

The Lord 51

Chapter 51: Important Position

Bai Shan received the blood-red orb and looked at it curiously. He had no idea what it was because the Grade Orbs were the Great Qin Village's greatest secret. Zhao Fu had strictly ordered everyone who knew about them not to divulge any information, so most people did not know about them.

After Bai Shan took it, Zhao Fu explained to him what the Grade Orb did.

Bai Shan looked completely stunned, and after recovering, tears started to stream down his face. He ran over and hugged Zhao Fu's legs as he emotionally cried out, "Your Majesty! Your grace towards me is something I can never repay in this lifetime or in the next!"

This was because Zhao Fu had given him an SS grade Orb. There were only 2 SS grade villagers in the entirety of the Great Qin Village: one was Li Si and the other was Zhang Dahu. Both were important subordinates to Zhao Fu – this was especially so for Li Si, who managed everything, great or small, in the Great Qin Village. It could be said that he was above 10,000 people and only below a single person.

Now that Zhao Fu had given Bai Shan an SS grade Orb, Zhao Fu had essentially elevated Bai Shan to the same level as the others. How could Bai Shan not feel shocked or emotional after being raised from a normal citizen to an important minister?

Zhao Fu helplessly looked at the old man hugging his legs, who had tears and snot all over his face, and said, "Alright, please get up!"

Zhao Fu gave Bai Shan the SS grade Orb after a lot of thinking. After all, anyone would want to be SS grade. People like Liu Mei, Old Logue, and Doke were all S grade, so Zhao Fu wanted to give them SSS grade Orbs in the future. As such, giving them an SS grade Orb right now was a bit of a waste, and S grade was not too bad. This was why Zhao Fu didn't choose them.

Of course, Zhao Fu could have given the SS grade Orb to anyone and nurtured him or her into a great general, but Zhao Fu was not lacking subordinates and he still had the two S grade Orbs. As such, he put that thought aside.

Moreover, when Zhao Fu thought of research, no matter if it were the teleportation channels or the Taming skill, he realized that Scholars were incredibly important. After all, science could greatly increase their productivity.

Zhao Fu needed to develop both his military and villages. If he only focused on his military, he would only temporarily seem powerful, and he would soon start to lack resources. If he only focused on his villages, without a sufficient army, he would simply be fattening up his villages for someone else to take them.

There were also the Gnome Mechanics Scholars. Zhao Fu decided that he would also give them Grade Orbs in the future. The ballistae that they had created were the Great Qin Village's most powerful weapons at the moment. However, ballistae were only effective against those who were at Stage 1 or

below in their cultivation. They would not be as effective against those above Stage 1, so Zhao Fu ordered the Gnome Mechanics Scholars to research Stage 1 ballistae. These ballistae would be able to threaten those at Stage 1, and they would still be effective against those above Stage 1.

Raising one's Grade meant that his or her comprehension and abilities would be enhanced. Through the Heaven and Earth Refining Formation, Zhao Fu's people were able to steal other people's fortune.

Right now, ordinary ballistae were good enough, so Zhao Fu held off from giving the Gnome Mechanics Scholars the Grade Orbs for now.

Zhao Fu told Bai Shan to go back and continue researching a skill that could let them see the grades of corpses – this was incredibly important to Great Qin.

Bai Shan wiped away his tears and snot and promised Zhao Fu that this would be done soon. Afterwards, he hopped and skipped away like a little child.

A few people who walked past him asked, "Old man Bai, what's got you so happy"?

Bai Shan grinned and continuously praised Zhao Fu. Bai Shan said that Zhao Fu was an enlightened liege that was good at using talented people and that it was their blessing to be able to serve under such a lord.

Even Wang Ergou, who flattered Zhao Fu every day, felt awed. He had never seen such shameless flattering before.

Following this, Zhao Fu arranged the Great Qin Village's first Martial Arts Competition. Anyone could participate, and the top two people would be given important positions. Everyone else who did well would receive monetary prizes.

The competition caused the Great Qin Village to become incredibly lively. All the races participated, including the Elves, Grey Dwarves, and Goblins. Zhao Fu had two main reasons for holding this competition. The first was to see if he had overlooked any talents. The second was to make the different races get along with each other better. After all, they were all living creatures and had their own emotions; they were not just numbers. As such, Zhao Fu took their feelings into consideration – after all, people could support a regime or completely overthrow it.

The first emperors who laid China's foundations all understood this, but it was a pity that those who came after them only wanted to enjoy themselves. This was why there were so many dynasties in China.

The Martial Arts Competition lasted for an entire day, and out of the final two victors, one of them was a Strong Orc called Saar. He was incredibly strong and liked direct fights, meeting force with force. He had beaten many Goblin Warriors to the ground, and his body was covered with firm muscles. Whenever a challenger saw his fearsome Orc appearance, he or she couldn't help but take a few steps back.

The other victor took everyone by surprise: it was Wang Ergou. With his tiny frame, even a Goblin Warrior should have been able to beat him to death, but in the end, he was one of the victors. This was because he used all kinds of shameless tactics; crotch shots and nostril hits were nothing to him. One time, he continuously provoked his opponent, causing the opponent to feel incredibly infuriated. Following this, he had even mooned his opponent and let loose a thundering fart. His opponent had

been completely enraged and charged towards Wang Ergou to beat him to death. However, he had slipped on a banana peel prepared by Wang Ergou, causing him to fall off the stage and lose the fight.

Even though Wang Ergou was one of the final two victors, his reputation became terrible. However, many people still admired him because he would be greatly nurtured by Zhao Fu.

After the Martial Arts Competition concluded, Zhao Fu called Saar and Wang Ergou into the Village Hall. Zhao Fu was sitting in a chair with Bai Qi and his other main subordinates standing beside him. After walking in, Saar and Wang Ergou half-knelt on the ground and waited for Zhao Fu to speak.

Zhao Fu slightly smiled and said, "Both of you have surprised me – especially you, Wang Ergou."

An awkward look appeared on Wang Ergou's face, but he smiled and said, "This is because of Your Majesty's blessings."

After lightly laughing, Zhao Fu handed the two S grade Orbs to them. After using them and seeing their new Grades, they were completely stunned and quickly kowtowed to express their thanks towards Zhao Fu.

Seeing that matters here had been taken care of, Zhao Fu returned to the real world.

Chapter 52: Danger

After returning to the real world, Zhao Fu left his room and prepared to go down to the restaurant that was for members of the collateral family. The collateral family has lower status than even the branch families because the branch families have pure Ying family blood.

Even though the treatment of the collateral family was not as good as the main family or branch families', it was still not bad. Members of the collateral family could eat whatever they wanted and however much they wanted, and it would be paid for by the Ying family.

It was a clear day today, and there were very few clouds in the sky. The sun was high in the sky, and its rays were quite hot.

Within a building, a slightly-skinny middle-aged man watched Zhao Fu walk through his sniper scope. A trace of a smile appeared on his face as he slowly aimed the sniper rifle towards Zhao Fu's head and slowly pressed down on the trigger. He acted as if he had already seen Zhao Fu's head explode as his brain and blood splattered everywhere.

Zhao Fu was walking down the path when he saw that someone had dropped a \$1 coin. That person must have been quite rich and satisfied to not bother picking up a \$1 coin, and Zhao Fu bent over to pick it up.

Bang!

Zhao Fu's hairs stood on end when he heard the gunshot. He felt something shoot over his head, causing his mind to go blank. His heart rapidly thumped, and he felt as if time had slowed down as he breathed heavily.

In the next second, Zhao Fu dove into the shrubbery beside him, and after crawling through, he started to run for his life.

Bang!

Another gunshot rang out by the time the nearby people also reacted and started to chaotically run around. Zhao Fu took this opportunity to run back into his room and slam the door shut. He leaned against the door, his body slightly trembling. He never expected death to be so close to him; if he hadn't bent down, his head would have been hit by that bullet.

The middle-aged man silently cursed as an ugly expression appeared on his face when he saw Zhao Fu run back into the building. The man threw away his sniper rifle and chose to escape because he knew what he was doing.

This man was called Zhou Qian, and he was part of an assassin organization. When he first received this request, he was quite hesitant because he knew how terrifying the Five Great Families were. Even a top-tier assassin organization wouldn't dare to easily offend them.

