

269 Brian's Reputation [1]

A week later, Brian's only focus was to contribute to the mercenary group. He would leave the siheyuan with Jake and hunt some monsters and also save some villages in need of so-called protection. Furthermore, he needed to focus on his cultivation. 1

After their daily training, leaving a rocky mountain and descending in where the direction of the capital city of the Wu region was, Jake sighed in somewhat of a disappointment with himself. He faced Brian with a kind of sad expression on his face.

"I apologize that I can't be any help to you when it comes to cultivation. For some reason, the time I started practicing my martial arts, I gained no ability to cultivate."

Brian heard the saddened tone from him, and what he could only feel was guilt that he might be pressured since the real case was starting. Brian was starting to be known in the group as someone who was a rising star and also an important person in the White Lead.

"You don't have to apologize about it, Brother Jake. Your martial arts, even if it wasn't an exact imitation of yours, were already helping me. I could save my Qi by using the movements and



breathing you taught. At this point, I would have smooth and fast progress."

"It is a good thing. But by the way, I am curious, Brother Brian. How will you re-establish your position in the White Lead? You still didn't have any connections. It is critical in re-establishing your position, right?"

This was the one thing that Jake learned from working under noble families and also from observing society. Positions, in a nutshell, were just about having relationships with other people, and creating influence eventually. And just as Jake noticed that he was still not working on it, a cloud-like thought was forming in his head.

'Grand Master wanted to make things within a month. But a month has passed; will it be acceptable if Brian is still unable to re-establish his position? If he made Brian the leader of White Lead, what would happen if no one followed him? Fear? But fear doesn't have any respect or loyalty, which is important as well.'

He was confused by Brian's plan. He had already explained it, and in simple terms, Brian just wanted to earn plenty of achievements and contribute more to the group. Even though he knew it would be bad, he had to endure it since sacrifices weren't inevitable.

Jake didn't care about morals. He wanted things to be fast, but he couldn't tell Brian since he also respected his decision. This wasn't all about morals for him; rather, he wanted to tackle it already.

"Was this excitement? I don't really know why I wanted to make things fast. Maybe it is because of the time limit and target time that Grand Master set."

He let out a sigh and then shook his head, ignoring the other rise in his thoughts.

"Well, whatever. I will just support you, Brother Brian."

"I am thankful that you are by my side, Brother Jake. I just don't know how I would fix things if I hadn't met you two. Maybe it was a good thing that I didn't dodge and run away from you."

Jake scoffed. "Why would you even try to run away from us? It is not like we were bad in the first place. We pretty much didn't care about other people."

"Well, it was just a gut feeling."

Brian didn't slack off to have his reputation and position return. He would always accept missions and orders from above that would



benefit the mercenary group. Even though in some cases, he didn't like hurting innocent people, he had no other choice but to endure it.

And due to his achievements, other members of White Lead started to have high expectations of him, which he worked hard to not fail, not even just a small percentage. He had to be perfect.

Brian's personality changed entirely. People who knew him in the past could notice it. He had this resolute and dignified face that anyone would be mesmerized by looking at. Furthermore, his reputation wasn't just the thing that was famous in White Lead, but also Jake's.

They were greeted by other members in the capital city just after they descended from the Rocky Mountains. And as they were forced to stop, to take care of their reputation, they had to entertain them. It was the path that Brian chose to be good to the lower members and gain their trust.

'If people looked at me as a good leader, or even just a role model, I would eventually gain their trust.'

With a smile on his face, he talked with the lower members. Meanwhile, Jake was bombarded by other members as well. They were his admirers. They heard about his reputation from others and told others about

him as well. It was an unending flow of telling stories, whether there was a basis or not. In conclusion, they were only excited to see him since they would sometimes hear his name from stories.

"Advisor Jake, what do you think about my cultivation? Is this already enough to stand up taller than others who are the same age as mine?"

Jake had also established a good character for the people, which they became used to, and he had no other choice but to act that way.

'Even though fear is important, being respected and loved while knowing your abilities is good.' Jake bit his lip as he forced himself to respond to the people.

"Well, it is not about competing with others really. You just need to set a goal, and you should be able to achieve it. That is the real competition, not with other people, since your number one enemy is yourself."

'What bullshit. Any person that has the ability to kill you could be your enemy. Those who have hostility towards you and would harm your life are also enemies. But, for the sake of this, I must endure speaking these flowery words.'

When they heard what Jake said, their faces



couldn't hide the excitement. It was more of a feeling that every word Jake said was important and significant for them to grow.

Finally, after a few minutes, they slipped through the crowd and returned to Brian's house. Inside the siheyuan, Brian had a house, and Jake also lived there.

"Finally... Those people in the crowd were just too overwhelming. It is a good thing that they were fools." Brian uttered, taking a glass of water to drink.

Jake smirked and scoffed at it. He then replied, "Well, what can we do? We should endure it and fool them. Even ourselves as well, for the sake of stopping them, right?"

"What do you mean, Brother Jake?" Brian was forced to come to a halt as a result of what he overheard Jake say. He slowly faced him with his face, waiting and surprised. "What do you mean by that?"

"Don't tell me that you are going to ask yourself about it. Brian, I already figured out why you wanted to be the successor. You want to stop White Lead's governance and free the people. Even though it was slightly obvious, I just feel like it deserves to be mentioned."

"Brother Jake, why would you say that? I wanted



to be the successor because I wanted to take revenge on my father. But, it is just like what you said, it has some meaning running around the idea you showed."

"Wait, what? Revenge?" Jake, as if hearing something shocking, tilted his body and shifted his gaze to Brian, with his eyes wide. "Why would you get revenge on your own father? It doesn't mean something."

"You are jumping to a conclusion, Brother Jake. It has some meaning."

He was made to freeze, and just at that moment when he wasn't able to make any reaction, Jake was thinking about it.

'Revenge? Maybe being not well aware of other things just made me realize that it is not about what I really think. I don't know his story, so I should not say it doesn't mean anything.'

"I am sorry." Jake lowered his head after realizing his faults. "I just couldn't think of any reason. I am stupid. But why would you want revenge on your own father?"

Brian didn't answer immediately; instead, he just stared at his glasses with deep and long breathing.

"Nothing serious. I want to forget about it, really. It is funny that I was the one who brought this



up, but I am the one who is being emotional. Anyway, I hope that you ignore it."

Jake just stared at him. Inside his thoughts, he was putting things into consideration.

"There must be a reason why Brian wanted revenge. And this will also mean freeing the innocent people in case he kills his father. But, what should I really think about it? Killing his father doesn't mean that he will become the leader. He needs Grand Master's help."

"Okay, I can understand. But, we just need to focus more on your forms, Brother Brian. At some point, you are forgetting some proper execution, and it is not a good thing since you are a cultivator."

"I understand. I will work harder, Brother Jake."

