

The Quest 368

Chapter 368: Taking Disciples

"You're not getting chubbier; your skin is just getting thicker..." Old Kui couldn't help but say.

Mr. Zhuang denied it:

"Impossible, my skin has always been this thick."

Old Kui sighed, not wanting to bicker with him, and asked about serious matters, "Have you thought about how to avoid karma? "

Mr. Zhuang nodded, "I have."

Old Kui silently looked at him.

Mr. Zhuang took a sip of wine and said lightly:

"Karma is predetermined, just like this wine, you can't avoid it just by wishing not to. Once you drink it, you can't avoid getting the scent of it."

"Since it can't be avoided, then use other karmas to confuse it."

"By confusing the smell of the wine, others might not be able to smell it; by confusing karma, others might not be able to see through it."

Confusing karma...

Old Kui frowned and thought about it, understanding, but still said,

"Won't this make karma even more complicated?"

"It's not me who's making it complicated..."

Mr. Zhuang shook his head, then his gaze became distant as he looked towards the courtyard.

In the courtyard, under the large pagoda tree, three disciples were happily together.

Mo Hua and Bai Zisheng were talking about something, and Bai Zixi's beautiful eyes were bright as she quietly listened, occasionally revealing a smile as faint and gentle as a crescent moon.

Mr. Zhuang's gaze was deep, "It's just that some karmas already exist."

...

The next day, as usual, Mo Hua went to visit Mr. Zhuang, bringing many edibles in large and small boxes.

"Gentleman, my mother asked me to bring these for you to try!"

Mo Hua's tone was cheerful, his eyes bright as if filled with starlight.

The morning sun was splendid, and the room was filled with a clear glow.

Looking at Mo Hua, Mr. Zhuang's demeanor suddenly softened and gently said:

"Mo Hua, would you like to be my disciple?"

Mo Hua was slightly startled, "Aren't I already your disciple?"

Mr. Zhuang shook his head, "Not a nominal disciple, but a direct disciple!"

Mo Hua was stunned.

His mouth hung open, for a moment, he couldn't believe his ears and thought he had misheard.

"Direct... direct disciple?"

Mr. Zhuang smiled slightly and nodded gently.

Mo Hua was thrilled, but then he cautiously asked,

"Gentleman, you won't regret taking me as your direct disciple, right? My spiritual root is very poor..."

Mr. Zhuang chuckled, "It doesn't matter..."

Mo Hua thought he was dreaming, but even if it were a dream, he had to agree to such a thing.

Just as Mo Hua was about to agree, Mr. Zhuang stopped him.

Mr. Zhuang said solemnly, "You need to think it through."

"Is there anything to think about?"

Mo Hua frowned, not understanding what there was to consider.

Mr. Zhuang then said, "I'm leaving Tongxian City. If you become my disciple and learn formations from me, you'll have to wander with me."

"Wandering without knowing the time, you should discuss with your parents, consider their feelings, and then decide whether you want to become a disciple." R&NöβES

Mr. Zhuang's considerations were considerate and thoughtful.

Mo Hua's small eyebrows knitted together, quite troubled.

He wanted to acknowledge Mr. Zhuang as his master and learn higher formations, but he didn't want to leave his parents and worried they would be concerned.

Mr. Zhuang gently said, "Go ask your parents, think it over, and then give me your answer."

"Okay."

Mo Hua nodded seriously.

After returning home, Mo Hua told his parents about the matter.

Mo Shan and Liu Ruhua both showed happy expressions, then both hesitated a bit.

Mo Shan was about to say something with a frown, when Liu Ruhua said firmly:

"Huar, take Mr. Zhuang as your master."

Mo Hua was briefly taken aback, "But..."

But once he became a disciple, he would have to leave with Mr. Zhuang, and he didn't know when he would be able to return, when he could see his parents again...

Liu Ruhua's demeanor was gentle, she shook her head and said:

"Don't worry about so much. If you have accomplishments in formations, the world is vast, and you can go anywhere. Don't mind the temporary separation."

"To learn formations from Mr. Zhuang is an incredible opportunity that you must not miss!"

"We are just loose cultivators without name or gain, and despite that, Mr. Zhuang is willing to take you as a disciple, which is an immense kindness."

"We have no way to repay this kindness."

"By taking Mr. Zhuang as a master and attending to him, you would be showing some gratitude for his kindness..."

Liu Ruhua's tone was gentle but firm.

Mo Shan also nodded, "Listen to your mother."

"Alright, I'll remember!"

Mo Hua seriously nodded.

After Mo Hua returned to his room, Liu Ruhua's resolute expression disappeared, turning hesitant and anxious, torn with indecision.

Mo Shan held her hand and softly said:

"Are you reluctant to let him go?"

Liu Ruhua's eyes tinged with sourness, she nodded.

How could she bear to let go of the child who had been by her side since childhood, especially one so caring and considerate...

But there was no choice in the matter of reluctance.

Liu Ruhua sighed,

"Huar's mastery of formations is so good that no one in Tongxian City can teach him anymore. Staying here his whole life, it's likely difficult for him to make any further progress..."

"I know he likes to study formations and wants to learn more, but he's also concerned about us and can't make up his mind."

"Parents' love for their child leads them to plan for his future..."

"I can't delay his future just because I can't bear to let him go."