However, the request this time was a member of the collateral family who did not look too important. He wasn't part of the main family and killing him wouldn't draw too much attention. The reward for this request was \$60 million, and \$30 million had been transferred to him already. Moreover, the client would provide a way for him to escape overseas, which was why Zhou Qian dared to take such a great risk.

In the beginning, he had tried to infiltrate the district, but this was no ordinary district. Even though only members of the collateral family were living here, the security was still top notch, so Zhou Qian could only try to snipe Zhao Fu.

However, now that he had failed, he had to escape. The Ying family would soon come here to investigate.

In his room, Zhao Fu gradually calmed down. Without needing to think about it, Zhao Fu already knew who was behind this. Apart from the Li family, who saw him as a threat and wanted to get rid of him, who would do such a thing? They must have found out that he possessed the Ying family's bloodline and were worried that he would establish himself and make trouble for the Li family, so they tried to kill him quickly.

"Li family! One day, I'll destroy your entire family," Zhao Fu said icily.

In her last words, Zhao Fu's mother had told him not to seek revenge against the Li family. Even after he obtained the Great Qin's legacy, he had gone about his own matters and did not think about his past with the Li family, nor did he consider harming the Li family.

However, the Li family had crossed Zhao Fu's bottom line time and time again, and he had nearly died just then. Zhao Fu's hatred towards the Li family reached its peak, and he clenched his fists and gritted his teeth.

However, after Zhao Fu came back to his senses, he realized that he was nothing in the real world. He had no money or power, so how could he escape from such a powerful family?

Today they had sent a sniper, but tomorrow they could send people to kill him directly, and the day after they might choose to use poison. Since he had become a thorn in their hearts, they would do everything they could to kill him.

Perhaps he could reveal that he was Great Qin's Legatee and receive the full support of the Ying family. After all, the Ying family was one of the Five Great Families and was much more powerful than the Li family.

Even though the Great Tang Empire was a 'Celestial Empire' and was much more powerful than the Sui Dynasty's Yang family, the Qin Dynasty's Ying family had gathered its strength for hundreds of years more than the Li family. As such, he could use the Ying family to destroy the Li family.

If Zhao Fu could wipe out the Li family and make Li Zhe kneel in front of his mother's grave and repent before killing him, it would simply be perfect!

"Hahahahaha..." Zhao Fu suddenly started to laugh at his own naivety. "Do you think that the Ying family will passionately welcome you and treat you as the master of the Ying family if you stand up and yell that you're the Great Qin's Legatee? Do you really think that's possible?"

Zhao Fu couldn't help but mock himself. He was merely an outsider that had a bit of the Ying family's blood, so how could they give him the Ying family? Who would accept the Ying family being given to an outsider?

The main family members looked down greatly on those who were even worse than the branch families. If the Ying family built an empire in the Heaven Awaken World, the collateral family members would be at the lowest rank of the hierarchy, and they would only be used to consolidate the Ying family's rule.

Once he announced his identity, the Ying family would announce him to be the master of Great Qin on the surface. However, the Ying family would secretly use many methods to control him. If the main family could take the Great Qin Legacy away from him, he would lose his value and most likely be killed by them.

"In this world, brothers can kill brothers and fathers can kill their sons for their own gain. Anyone would do anything for his or her own benefit, so how could they not lay their hands on you, who they see as an outsider?"

As such, even if Zhao Fu announced his identity, he would not necessarily be safe. He would be in a precarious situation with the Li family threatening him openly and the Ying family threatening him secretly. It would be almost impossible for him to protect himself.

Right now, anyone could easily crush him to death – that was how weak he was.

That was the problem: the Li family and the Ying family were both incredibly dangerous, and he could escape from neither of them. What should he do? Zhao Fu lapsed into deep thought.

Suddenly, someone knocked on his door, surprising him. Zhao Fu turned to look at the door.

"Is Mr. Zhao available?" A woman said. Zhao Fu was familiar with this voice, and when he looked through the peephole, he saw a woman standing outside with a few security guards.

Chapter 53: Secret Hatred

The woman was Ji Qin, the person who had brought him here. Zhao Fu thought about it before opening the door and asking, "What is it?"

Ji Qin slightly smiled and said, "Mr. Zhao, Big Miss Xi has invited you to meet with her."

Zhao Fu stared at her in surprise for a split-second. He knew who Big Miss Xi was. She was called Ying Xi and the successor of one of the Ying family's 6 main bloodlines. Why did she want to meet him? It wasn't because his identity as the Great Qin Legatee had been exposed because no one could possibly know about that.

"Why does Ying Xi want to see me?" Zhao Fu realized that she might have heard about what had just happened and thought that there was value in using him.

Zhao Fu thought about it before nodding and leaving with Ji Qin and the security guards. They came to a beautiful garden where there was a beautiful young woman who looked around 23 or 24 years old. She was wearing a white dress and looked like a celestial goddess among the flowers.

"Big Miss Xi, I've brought him here," Ji Qin respectfully said as she slightly bowed.

Ying Xi had just picked a small flower and charmingly smiled before looking at Zhao Fu and nodding.

When Ying Xi looked at him, he remained expressionless and calmly stood still.

"Come with me!" Ying Xi said before turning and walking away.

Zhao Fu followed behind her, and soon, they reached a pavilion within the garden. Ying Xi sat on an exquisitely-made bamboo chair and signaled for Zhao Fu to also sit. Zhao Fu nodded and sat down facing her.

"Do you know why I asked to meet you?" Ying Xi asked as she slightly smiled.

Zhao Fu thought about it, and even though he could guess why, he pretended not to know and shook his head.

Seeing this, Ying Xi asked in satisfaction, "Then do you hate the Li family?"

Just as expected, through what had happened, the Ying family's higher-ups had found out about his identity. Zhao Fu did not hide anything and truthfully replied, "I do!"

"If I help you take revenge, would you be willing to join my faction? Don't worry; I'll make sure you stay safe, and no one will be able to threaten your wellbeing."

Ying Xi did not beat around the bush and directly made her intentions clear after seeing the hatred in Zhao Fu's eyes.

"Help me take revenge?"

Zhao Fu knew that Ying Xi would not actually help him take revenge. Rather, she wanted to use him as a pawn to control the Li family in the future.

In the chaotic times to come, the world would be filled with war. Each of the large families started to make preparations, and the Ying family was no exception. If the Ying family wanted to deal with the Li family, Zhao Fu would be an important piece.

This was because Zhao Fu also had the Li family's bloodline. Even though he was not much right now, if the Ying family supported him, he would be able to divide the Li family and control it while remaining as one of the Ying family's pieces.

The Ying family had many collateral family members, so why would it choose to nurture Zhao Fu? It was because the pawn could not be too stupid, or the Ying family would be unable to control the Li family, and the pawn also couldn't be too intelligent because he or she could turn against the Ying family.

Moreover, Zhao Fu's identity was also quite attractive. Controlling someone with the Ying family's bloodline was much better than controlling a member of the Li family's collateral family.

Zhao Fu had long since guessed Ying Xi's goal, and everything she said was within his expectations. As such, Zhao Fu did not act too stupidly, nor did he reveal too much of his shrewdness.

Before coming here, Zhao Fu had wanted to expose his status as Great Qin's Legatee. Even though the Ying family and Li family were both quite dangerous, he had no choice. If he did not reveal his status, he might be killed by the Li family, so he had to reveal himself to stay alive and hope to slowly deal with the Ying family in the future.

Zhao Fu's current schemes were enough to make even some of the old foxes terrified and the strategists to be in awe. Zhao Fu had experienced many hardships since he was young and seen much of the world. His experiences let him understand the nature of this cruel world.

Zhao Fu had been by himself most of his life, and loneliness was indeed something that could bring someone pain and drive a person to madness. However, it could also cause a person to mature and see through other people's hearts, which was why Zhao Fu's personality and intellect were like this.

Zhao Fu nodded and agreed to Ying Xi's request. Since she would treat him as a pawn, he would use her to guarantee his safety for now. They were both merely using each other, and agreeing was in Zhao Fu's best interests right now.

