosity on their faces, inquisitiveness in their eyes.

Clearly, last night's affair at Drunken Fairy Tower was now known throughout the town.

But no one came to disturb him.

To the ordinary people of Mountain City, the masters of Martial Arts Street had already surpassed the realm of the common folk.

Moreover, with Li Deshang's presence, after some added rumors, these people, though curious, were also apprehensive.

Zhao Laosi before him was similar.

While cooking wontons, he would sneak glances at Jason now and then, but dared not look too much.

Everything seemed normal.

But Jason felt something was off.

There was something unnatural about Zhao Laosi.

But precisely what felt unnatural, Jason couldn't say.

Still, the wontons smelled delicious.

Even though he hadn't tasted them yet, Jason could already detect their aroma.

In his mind, Jason was already imagining the taste of the wontons, especially complemented by that broth, which he was sure wasn't bad.

"Master Mu, scallions and cilantro?"

"Both."

"Vinegar and chili are over there."

Zhao Laosi pointed to the corner of the stall and began preparing the broth, adding bits of seaweed, shrimp shells, salt, and pepper, which instantly released their original flavors in the hot broth. The vibrant green scallions and cilantro rose to the top of the bowl, followed by the egg, and when the pale wontons were added, they complemented the green perfectly.

A couple of droplets of sesame oil made the bowl of wontons even more mouth-watering.

"Master Mu, your wontons."

Zhao Laosi said with a smile.

"Hmm, I'll have another bowl."

Jason said after receiving the bowl.

"Alright."

Zhao Laosi was a bit taken aback but quickly smiled again.

Jason didn't bother sitting but instead drank a sip of the broth while standing, smacked his lips, then started to add vinegar, chili, and salt. Without using a spoon, he lifted the bowl and downed the wontons with one swift motion.

Zhao Laosi apparently had never seen someone eat wontons like this and was slightly startled.

Jason wiped his mouth and placed the bowl down, waiting patiently.

He was now sure why he had felt something strange.

Because—

The person in front of him was definitely not Zhao Laosi.

Zhao Laosi's wontons were never this delicious.

The sense of smell doesn't lie!

He had smelled the wontons the original Zhao Laosi cooked before.

Compared to what he just had, they were at least two grades lower.

Chapter 1269: Wonton Stall (3)

Moreover, the other person was reluctant to add shrimp skin and pepper.

But just now, this bowl not only had shrimp skin and pepper, but it was also perfectly seasoned. The other person's skills were no worse than the master chef at 'Drunken Fairy Tower' last night.

'Killed Zhao Laosi and is impersonating him?'

Jason quietly thought.

Where is Zhao Laosi?

No doubt he's in the back alley.

As for the other person's purpose?

It's very likely they're here for Hua Hong.

However, Jason wasn't in a hurry to make a move.

First, he twitched his nose to confirm that there wasn't any more "food" on the other person, then he patiently waited.

Without more "food," having a few more bowls of wontons was only natural.

However, just as Jason picked up the second bowl of wontons, he suddenly felt a chill up his spine,

Instinctively, Jason turned his head and saw Dou Bao.

Dou Bao was standing at the martial arts school's entrance, watching there, while a few martial arts apprentices had just come out.

Clearly, Dou Bao was seeing off the martial arts apprentices and just happened to see Jason eating wontons at the stand.

Jason's vision far exceeded that of ordinary people. He immediately saw the grievance and anger in Dou Bao's eyes.

As if to say, "Is my cooking not good enough?"

"Why are you eating out?"

"Can't you eat at home?"

Under such a gaze, Jason felt a growing sense of guilt deep inside.

An involuntary sense of guilt.

As if he had done something wrong.

Especially when Dou Bao just stood there watching without stopping him or scolding him, only looking more aggrieved, even if there was no mistake, it felt like he was in the wrong.

'What to do?'

'Will I lose my long-term personal chef?'

'I have to make it right!'

'I must make it right!'

As Jason was racking his brains, two figures appeared on one side of Martial Arts Street.

Two young and beautiful girls in cheongsams walked over.

The one on the left was slightly taller with long legs.

The one on the right was shorter, but curvaceous.

Both of their appearances were quite beautiful, especially when they walked together. The fitting cheongsams drew attention, almost immediately catching the eyes of the men on Martial Arts Street.

They glanced at the left, then at the right.

But the two paid no attention to them and walked straight up to Jason.

"Good morning, Master Mu."

"Do you remember us?"

"I am Li Yuanyuan, and this is Zhao Shuhua."

After the two girls came over, the girl on the right spoke directly, with gratitude on her face, and the girl on the left was the same.

Li Yuanyuan and Zhao Shuhua, these two names were unfamiliar to Jason.

However, he had seen these two people before.

The first time, they were wearing school uniforms at the entrance of his martial arts school.

The second time was on the docks late at night, where they were tied up among the trafficked crowd.

This was the third time.

They had come to express their gratitude.

Jason didn't particularly care.

He hadn't intentionally saved them; it was just a matter of convenience.

So, he nodded and didn't want to interact with them further.

However, Li Yuanyuan and Zhao Shuhua weren't like that.

"We are truly grateful to you."

"Without you, we would have

As they spoke, they became emotionally moved, almost to tears.

The feeling of a chill on his spine intensified.

Jason secretly glanced at the martial arts school's entrance.

Dou Bao was still standing there, her eyes no longer angry, only full of grievance, but that grievance was several times stronger than before.

The expression on her face seemed to say: You have a dog outside!