Mo Shan also found it hard to let go in his heart, but he didn't show it and just smiled to comfort her,

"Don't worry, it's just traveling the clouds; it's not like he's not coming back. Who didn't travel when they were young?"

"Maybe after a few years, he'll come back."

"By then, he might even bring back a little bride for you."

Liu Ruhua burst into laughter through her tears and scolded him, "What nonsense are you talking about?"

Seeing that his wife's mood had improved, Mo Shan held her hand tightly and reassured her,

"No matter where he roams, he will always have a day of return; as parents, we simply wait for him here..."

Liu Ruhua's mood gradually stabilized, and she silently nodded her head.

...

The next day, Mo Hua went to find Mr. Zhuang again, remembering his parents' instructions, he respectfully performed a deep bow and crisply said,

"Mo Hua is untalented and humbly requests Mr. Zhuang to accept me as a disciple!"

Mr. Zhuang was stunned.

It was clear that he wanted to take a disciple, but Mo Hua came to respectfully request apprenticeship...

A warmth arose in Mr. Zhuang's heart; he came forward to help Mo Hua up and even dusted off his clothes for him, "No need for such big formalities, it's too stand-offish..."

Mo Hua squinted his eyes and smiled.

Seeing Mo Hua's innocently joyful smile, Mr. Zhuang also smiled warmly, feeling a weight lifted from his heart.

No matter what, he had finally accepted this disciple.

No matter how the world may change, and how causes and effects evolve, this matter will remain unchanged.

Since it had been decided, there was no need to hesitate or wander; it was best to proceed with firm steps.

Mr. Zhuang suddenly felt much lighter in his heart.

It seemed after so many years of uncertainty, he had finally found his bearings and the many years of sullen hardships had all gone with the wind.

Mo Hua was happy for a while, then suddenly thought of something and became somewhat troubled again.

He quietly asked, "Gentleman, do you plan to take several disciples?"

Mr. Zhuang looked at him with a hint of a smile, "What is it you want to ask?"

Mo Hua felt it wasn't quite appropriate and hesitated before saying, "What about Zisheng and Zixi? Aren't you going to take them as well?"

If everyone was a nominal disciple together, but only he were to become Mr. Zhuang's direct disciple, it probably wouldn't sit well with them...

Mr. Zhuang laughed, "They have good aptitudes, and there's some connection with me; I'll accept them."

Mo Hua breathed a sigh of relief and was very happy.

With this, everyone would start off as nominal disciples together and then become direct disciples together; then they would truly be of the same sect.

Mo Hua then thought that Zisheng and Zixi were extremely talented and had a family heritage; maybe Mr. Zhuang had thought of accepting them as disciples long ago.

Compared to them, he was born frail, with an inadequate spiritual root and a poor background; it was only his strong divine sense and his slightly better skill in formations.

It was only natural for Mr. Zhuang to accept Zisheng and Zixi as disciples while taking him on seemed a bit like making up the numbers.

But Mo Hua didn't care; he was happy that Mr. Zhuang was willing to take him as a disciple.

After Mo Hua left happily, Mr. Zhuang called Bai Zisheng and Bai Zixi over and directly asked them,

"Are you willing to take me as your teacher?"

Bai Zisheng and the others were also shocked.

After a moment, Bai Zisheng's face lit up with excitement, and Bai Zixi also showed signs of delight.

They originally thought Mr. Zhuang wouldn't accept them, but unexpectedly, there was a twist in the end, and the gentleman agreed to take them as disciples.

The two immediately performed the rituals and respectfully said,

"We greet our master."

Mr. Zhuang nodded slightly and said, "Rise."

They respectfully stood up again.

Mr. Zhuang said, "We'll choose an auspicious day to burn incense and offer tea before formally taking me as your master."

"As for the rest, your mother should know everything and must have told you."

Mr. Zhuang's gaze became profound, "Since I've agreed to take you as disciples, naturally I'll teach you everything I should, and give her an explanation as well."

Bai Zisheng and Bai Zixi nodded in agreement.

They just needed to become disciples; the rest was not for them to overly concern themselves with.

Before becoming disciples, they followed their mother's arrangements; after becoming disciples, they would follow Mr. Zhuang's orders.

The matters within, in fact, were not up to the siblings to decide.

Or it might be said that in noble clans, these clan disciples, even though they might be direct descendants and exceptionally talented, often had no say in such matters.

The more important the matter, the less room there was for change.

After giving brief instructions, Mr. Zhuang sent them on their way.

With her keen mind, Bai Zixi hesitated before leaving, but finally asked,

"Gentleman, about Mo Hua..."

Bai Zixi didn't finish her question when Bai Zisheng caught on and also asked on her behalf,

"Gentleman, will you accept Mo Hua as your disciple too?"

If everyone started off as nominal disciples, and now they had all become Mr. Zhuang's disciples, it would undoubtedly weigh on Mo Hua's heart if he were left out, even if it went unspoken.

Mr. Zhuang was taken aback, feeling an inexplicable sense of gratification, and nodded,

"Yes!"

The two of them were even happier now.

Bai Zisheng's face showed his elation, and Bai Zixi smiled gently, her smile blooming like a night-blooming cereus, beautiful and breathtaking.

Seeing this, Mr. Zhuang reflected inwardly,

This child's appearance is even better than her mother's.

One wonders if that will be a good thing in the future...