For now, Ying Xi could control him completely, so he would act as she wished. As for the Li family, he didn't need anyone to help him take revenge – only by staining one's hands with the blood of those who one hated could one be satisfied.

Ying Xi was delighted when Zhao Fu agreed. Zhao Fu was an important pawn in her plans, so she immediately ordered for Zhao Fu to be treated well and moved to an even safer place.

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Bang!

Within a room in the Li family's residence, Li Feng furiously slammed his palm on the table and yelled, "The Ying family has gone too far!"

Li Feng was this furious because the Ying family had sent a message, "If Zhao Fu dies, we will slaughter 100 people from the main family."

The Ying family did not put the Li family in its eyes at all. The Li family was still quite a large family and had its own pride, so how could Li Feng accept such a thing?

“Hmph!” Li Feng coldly harrumphed as he said, “The Ying family is too arrogant. Do they think that the Li family has no talents and would fear the Ying family?”

When the butler saw that Li Feng was so furious that it looked like he wanted to start a war with the Ying family, the butler, who was beside him, quickly said, “Sir, please calm down. Acting against the Ying family right now simply isn’t rational. They haven’t found the Great Qin’s Legatee yet, so we should lay low for now. In the future, the Li family will definitely grow to be much more powerful than the Ying family, and it won’t be too late to deal with them then.”

Li Feng nodded, his anger receding slightly as he asked, “Have you disposed of the assassin? We can’t give the Ying family an opportunity to grasp onto us.”

The butler respectfully replied, “Don’t worry, sir, he has already been dealt with.”

Li Feng let out a sigh of relief. If the assassin had fallen into the Ying family’s hands, there would have been great trouble for the Li family. It would have been possible for the Ying family to say that the Li family had tried to kill an illegitimate child but failed, causing the Li family’s reputation to take a hit.

However, Li Feng felt that he had overlooked something. After that bastard joined the Ying family, he had sent an assassin after him. No matter how well he took care of that matter, the Ying family definitely knew that the assassin was sent by the Li family. However, if the Li family did not act now and allowed Zhao Fu to grow, dealing with him would become more and more troublesome in the future. If he had known that this would happen, he would have killed both the mother and the son back then.

Li Feng couldn’t help but hate Zhao Fu even more.

Chapter 54: Great Tang

In another one of the Li family’s rooms, Li Baiqing was sitting on a chair and looking through some documents. A surprised smile appeared on his face as he said, “Who would have thought that I would have a big brother from a different mother!”

As Great Tang’s Legatee, Li Baiqing received the full support of the Li family. They poured all of their resources into him, which he had used to create an intelligence network. That was how he had found out that his grandpa had sent an assassin after Zhao Fu.

After thinking about it, Li Baiqing thought to himself, “_Zhao Fu, the Li family has wronged you. If you don’t do anything to harm the Li family, I’ll definitely spare you in the future and make it up to you. However, if you become the Ying family’s pawn and try to harm the Li family, don’t blame me for being merciless.”_

“Your Majesty, what should we do now?” A formidable-looking young man asked as he lowered his head and cupped his fist.

This young man had an extraordinary background. He was the descendant of a famed general of Great Tang and was called Li Guangye. Even though he was part of his own family, after meeting Li Baiqing, he

was awed by his talent and saw Li Baiqing as a wise liege. As such, he decided to do as his ancestor did by giving his loyalty to Great Tang.

Great Tang also spawned 2 historical figures. One was Xue Rengui, a peerless general who fought and won countless battles and made many heroic contributions to Great Tang. The other was Wei Zheng, a great Prime Minister who dared to speak forthrightly and remonstrate the Emperor.

Li Baiqing replied to Li Guangye, "Don't worry about it for now. Conflict between the Li family and the Ying family isn't good for either of us, and it will only serve to benefit others. We'll let everything proceed naturally."

Li Guangye nodded and retreated to one side to serve Li Baiqing.

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As for Zhao Fu, he had been moved to where the main family members lived, and Ying Xi had even given him a bodyguard to protect him.

That was all they could do for now. Zhao Fu was much safer now, and when he went to his new room, he took out the Heaven Awaken Stone and chose to enter the Heaven Awaken World.

Zhao Fu discarded his unpleasant thoughts of the real world and completely focused on the Great Qin Village. Right now, the Great Qin Village was the only thing that Zhao Fu could rely on.

Because the Orc threat had been eliminated, Zhao Fu started to scheme about godly spirits. However, he first had to consider whether he could use them for the Heaven and Earth Refining Formation, and he also needed energy stones. With the limited amount of energy left, how could it refine a godly spirit?

Energy stones would definitely be an important resource, whether it was now or in the future. After all, without them, he would not be able to use the Heaven and Earth Refining Formation. However, energy stones were simply too expensive, and they were worth 10 gold coins each. That was 100,000 copper coins!

Zhao Fu did not have that much money, but he could use the equipment he obtained from the region of bones to exchange for energy stones. However, equipment was something that Zhao Fu desperately lacked at the moment.

After conquering so many Outlanders, Zhao Fu took 100 Kobolds from the 300 he had conquered, 300 Goblins from the 700 he had conquered, 100 Orcs from the 400 he had conquered, and 600 Elves from the 1,400 he had conquered to add to his army. Now, Zhao Fu had 2,900 soldiers, but he only had 1,000 or so pieces of Blue grade armor. How could he sell any when he was greatly lacking equipment?

Energy stones were incredibly difficult to obtain, and unless he found a way to earn massive amounts of money, it would be impossible for him to buy any. Zhao Fu started to wonder if he could find any mines for them in the Forest of Horrors.

As such, he could only put his plan of refining a godly spirit on hold. Of course, his plans now were to continue exploring the Forest of Horrors. Right now, Zhao Fu had only explored the 30-kilometer radius around the Great Qin Village, so he wanted to see what other gains he could obtain from outside that area.

Now, he had 2,900 soldiers in total and bringing along so many soldiers was a bit too much. Zhao Fu decided to split them into two teams – one would be led by himself and the other by Bai Qi. They would explore the region around them from different directions.

A few days later, the two teams finished exploring the 50-kilometer radius outside of the Great Qin Village. They did not find anything significant, but they did conquer another four Basic Villages. There was an ordinary Human Village, an ordinary Bandit Village, an ordinary Gnome Village, and an ordinary Goblin Village.

These four villages were able to greatly increase the Great Qin Village's population because Zhao Fu employed tactics that kept as many people alive as possible. The four villages supplied him with an extra 1,300 people, and he moved 500 of them into his military, increasing it to 3,400 soldiers. Now, the Great Qin Village was definitely the most powerful village in the 100-kilometer radius around the village.

Moreover, after conquering 4 Basic Villages, Zhao Fu obtained 200 Achievement Points, causing him to rank up to Third-Ranked Baron. Even though he was only Third-Ranked, it was still a baronage, which meant that he had the right to upgrade the Great Qin Village into a Town. Apart from this, Third-Ranked Barons also had other special privileges, such as more respect from the guards in main cities, 10% discounts at stores, the ability to buy houses within main cities, and the ability to become a resident of a main city without spending Merit Points.

Zhao Fu was attracted by the ability to buy a house. In some virtual gaming novels, the characters would buy massive amounts of land and then develop and sell it for an astronomical profit.

However, the houses in main cities could only be rented for now. Most people had to earn Merit Points and become a resident before they could buy land. However, they were limited to buying land in the Residential District and could not buy any land in the business or luxury areas, and there was a limit on how much land they could buy.

Zhao Fu knew that he would be able to directly buy houses with his Third-Ranked Baron status, but there might be similar limits. However, he still decided to go to some main cities to have a look. He desperately lacked money, so he wanted to see if there were any good ways to earn large amounts of money quickly.

Zhao Fu used the transportation channel and once again went to Holy Light City. There were not many changes there, and there were still just as many people. After arriving, Zhao Fu headed directly towards the real estate office in the Residential District.

When Zhao Fu arrived, he found that there were only a few people there. Zhao Fu saw a few people he knew: there was Jiang Rou and a few of the Jiang family's people and the pompous young man from the Zhou family and a few of his followers hanging around.