No!

This can't continue!

Or else I'll lose my chef!

With this thought, Jason's expression changed. His habitual indifference became filled with righteousness, his eyes radiating a strong sense of authority and menace. He looked at Zhao Laosi behind the wonton stand, and said word by word —

"Speak, why did you kill!"

Zhao Laosi was shocked.

Chapter 1270: Zhao Lao 4 is Shocked!

Zhao Laosi looked at Jason, feeling a little lost.

He was clearly just watching the show from the sidelines, how did he end up involved?

Plus, how did the other party know he committed murder?

"Master Mu, you must be joking. I'm just a wonton stall owner, how could I kill someone?"

Zhao Laosi laughed as he handed a bowl of cooked wontons to Jason.

Jason accepted it.

Zhao Laosi breathed a sigh of relief.

'It looks like he was just trying to divert attention.'

'Otherwise, if he really knew I killed someone, would he still dare to eat my food?'

Just as Zhao Laosi was thinking this, Jason tilted his head back and ate the wontons, soup and all.

'Sure enough, just to divert attention...'

"Then what's the deal with Zhao Laosi's corpse in the alley?"

While Zhao Laosi was still pondering, Jason put down the bowl and said directly.

Zhao Laosi was stunned.

'It's not to divert attention!'

'Nor is it a trick!'

'He really found out!'

Zhao Laosi furrowed his brows and looked at Jason in confusion, unable to understand why Jason already knew and still dared to eat the wontons he made, wasn't he afraid of poison?

Besides, how did this Master Mu know?

He thought he had committed the perfect crime.

Whether in form, expression, or demeanor, he was convincingly authentic.

He even had some of Zhao Laosi's memories and wouldn't make a mistake.

"Where did I slip up?"

Zhao Laosi asked, bowing.

The voice was still Zhao Laosi's, the actions were Zhao Laosi's.

But the content of his words shocked Li Yuanyuan and Zhao Shuhua, the two girls almost instinctively hid behind Jason, and the crowd that had been just watching quickly dispersed.

"He really committed murder!"

"Zhao Laosi was killed!"

"The Zhao Laosi here is fake!"

Such whispers rose among the crowd.

Zhao Laosi heard them but didn't care, maintaining the bow, staring straight at Jason.

It seemed as though nothing around him mattered except Jason.

"Your wontons are much better than Zhao Laosi's."

Jason answered truthfully.

"Better than Zhao Laosi?"

Zhao Laosi was taken aback, clearly not expecting to be found out this way.

"Yes."

"You even added dried shrimp, pepper, which Zhao Laosi would never splurge on."

Jason nodded.

"Since you noticed, why didn't you say so directly?"

Zhao Laosi asked another of the questions in his mind.

Logically, since he was discovered, he should be surrounded by people by now.

This kind of situation had happened before.

But now, there were no ambushes around.

The only one who was in danger was Jason.

"Why say it directly? If I don't say it, I can eat a few more bowls. If I say it, I wouldn't get even one."

"After all, your wontons are delicious."

"Besides..."

Jason dragged out his tone, capturing Zhao Laosi's attention.

Zhao Laosi's concentration was entirely on Jason, and now he perked up his ears for more.

Then, he heard—

"It's free."

Zhao Laosi blinked, thinking he must have misheard.

But seeing Jason's smiling face, he knew he hadn't.

Suddenly, Zhao Laosi's expression stiffened.

He thought of many possibilities but had never anticipated such an answer.

An unexpected answer.

Strangely, he felt taken advantage of.

Even though he wasn't Zhao Laosi, it seemed precisely because of that, the feeling of being taken advantage of was stronger.

Just then, Jason lifted his foot and kicked the side of the stall with the pot and furnace.

Bam!

Scalding soup, along with the charcoal from the furnace, flew towards Zhao Laosi.

"Ah ah ah!"

Caught off guard, Zhao Laosi was drenched in scalding soup and screamed in agony, then came the charcoal, intensifying the 'burn'.

Zhao Laosi rolled on the ground in pain.

Then, swiftly went silent.

"Dead?"

Li Yuanyuan and Zhao Shuhua looked at Zhao Laosi's corpse in shock and disbelief.

Dou Bao, who ran from the martial arts club entrance, boldly wanted to check the body, but was held back by Jason.

"Don't touch it, it's suspicious."

Faced with Dou Bao's confusion, Jason spoke gravely.

The attack just now, for a normal person, could be deemed fatal.

But for a killer skilled in disguise, clearly well-trained, such an attack shouldn't be deadly.

Jason furrowed his brows, looking at 'Zhao Laosi's' corpse.

Dou Bao watched Jason, then turned a scrutinizing and proud gaze towards Li Yuanyuan and Zhao Shuhua.

The meaning was clear.

See, the Master still cares more about me!

"I'll have someone report to the authorities."

Dou Bao said.

The more critical the situation, the more composed she needed to be.

"Alright."

Jason nodded.

Dou Bao ran to the side to find a messenger.

"Could you pass a message?"

Dou Bao said, pulling out a dime and placing it in the person's hand.

She wanted to give just a penny but chose a dime for the Master's sake.

Dou Bao knew that even without paying, someone would willingly help.

But that would entail owing a favor.

Financial debts are easy to repay.

Favor debts are hard.

No matter the size, they're troublesome.

Sometimes, they can be fatal.

Being able to settle a favor with money is the best deal.

She learned much about the ways of the world during her time traveling destitute.