However, the pompous young man did not dare to go too far. The real estate office was managed by Holy Light City, so even though the Zhou family could act big around players, the Zhou family was nothing in the eyes of the residents of the main cities. If the Zhou family dared to offend the main city, no one from the Zhou family would dare to enter Holy Light City again. The might of a main city could not be defied by just anyone.

Zhao Fu didn't bother dealing with the scene before him. First, it had nothing to do with him, and second, there was definitely a reason why the pompous young man dared to continuously harass the Jiang family's people without suffering any consequences.

It could be because the Zhou family was simply too powerful, causing the Jiang family to lower their heads. After all, Zhao Fu could tell that the Jiang family was not weak at all. Alternatively, it could be because their families' elders supported them developing a relationship or at least permitted it, so no one intervened.

Chapter 55: Baron

Since their families did not stop them, why would Zhao Fu meddle in other people's business? Zhao Fu ignored them and walked into the real estate office to ask what benefits and restrictions Barons had.

At this moment, Jiang Rou saw Zhao Fu and Bai Qi. Even though they were wearing cloaks, Jiang Rou recognized them immediately. She couldn't help but call out, "Excuse me, are you Mr. Zhao?"

Zhao Fu paused in surprise, not expecting to be recognized instantly. He nodded, indicating that he was.

The pompous young man's expression became cold when he realized who those 2 people were. They were the ones who had beaten him up back then. When he had heard that the young man was a Legatee, Zhou Jie had thought that he had caused great trouble. However, after investigating, he found that there were no Legatees surnamed Zhao in the Forest of Horrors, and there were no powerful families in the Forest of Horrors either.

After all, if a Legatee was in the Forest of Horrors, his or her family would also move to the Forest of Horrors to help him or her gather resources and develop. However, there were no such signs.

Moreover, they had only thought that Zhao Fu was a Legatee because his followers addressed him as 'Your Majesty.' As such, there was no solid evidence that he was actually a Legatee.

Zhou Jie believed Zhao Fu to be a commoner who liked acting cool by ordering his subordinates to address him as 'Your Majesty.' Goddamit, what a shameless person – even his family didn't dare to do such a thing.

Zhou Jie coldly laughed. He believed that the people he had brought last time were too weak, and he had learned his lesson. From then onwards, he always had people who were fairly strong around in hopes of taking revenge on Zhao Fu someday.

"Boy, step outside with your elder if you dare," Zhou Jie said with a cold smile. He knew he definitely couldn't do anything in here, so he planned to call Zhao Fu outside to deal with him.

Jiang Rou's expression became ugly, and she realized that she had inadvertently caused trouble for Zhao Fu. She had reported that there was a Legatee in the Forest of Horrors to her family. However, after they did some investigating, they completely disregarded her words and took them as a joke, causing her to be sternly reprimanded.

Despite this, Jiang Rou still felt that Zhao Fu was extraordinary and believed that he was a Legatee, and a powerful one at that. In fact, she had a feeling that his name would one day resound across the world. Even if everyone took what she said to be a joke, she still believed it.

“Zhou Jie, don’t cause trouble; this won’t be good for the Zhou family!”

Jiang Rou tried to stop Zhou Jie, but he was too furious to listen to reason. After all, their families had acted as matchmakers for them, and Zhou Jie had long since started to see Jiang Rou as his fiancée. Now that his fiancée was trying to help another man, how could he not be angry?

Zhao Fu was quite surprised that Jiang Rou would try to help him out. Regardless, he didn’t have the time or energy to bother with Zhou Jie’s provocations.

When Zhou Jie saw that Zhao Fu was ignoring him, Zhou Jie ran up and tried to slap Zhao Fu while yelling, “You little bastard, didn’t you hear your elder talking to you?”

Zhao Fu’s gaze became cold, but he didn’t even bother moving. Beside him, Bai Qi coldly harrumphed, caught Zhou Jie’s hand, and twisted. A crisp crack sounded out when Bai Qi broke Zhou Jie’s arm.

“Arghhh!” Zhou Jie screamed pitifully. Zhou Jie’s people rushed at Bai Qi to help Zhou Jie. Even though they could be considered strong among normal people, trying to fight against Bai Qi was simply seeking death.

By now, Bai Qi’s cultivation was already at Stage 0-7. Adding on the bonus stats from his equipment, how could they defeat him? In just a few hits, he had beaten all of them to the ground and injured them so badly that they couldn’t even crawl.

When Zhou Jie saw the thugs that he had paid so much money for defeated so easily, he immediately shouted fearfully at the manager of the real estate office, “Look, he’s attacking people! Hurry up and arrest him!”

However, something shocking happened. The manager, who normally acted indifferently towards players, respectfully walked over to Zhao Fu and said, “Esteemed Baron!”

Zhao Fu calmly nodded – evidently, this was one of the perks of his rise to Baronage. He turned to look at Zhou Jie, who was nursing his broken arm while staring at him with a look of disbelief, and asked the manager, “What are you going to do about this?”

The manager smiled and said, “I personally saw this troublemaker attack Esteemed Baron first, and Esteemed Baron rightfully defended himself. This lowly one will immediately send for some people to throw them out.”

Following this, the manager called the guards to throw Zhou Jie and his thugs onto the street.

Jiang Rou and everyone else watching had never expected things to take such a turn. No one had expected that Zhao Fu would already be a Baron – after all, even Jiang Rou, someone from a large family, had only just become a Citizen, and she was far away from becoming a Baroness.

Most of the normal families had established their villages near main cities, so it was relatively safe there. However, that also meant that they didn’t have many opportunities, so within the entire Forest of Horrors, only Zhao Fu had risen to the status of Baron.

“Mr. Zhao, we meet again. I’m terribly sorry for bringing trouble to you!” Jiang Rou came to apologize for calling out to him, resulting in the present situation.

Zhao Fu thought for a moment before replying, “It’s nothing much, Miss Jiang. There’s no need to apologize.”

Jiang Rou still felt quite apologetic and said, “This matter was my fault, and I’m truly sorry. Also, there’s no need to call me Miss Jiang; you can just call me by my name.”

In response, Zhao Fu nodded.

At this moment, Jiang Rou couldn’t help but ask, “Mr. Zhao, would it be alright for us to become friends?”

Everyone watching felt incredibly jealous; there were very few people who could make Miss Jiang take the initiative.

Zhao Fu hesitated before replying, “Alright, but don’t call me Mr. Zhao anymore – just call me Zhao Xin.” Zhao Fu did not want to give out his real name, so he made up a name for himself.

She couldn’t help but feel incredibly happy when she heard Zhao Fu agree and tell her his name. She lightly smiled, making her seem incredibly gentle and beautiful. Anyone looking at her couldn’t help but space out.

Zhao Fu was quite resistant to her charms though, and after chatting for a bit, he found out why Jiang Rou had come here. The Jiang family had made Holy Light City its main place of development and wanted to buy some land here.

No one wanted ordinary residential land – the Jiang family wanted to buy land along a main street, but that land was restricted to residents, so the Jiang family could not buy it.

Zhao Fu thought about it and realized that he could buy this land and then sell it for a high price to these families to make a massive sum of money.

Zhao Fu thoughts raced, and he felt incredibly excited. However, when he heard what Jiang Rou said next, he became quite disappointed.

Chapter 56: Bronze Concentrate Mine

Zhao Fu was disappointed because Jiang Rou said that her family was only willing to pay up to 40 gold coins, which was 400,000 copper coins. However, he could only buy 4 energy stones with that amount of money. If Zhao Fu wanted to buy large amounts of energy stones, he would need a massive amount of money.

First, there were 1,000 or so channels in the Heaven and Earth Refining Formation, so he needed at least 1,000 energy stones. Zhao Fu had asked Old Logue before how to get a godly spirit to descend, to which Old Logue had told him that a godly spirit’s main body could not descend, but it could send a clone. Only through many sacrifices could such a thing happen.

Zhao Fu had no idea how strong a godly spirit's clone would be, but even if it was only a weak godly spirit, it would still be quite powerful, so he definitely needed at least 1,000 energy stones. Energy stones were roughly worth 10 gold coins each, which meant that 1,000 energy stones would cost 10,000 gold coins or 100 million copper coins.

Zhao Fu started to suspect whether he had gone mad by considering to spend so much money on something that might not even necessarily work. However, whenever he thought about refining a godly spirit that could determine the lives and deaths of tens of thousands of beings, he knew that he would definitely obtain something heaven-defying from it.

Given that he needed 100 million copper coins, Zhao Fu scorned Jiang Rou's 40,000 copper coins. However, after thinking about it, he realized that a family paying 40,000 copper coins at this stage was not bad at all.

Zhao Fu first asked the manager what special privileges Barons had, and he learned that he could hire 10 Stage 1 soldiers in Holy Light City and could buy 10 lots of land in Holy Light City apart from the Mayor's Residence.

Zhao Fu's plan of becoming rich through real estate crumbled when he heard this. He could only buy 10 lots of land, and he would not have anyone to sell to. Currently, all of the large families were too poor.

He could sell a lot of land to Jiang Rou as a gesture of friendship and accept her 40 gold coins. Normal places in the Residential District cost tens of thousands of copper coins, while those on main streets cost hundreds of thousands of copper coins. The place that Jiang Rou wanted to buy was on the luxurious Nanda Street, and it cost 310,000 copper coins.

Zhao Fu helped her buy this plot of land and returned the remaining amount of money to Jiang Rou.

When Zhao Fu easily dealt with the problem that had been troubling her this entire time, she felt even more in awe of him, and she said gratefully, "Thank you, Zhao Xin!"

Zhao Fu did not pay this much mind. It seemed that he would not be able to profit that much from real estate, so he did not plan to invest much into it. After hearing about the privileges Barons received, he felt slightly disappointed.

The ability to hire 10 Stage 1 soldiers wasn't too bad. If Zhao Fu had a Normal grade Village, he might have hired them already, but he had a Legendary grade Village and a special legacy, while even the main cities were only Gold grade.

He could hire 10 soldiers, but he would not be able to guarantee the absolute loyalty of those 10 soldiers. If news about the Legendary grade Village was leaked, even the powers within the main cities wouldn't be able to help themselves from wanting to take it away from him.

After saying goodbye to Jiang Rou, Zhao Fu returned to the Great Qin Village in disappointment. Suddenly, someone ran over to report, "Your Majesty! We've found a massive bronze concentrate mine 53 kilometers to the west!"

Zhao Fu couldn't help but feel delighted. Bronze concentrate was like normal bronze ore, but it could be used to create Blue grade equipment. Just how big was this 'massive' bronze concentrate mine?

Zhao Fu called Saar over – he was that expedition’s captain – and asked him for more details. The bronze concentrate mine was an open-pit mine, and it was roughly 2 square kilometers in area. It was likely that there was even more under the ground, and after hearing all of this, Zhao Fu couldn’t help but feel excited.

Saar continued, “Your Majesty, there are roughly 1,000 or so Grey Dwarves settled around there as well.”

Zhao Fu nodded. Following this, he gathered his entire army and headed towards the bronze concentrate mine.

After arriving, a look of shock appeared on Zhao Fu’s face. There was not a single tree in front of him. At a glance, all he could see was bronze concentrate, and it covered the ground.

Even though Saar had told him how big the open-pit mine was, he was still in awe when he saw it for himself.

By now, the Grey Dwarves who were mining had discovered Zhao Fu’s soldiers. They immediately threw down their tools in fear and ran back to their village. Soon, the entire village was on high alert, and Grey Dwarves wearing bronze concentrate armor and holding bronze concentrate axes and hammers walked out.

Zhao Fu took his soldiers and surrounded the Grey Dwarf Village. Zhao Fu was quite envious when he saw that the 1,000 or so Grey Dwarves all had brand-new, excellent Blue grade equipment. There were so many good pieces of equipment.

Zhao Fu looked towards the Grey Dwarf Village, but he did not plan to attack. The Grey Dwarves were all forging masters, and if Zhao Fu took over this mine, he would have to rely on these Grey Dwarves to do most of the forging for him.

As such, he called one of his Grey Dwarf subordinates over to interpret what he said. He then said in a loud voice, “I don’t want to harm any of you, and all of you should know how valuable this bronze concentrate mine is. Even if I don’t take it today, others will come in the future to take it. As long as you surrender to me, I can promise that your lives will not change, and I will send people to protect you.”

After loudly declaring these things to them, the Grey Dwarves did not respond for a while. Zhao Fu looked at Bai Qi, and Bai Qi immediately ordered to bring out the 60 ballistae. The Gnome Mechanics Scholars had created quite a few ballistae over the past few days, and all of them were aimed towards the Grey Dwarf Village.

“I’ll say it again – I don’t want to harm any of you, but don’t force me to do it!” Zhao Fu once again called out.

However, when he saw that there was still no response, he gave the order to fire the ballistae. 180 bolts shot out from the ballistae, and they gave off a terrifying aura. Of course, Zhao Fu did not have them aimed towards the Grey Dwarves but towards the houses. The bolts flew over the Grey Dwarves’ heads and pierced through their wooden houses.

After seeing the ballistae's might, the Grey Dwarf Village finally responded. A Grey Dwarf with a massive beard walked out and said in a loud voice, "Lord, will you really abide by your promise? If we surrender to you, will our lives really stay the same, and will you send people to protect us?"

Zhao Fu obviously wouldn't send them to fight – their value lay in their forging skills, and with such a big bronze concentrate mine, it would take these 1,000 Dwarves 10 or so years to finish using it. Zhao Fu nodded and said, "As the Legatee of Great Qin, I swear this to you!"

Following this, the Grey Dwarf with the massive beard led the other Grey Dwarves and knelt down to Zhao Fu, signaling their surrender.

Even though the Dwarves could be ill-tempered at times, they were normally sincere, loyal, frank, and straightforward. They were not the scheming type, and when they saw that it would be impossible for them to resist Zhao Fu, they decided to surrender.

Zhao Fu was quite happy and took his soldiers in. This time, Zhao Fu didn't relocate the village and only conquered it. The Grey Dwarf Village was called Rhode Village, and it was a Normal grade Village. The big-bearded Grey Dwarf was the Village Chief, Rhode.

After entering the Grey Dwarf Village, Rhode gave Zhao Fu a big surprise, making Zhao Fu feel as if he had won the lottery.

Chapter 57: Refining Plan

The massive surprise Rhode gave Zhao Fu was that apart from the armor and equipment that the Grey Dwarves were already holding, they also had another 4,000 pieces of equipment.

Hearing this, Zhao Fu quickly asked Rhode to take him there.

Soon, Rhode brought Zhao Fu to a very large storehouse. It was filled with bronze armor and weapons, and they all shined with a metallic light. Zhao Fu felt as if he had walked into a massive treasure trove, and he quickly went over to take a look.

[Bronze Concentrate Armour]: Grade: Blue, Stats: Strength +1, Constitution +1, Description: Superior quality armor forged from bronze concentrate.

[Bronze Concentrate Sword]: Grade: Blue, Stats: Strength +1, Agility +1, Description: Superior quality sword forged from bronze concentrate.

All of them were quality goods and gave at least 2 points of stats. They were worth around 600 or so silver coins each, and obtaining them meant that everyone in Zhao Fu's army would be able to have new equipment, boosting their strength greatly. Moreover, with this super-big bronze concentrate mine, they would not have to rely on obtaining the rusty equipment from the region of bones anymore.

Suddenly, Zhao Fu's eyes flashed as he thought of a good way to make money. Since he no longer needed the rusty Blue grade equipment from the region of bones, he could sell all of them now.

Li Wen obtained 100 or so pieces of equipment every day, but because they lacked people with forging skills, repairing them took quite a long time. Now that they had an extra 1,000 Grey Dwarves, they could

quickly repair them. The 1,000 or so pieces of equipment that Zhao Fu's soldiers were currently using could also be sold.

Of course, Zhao Fu did not plan to sell them to a shop; rather, he wanted to open his own shop. He would only be able to sell the rusty equipment for 300 silver coins a piece to a shop, but if he sold them himself, he would be able to sell them for 400 silver coins each.

Zhao Fu felt quite excited – he had come another step closer to refining a godly spirit. Afterwards, Zhao Fu went over to the Grey Dwarf Barracks.

[Dwarven Warrior]: F+ grade Military. Description: Powerful warriors among the Dwarves. Effect: Receives [Brandish].

[Dwarven Blacksmith]: D- grade Military. Description: A Dwarf who has raised his or her Dwarven talents to its limit. Effect: Receives [Enhanced Forging].

After looking through these professions, Zhao Fu found that the Grey Dwarves had a special military profession, Dwarven Blacksmith. It was D- grade, which was quite powerful. After all, Zhao Fu's Demon Priest profession was also D- grade. However, Zhao Fu's profession was a battle profession, while this was a trade profession. Adding on the Dwarves' latent talent in forging, this profession was quite incredible.

Rhode Village was currently an Intermediate Village, and the limit of the number of Dwarven Blacksmiths was 10.

After going through Rhode Village, Zhao Fu started to make plans for the mine. The gigantic bronze concentrate mine was simply priceless, and it was enough to make anyone go mad over it. Even main cities would want to take it for themselves if they discovered it.

As such, Zhao Fu stationed 2,000 of his soldiers there and ordered them to strictly keep any creatures from coming within 10 kilometers of the mine. This place would determine Great Qin's future.

Following this, Zhao Fu also instructed his people to construct a teleportation channel here to make it convenient to move to and from the Great Qin Village.

Zhao Fu then split his remaining 1,400 soldiers into two teams and placed them under the command of Zhang Dahu, Saar, and his other capable generals. They were to continue exploring the Forest of Horrors and attack any Basic Villages.

Now, Basic Villages were like bits of meat hanging around Zhao Fu's mouth, waiting for him to devour them. If they discovered any Intermediate Villages, they could merge the two teams and attack it. If they discovered any Advanced Villages, Zhao Fu would personally take command.

As such, Zhao Fu did not bother with Basic and Intermediate Villages, and he left them to his subordinates.

By now, Zhao Fu already had 20 villages: eight of them were Human Villages, four were Goblin Villages, three were Gnome Villages, two were Kobold Villages, one was an Orc Village, one was an Elf Village, and one was a Grey Dwarf Village.

Including the Great Qin Village, Zhao Fu's villages spawned at least 130 villagers every day. In three days, he would be able spawn more villagers than what a Basic Village could have. After reaching this point, Zhao Fu finally started to slow down the population growth.

After returning to the Great Qin Village, Zhao Fu took the teleportation channel to Holy Light City and bought a spatial ring. Zhao Fu had long since wanted to buy one, but he had forgotten about it every time. Spatial rings were quite expensive, and a spatial ring that had 10 square meters of storage cost 10 gold coins.

After buying a spatial ring, Zhao Fu returned to the Great Qin Village. He gathered the money that he had collected after all this time and many pieces of equipment before going off to start his shop in Holy Light City.

Just as he was about to leave, Liu Mei rushed over and blocked Zhao Fu's way. Behind her was Asani, the 15-year-old Elf, and Zhao Fu couldn't help but wonder why they were together.

At this moment, Liu Mei unhappily said to Zhao Fu, "Your Majesty, I also want to go to a main city. Why don't you ever bring me?"

"Why would I bring you? I have serious matters to take care of there," Zhao Fu responded, feeling strange.

"Then take me as well. I'm quite pretty, so I'll be able to make you look better," Liu Mei said arrogantly in a confident manner.

Zhao Fu was not sure what to say. Liu Mei was indeed quite beautiful, and she was the seductive type. However, rather than making him look better, she would most likely bring him trouble.

As such, Zhao Fu resolutely refused.

Liu Mei went over and hugged Zhao Fu's arm, rubbing her large chest against him as she said coquettishly, "Your Majesty, I want to go, and so does little sister Asani."

She was using this ploy again. Zhao Fu got goosebumps all over his body, and when he heard what Liu Mei said, he looked towards Asani.

There was still a trace of fear on Asani's face when she looked at Zhao Fu, but she still managed to nod as she looked at Zhao Fu with hopeful eyes.

Zhao Fu thought about it and couldn't help but agree. However, he told them that he would only take them after sorting out the matter of opening the shop.

Liu Mei cheerfully laughed and let go of Zhao Fu. She pulled Asani's arm as they ran off.

Zhao Fu lightly smiled and shook his head before using the teleportation channel and going to Holy Light City.

Chapter 58: Seven Arts Weaving Technique

After arriving at Holy Light City, Zhao Fu was about to go to the real estate office when he suddenly saw a player's stand filled with realistic wooden sculptures. There were pandas, dolphins, penguins, and all sorts of other animals, and these novel wooden sculptures attracted many of the residents over.

Zhao Fu suddenly had an idea – opening a restaurant here would be quite good. He could bring over many cuisines from the real world, such as hotpot, teppanyaki, and the like. As the saying went, 'Food is the god of people,' so this venture could earn him quite a bit of money because the residents here did not lack money at all.

Zhao Fu arranged his thoughts and walked into the real estate office. He had brought all of the money he had, which was 103 gold coins. Of those 103 gold coins, he had obtained 45 of them from the Advanced Orc Village.

Zhao Fu bought two lots of land at two bustling streets: one was 100 or so square meters and cost 25 gold coins, while the other one was 400 or so square meters and cost 65 gold coins. In total, he spent 90 gold coins.

This was almost all of the money that Zhao Fu had. Zhao Fu knew that most players were currently quite poor, but in the future, they would gradually become richer as their economies of scale became greater.

Adding on the lot of land he had bought for Jiang Rou, Zhao Fu had now bought three lots of land. He could still buy another seven, as Third-Ranked Barons could buy 10 lots of land.

It was likely that he would be able to buy even more land if his status increased again. He could also go to Soldier Forest and Demon Tree City to buy more land.

For now, Zhao Fu would establish his restaurant and equipment shop. Perhaps there were other people who also had the idea of opening a restaurant, but they were unable to buy any land. As such, Zhao Fu took this opportunity to open the first restaurant.

He knew that Jiang Rou was planning to open a clothing store with the land he had helped her buy. She told him that she had obtained the Seven Arts Weaving Technique, which allowed her to create clothing. Even though the clothes she could make were only Normal grade, they were exceptionally beautiful and would draw many female customers.

Of course, Zhao Fu did not help Jiang Rou too much. Even though he knew that Jiang Rou would most likely not act against him, that did not necessarily apply to the Jiang family. After all, a family always placed profits first.

As such, Zhao Fu left a way out for himself. Even though the Jiang family had bought the property, it was still under his own name.

Within the Jiang family, the highest status that anyone had was Citizen, so they could not buy land for themselves. As such, Zhao Fu was completely justified in leaving this way out for himself. If they dared to try to do anything to him, he would mercilessly take the land back. He didn't want to be someone who kindly helped someone else but was trampled on in the end.

Zhao Fu was going to use the 100 square meter space as the equipment shop after doing some simple renovations to the building. However, the restaurant's decorations needed to be exquisitely furnished.

He could fit 90 or so tables in the hall on the first floor, 12 private rooms on the second floor, and 4 VIP rooms on the third floor.

Zhao Fu then contracted for the renovations to be done for 30 gold coins. He also needed to hire chefs and waiters for the restaurant, while his own people could manage the equipment shop. All they would have to do was write out the prices and receive money.

However, running a place like a restaurant was fairly risky because others could easily gossip about it and make trouble for it. As such, apart from the manager, Zhao Fu decided to hire players.

He hung a sign outside the restaurant, seeking to hire 15 waitresses – the only requirement was that they were hardworking and diligent. Their monthly wage would be 3,000 copper coins. He also wanted to hire 5 chefs, and their genders did not matter. However, they had to be able to cook all sorts of cuisines from the real world. Their monthly wage would be 8,000 copper coins per month.

As soon as Zhao Fu hung up the sign, it immediately attracted quite a few people over. Even though the wages were only 3,000 copper coins per month for a waitress, in the real world, that would be \$30,000. That sort of rate for a waitress was amazing, and it was even more so for the chefs.

Many people started to apply, and the waitresses were quite easy to select: Zhao Fu generally chose those who had good looks and were used to working in such environments. However, it was much more difficult to choose the chefs.

Even though they all said that they could make all sorts of cuisines and seemed quite professional, how could he know just how good they were without trying their food? As such, Zhao Fu took the applicants into the kitchen and asked them to cook some dishes for him to try.

The applicants all started by picking out ingredients, all of which were fairly basic, such as radishes, cucumbers, potatoes, etc.

After washing the ingredients, they started to cut them.

Zhao Fu watched on the side as the applicants quickly chopped the ingredients on the cutting boards, turning the ingredients into slices or cubes. Everyone looked like a proper chef, and at least from their skills with a knife, it seemed that there were not any scammers among them.

Zhao Fu even saw a skinny youth who had knife skills that were close to a godly level. He pressed a chunk of radish against the chopping board, and without even looking at it, his knife seemed to dance with a mind of its own... as chopping sounds rapidly sounded out, he looked as if he was a master pianist elegantly playing the piano.

Zhao Fu anticipated what his food would taste like. The youth had introduced himself as Huo Qing, and he was only slightly older than him.

Zhao Fu had been wearing a cloak this entire time, so none of them were able to see what Zhao Fu looked like. They only knew that he was a man, and all of them were quite curious towards their mysterious boss.

This was the first restaurant opened by a player, and just this alone was able to attract many people. With Zhao Fu's black cloak, he seemed even more profound and mysterious.

Afterwards, everyone started to cook their food. Huo Qing once again caused Zhao Fu's eyes to light up – Huo Qing flicked his pan, sending his ingredients high into the air before falling back into the pan perfectly. He lightly sprinkled some condiments into the pan, and every one of his movements seemed as graceful and flowing as water and clouds.

The most anticipated moment came. Everyone had cooked a dish and placed it in front of Zhao Fu. The 15 waitresses that Zhao Fu had chosen also stood by the side and looked on curiously. Zhao Fu was quite excited to try the dish made by the youth called Huo Qing – after seeing his skills in chopping and cooking, he was certain that his skills were master level.

Zhao Fu couldn't help but grab his chopsticks and try the julienned radish dish made by Huo Qing.

Every strand of radish was the same size and looked incredibly well-presented. They were as white as snow and did not look like they had been cooked at all. There was a bit of spring onion sprinkled on top, giving the dish a faint but delicious aroma.

Zhao Fu picked some up with his chopsticks and gently placed them into his mouth. He slowly chewed and savored the taste when his face suddenly froze as he spat out a mouthful of radish. He completely took back what he had thought before – a professional scammer had mixed his way in here!

How could this dish look so good but be so appalling? It was neither salty nor sweet, and it was simply indescribably horrible.

When Zhao Fu split out his mouthful of food, everyone was quite surprised.

Huo Qing awkwardly smiled and asked, "Boss, why did you spit it out? Is it not to your liking? That's a special dish that I created."

As he spoke, he took the dish to the waitresses to try. Zhao Fu did not stop him – he wanted to see if it was just him who thought that it was disgusting.

Chapter 59: School of Yin Yang

Everyone else went over with looks of curiosity because everyone had also felt the same anticipation that Zhao Fu had felt. The plate of julienned radishes looked incredibly delicious, yet Zhao Fu had spat out a mouthful after trying it.

Some of the waitresses walked over and also tried a mouthful each before they all spat out the radishes. Huo Qing felt awkward to the point of death, and he could only stand there and sigh to himself.

Afterwards, Zhao Fu tried the other dishes. Most of them were quite good, and the final dish he tried was also a plate of julienned radishes. They looked quite similar to Huo Qing's and were presented quite well as well. After his last horrible experience, Zhao Fu felt quite wary, but in order to be fair, he still tried it.

Zhao Fu immediately tasted a flavor that was not something that a normal person could come up with. The radishes were sweet and crisp without a trace of spiciness or zest. After trying a mouthful, it made Zhao Fu immediately want to eat another mouthful.

“Who made this?” Zhao Fu looked up towards the chefs.

At this moment, a tall and slim young woman wearing an old-fashioned long skirt and a veil stepped out. Even though no one could see her facial features, everyone knew that she was definitely a beauty.

A beauty like this with such astonishing culinary skills definitely wasn't here for the high wages. Zhao Fu's expression became serious and said to the others, “Go outside for a while and wait for me to announce the results!”

The others felt that something was strange and all left.

After seeing Zhao Fu's expression when eating those julienned radishes, Huo Qing looked as if he had seen a true master. He ran over with a big smile and said enthusiastically to the mysterious woman, “Beauty, I'll come to learn from under you as my master in the future!”

After saying this, Huo Qing happily raced off.

“Who are you? A great goddess like you isn't fitting for my little restaurant,” Zhao Fu said as he looked at the mysterious woman.

The mysterious woman slightly smiled and said, “I'm not a great goddess; I'm just a little commoner who thinks that food is the first necessity of man.”

Zhao Fu frowned in surprise before his expression became even more serious. He never thought that he would meet someone from the Hundred Schools of Thought so early on – ‘Food is the first necessity of man,’ was definitely something only someone from the School of Gourmet would say.

“People from the Hundred Schools of Thought all have prestigious statuses; this little restaurant is not suitable for such a grand figure like yourself. It's better for you to seek employment elsewhere!”

Everyone from the Hundred Schools of Thought was quite dangerous, so how could Zhao Fu dare to keep someone like this woman around without knowing her intentions? Anyone who underestimated the Hundred School of Thoughts would die a horrible death.

The woman heard the wariness in Zhao Fu's voice and did not seem angry at all. Her countenance did not change at all, and a faint smile appeared on her face as she said elegantly, “Sir, there's no need to be so wary of the School of Gourmet; we're just a small group of people and don't have any wild ambitions. We're not at all interested in conquering the world or establishing an everlasting kingdom; we just want to peacefully make food and see satisfied smiles on the faces of our customers.”

The wariness in Zhao Fu's heart receded slightly. However, he still asked, “How do you know I can create that peace for you?”

“Sir, even though everyone from the Hundred School of Thoughts belongs to a School, we all still have their own overriding interests and masters. Some have our own faith, others want to realize their grand ambitions, and others simply want peace in the world. This lowly one cannot represent the entire School of Gourmet, but I can say on behalf of myself that all I want is for you to give me peace and security, ‘Your Majesty!’”

Zhao Fu felt incredibly stunned, and his gaze became cold as he asked the woman, “How did you know my identity?”

The mysterious woman lightly laughed as she replied, “Even though this lowly one is part of the School of Gourmet, my little sister is a Lesser Arbiter of Fate of the School of Yin Yang’s Five Elements Branch. As such, I also understand some of the School of Yin Yang’s Yin Yang Techniques.”

“Yin Yang Techniques?” Zhao Fu frowned. What this woman was talking about seemed quite fantasy-like, but after seeing god Kerr himself, he realized that supernatural forces did indeed exist here.

Even though Zhao Fu was quite doubtful of the supernatural, China’s history was quite mysterious and profound, so perhaps such things really existed.

At this moment, the mysterious woman started to explain, “Your Majesty, this lowly one can see that the fate above your head is a Dark Gold Dragon Light. It’s a fate that only those with a Legacy have, which was how this lowly one was able to guess your identity.”

Zhao Fu let out a sigh of relief. She only knew that he was a Legatee, and his personal identity had not been somehow leaked.

“Your Majesty, since you want to hide your identity, this item can help you mask your fate here, though it won’t be able to hide it in the real world. Even though one cannot bring things from the Heaven Awaken World into the real world, your fate is something that remains with you. However, you don’t need to worry about meeting someone from the School of Yin Yang or the School of Taoism – it’s rare for them to see the fate of a Son of Heaven.”

As she spoke, the mysterious woman handed Zhao Fu a normal-looking and slightly crude jade pendant. Zhao Fu looked at it curiously.

[Jade Pendant – Concealment]: Description: A normal jade pendant that has been affected by Yin Yang Techniques, and it can hide one’s fate.

Zhao Fu felt quite surprised when he saw the description. It seemed that the system recognized the existence of Yin Yang Techniques, so those supernatural things really did exist in this world. The Hundred Schools of Thoughts truly had mysterious and wonderful abilities.

Zhao Fu decided that he would believe this mysterious woman’s words for now. Of course, he would only give her a position as a chef, and he would not reveal anything important to her. He looked at her and said, “I can hire you, but I hope what you said is true. Otherwise, don’t blame me for being merciless.”

The mysterious woman lightly nodded. From her self-introduction at the beginning of the session, Zhao Fu knew that her name was He Xianru.

Zhao Fu left the matter at that and let out a breath. When he thought about everyone else still waiting outside, he went out to announce the results. He Xianru gave a smile that could topple cities and followed Zhao Fu out.

After walking out and seeing the group of people waiting for the results, Zhao Fu announced the five people who he had chosen, including He Xianru. Of course, he did not hire Huo Qing, that scammer.

The other people who were rejected left dispiritedly, but Huo Qing ran over to He Xianru and said, “Beauty, can you please take me as your disciple? I promise that I won’t cause you to lose face!”

“Sure!”

Everyone, including Huo Qing, was quite surprised when He Xianru immediately agreed. After thinking about it, Zhao Fu decided that keeping him around to chop some of the ingredients and do some of the odd-jobs wouldn't be too bad.

After tying up some loose ends, Zhao Fu spent some more money and made two signs. Both of these signs were made from Blue grade wood, and their color was quite pleasing to the eye.

Chapter 60: Ancient Equipment

Zhao Fu decided to name the restaurant Westfall Restaurant because the sun was setting in the west when he had bought the place, and the sunset glow was especially beautiful as night was falling.

As for the equipment shop, Zhao Fu decided to call it Ancient Equipment Store because the equipment they were selling was fairly old.

After taking care of matters there, before he had even formally opened the store, many people had come to buy equipment. Following this, he took 100 gold coins to a large building.

The building was the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Zhao Fu took off his cloak and put on a big smile as he handed a few silver coins to the guards. Adding on Zhao Fu's status as a Third-Ranked Baron, the guards quickly reported to the Minister, and soon, Zhao Fu was invited in.

After arriving at the guest hall, Zhao Fu saw a white and chubby middle-aged man sitting on a chair. Zhao Fu walked up and slightly bowed, saying, “I greet lord Minister of Internal Affairs.”

Even though Zhao Fu was a Third-Ranked Baron, which could make ordinary residents respect him, to the Minister of Internal Affairs, who wielded a lot of power, he was nothing.

Seeing this, a trace of a smile appeared on the Minister's chubby face as he motioned with his hand and said, “Sir, please sit. What matters would you like to discuss with this official?”

Zhao Fu sat down on the chair beside him and lightly smiled before saying, “This lowly one has opened two shops in Holy Light City. I've long since heard of Minister's illustrious name, so I came to pay my respects.”

Following this, Zhao Fu took out a small sack containing 100 gold coins and presented it to the Minister, saying, “This is merely a small token of my admiration; I hope your lordship will accept it.”

The Minister saw golden glimmers through the neck of the sack, and when he received it and felt it, he knew that it most likely contained around 100 gold coins. His smile instantly became sincere and warm, saying, “Sir can come and visit me whenever sir wants, and I will always welcome sir here. In the future, there's no need to bring any gifts.”

As he spoke, the Minister stuffed the sack of gold coins into his own pocket with great deftness.

Of course, Zhao Fu would not believe his courteous words. He had already gathered information about this Minister; otherwise, he wouldn't have come to meet him. Seeing that the Minister had accepted his

money, he quickly replied, “Yes, yes, this lowly one understands. My little shops will have to rely on your lordship’s care in the future.”

The Minister smiled and nodded as he replied, “But of course. That’s right, does sir know you can hire 10 soldiers?”

Zhao Fu understood that the Minister was going to provide him with some benefits now, so he pretended to look confused and shook his head.

Seeing this, the Minister said, “Recently, some scoundrels have been making trouble, and Holy Light City has been in a bit of chaos. How about I send 20 soldiers to serve as guards for sir?”

Zhao Fu was delighted. He knew that hiring a Stage 1 soldier for a month cost at least 10 gold coins. Hiring 10 Stage 1 soldiers would have cost him 100 gold coins per month, and now, the Minister had gifted him 20 Stage 1 soldiers to serve as guards. This already completely eclipsed the 100 gold coins that he had given to the Minister.

However, this also meant that he might have to send gifts to the Minister now and then. Zhao Fu had no other choice though – if one wanted to do well, one had to get along with officials or even become friends with them.

“I’ll have to thank your lordship then,” Zhao Fu said. After chatting for a bit longer, he put on his cloak and took the 20 soldiers to his restaurant.

By the time they arrived, Zhao Fu’s employees had already covered a few tables with dishes, and Zhao Fu said to the soldiers, “Don’t hold back, all of this is on the house. In the future, I’ll have to rely on all of you to work hard.”

The soldiers all revealed looks of hesitation. They were ordered to come here to serve as guards, and they weren’t here to eat, drink, and enjoy themselves.

Seeing this, Zhao Fu smiled and said, “Don’t worry; just take this as an order from me. There’s no need for you all to worry needlessly.”

The soldiers looked at the delicacies on the tables and said with an embarrassed expression, “Thank you, boss.”

The soldiers gathered around the tables and started to heartily eat and drink. They did not frequent restaurants because most restaurants around here were fairly expensive.

After the soldiers started to eat, Zhao Fu told his chefs to prepare more food. After a while, he opened the doors and loudly called out, “Today is the restaurant’s grand opening; everything will be free of charge for residents of Holy Light City. Please come and eat however much you want! Do note that players, however, will have to pay.”

Right now, most players were incredibly poor and there were many of them. If Zhao Fu did not limit them, everyone coming in would be players, and the residents would not even be able to squeeze in.

In order for one’s business to do well, one had to let people know how good one’s products were. The residents were quite curious of the strange and wonderful food on the tables. Since it was all free, they did not hold back.

Zhao Fu left 10 soldiers there to maintain order before returning to his equipment store. He loudly called out that today was the equipment shop's grand opening and everything would be 20% off. He then left 10 soldiers there in order to prevent anyone from making any trouble.

Zhao Fu was especially on his guard against the Zhou family. If the Zhou family was not amenable to reason and tried to make trouble for him, he would have to find an opportunity to get rid of them.

Just like that, the first day passed. The restaurant did not make any money, and it instead lost a lot of money. However, business on the second day was better than the first's. Those who had come to eat on the first day had told everyone they knew about the restaurant, and many people, who were filled with curiosity, came to try the new food.

The equipment store sold 400 pieces of equipment on the first day, generating a terrifying revenue of 1,600 gold coins. After selling so many just on the first day alone, Zhao Fu was worried that he would not have any more to sell in the future. Because of this, Zhao Fu started to sell some of the White grade equipment as well.

In order to attract people, Zhao Fu also brought out a few Silver grade weapons. Normal shops owned by the main cities usually did not have Silver grade equipment, so those weapons drew quite a bit of attention. Apart from equipment, Zhao Fu also brought out a few of his Refined Martial Souls.

Refined Martial Souls all gave different grade skills. Some people even sold F grade skills, but most of them were worth 1-2 gold coins. The lowest grade skill that Zhao Fu sold was C grade, but because they were all physical skills, they were worth around 20 gold coins.

No matter if it were the Silver grade weapons or Refined Martial Skills, Zhao Fu did not want to sell any of them. As such, Zhao Fu priced them at ridiculous prices. Blue grade weapons were sold for 4,000 silver coins, while Zhao Fu priced the Silver grade weapons at 40,000 silver coins. The Refined Martial Skills, which were worth around 20 gold coins, were priced at 200 gold coins.

In order to increase the popularity of his equipment, the signs introducing them described them as weapons from tremendous ancient battles. The signs claimed that all of them possessed powerful ancient energy that ordinary people could not detect and that these weapons were waiting for someone connected to them by fate who saw their value and would bring them to divine glory again.

As for the Refined Martial Souls, the signs said that they had been left behind by ancient spirits and contained great powers. The signs claimed that it was possible for them to unlock godly SSS grade skills, but ordinary bumpkins would not be able to comprehend their profoundness.

"Haha!" Zhao Fu was quite delighted. By doing this, no one would dare to say that these goods were fake because that would be tantamount to admitting that they were 'ordinary bumpkins' who did not have good taste.

After making these signs, Zhao Fu's equipment store became much more famous than those opened by residents around him. Rumors about ancient godly weapons and skills left behind by sacred spirits started to be spread around.