

Chapter 38: Negotiating the terms

Ren Xiaosu was resting in the backyard of the clinic as he waited for the band to arrive. But it wasn't until early in the morning that he heard the stronghold's portcullis being raised slowly.

It sucked that he couldn't harvest the vegetables that had just been planted in the yard, those scallions, garlic seedlings, bok choy, and so on.

What had to come would eventually come. Ren Xiaosu opened his eyes and walked towards the consultation room at the front. He sat upright with decorum in the seat and waited.

Knock, knock, knock. Three raps sounded on the door.

"Please come in, the door's open," Ren Xiaosu said. He did not even raise his head, looking like he was busy filling out a medical record.

When the door opened, the morning sun shone onto Ren Xiaosu's face. He looked up and was surprised to see a well-dressed woman standing at the door. Ren Xiaosu had never seen someone wear this kind of outfit in town before.

Ren Xiaosu had seen her before when he was leaning on the windowsill. This woman was the famous singer from the stronghold, Luo Xinyu.

"How fanciful," Ren Xiaosu mumbled to himself. Then he looked behind Luo Xinyu at where the band members and private troops were standing. This time, the private army had actually sent out 12 soldiers, even more than the previous expedition.

But Ren Xiaosu's attention was still on the girl with the cap, the owner of the Perfect Firearms Proficiency.

The girl was dressed in dark blue sportswear and still wearing her cap very low. She seemed to have noticed that Ren Xiaosu was staring at her, so she raised her face slightly.

Ren Xiaosu saw her delicate chin but still could not see her eyes that were shrouded by the shadow of the cap.

Behind this group of people, a large group of students had gathered.

In fact, the band members were also a little confused. Why had these children suddenly gathered here? Li Facai's strapping daughter whispered from behind to the girl with the cap, "Are y'all taking Ren Xiaosu away?"

No one answered Li Youqian. It seemed that the girl with the cap didn't like to say much.

But suddenly, Ren Xiaosu heard the voice from the palace in his mind say, "Quest: Reject going with them to the Jing Mountains."

Ren Xiaosu was stunned. Why was the palace also involving itself in this matter? Typically, the palace would do things for his good, but why was it not allowing him to go to the Jing Mountains? What could possibly be there?

Obviously, Ren Xiaosu had been to the Jing Mountains before. Although that place was definitely a little more dangerous than staying in town, it shouldn't be so dangerous that the palace had to remind him not to go.

Unless something had changed?

Thinking of this, the thought of backing out started to grow in Ren Xiaosu's mind. He wanted was to see the vast world, not how dangerous it was.

Luo Xinyu sat down across from Ren Xiaosu. She smiled and said, "You're Ren Xiaosu, aren't you?"

Ren Xiaosu looked at Luo Xinyu and started to wonder aloud, "My father's father is called grandpa, my father's mother is called grandma..."

Luo Xinyu was confused. 'Are you seriously mental?'

Then an officer from the private army walked in. He looked at Ren Xiaosu and laughed. "Stop pretending, we've met before."

When Ren Xiaosu looked up and saw the person approaching, he didn't feel so good anymore. Wasn't this Wang Congyang? The man who had searched him twice already!

He couldn't keep pretending. Not only that, but Ren Xiaosu also knew he had to go on this expedition no matter what now.

He slumped out of his upright posture, leaning against the back of the chair. His entire body suddenly turned indolent. "I'm not going!"

"Quest complete. Awarded Basic Skill Duplication Scroll. You may use it to learn another person's skills."

Ren Xiaosu's eyes lit up. The quest was complete!

Indeed, the criteria for whether a quest was complete as judged by the palace was not based on the established facts but the attitude displayed by Ren Xiaosu!

All of a sudden, Ren Xiaosu got a bold idea.

Wang Congyang, who was standing by the side, said, "How can you not go—"

"I'll go," Ren Xiaosu said in a serious tone.

Wang Congyang was confused.

However, to Ren Xiaosu's great disappointment, the palace did not give him another new quest. Come to think of it, he could only complete the quest to gift the sparrow to someone once. How could Ren Xiaosu possibly be allowed to keep spamming quests like this?

At this moment, Luo Xinyu laughed. "If you're willing to go, that would be for the best. I trust that the letter from Boss Luo has already been delivered to you. If you don't go, you won't have any standing in this town."

"I can go," Ren Xiaosu said, "but I have a few conditions."

Luo Xinyu looked at Ren Xiaosu with a smile. She felt that their conversation was finally getting somewhere. "Speak."

"I want 30,000 yuan as remuneration."

"No, you'll only get 10,000 yuan."

"Alright then, I'll want an additional 10 bags of salt, 10 cartons of cigarettes, 100 kilograms of rice, and..." Ren Xiaosu started counting on his fingers.

Luo Xinyu said calmly, "Let me stop you right there. I'll pay you the 30,000 yuan."

"Alright, but I still have another condition," Ren Xiaosu said.

"Can't you say everything in one go?" Luo Xinyu said impatiently.

"You were the one who cut me off just now." Ren Xiaosu said, "I can go, but Wang Congyang can't."

Wang Congyang was obviously a relative of the dead factory manager, Wang Dongyang. He had already abused his authority by searching him twice. If they set off on the expedition together, there might just be some trouble along the way.

As such, Ren Xiaosu was reluctant to have a time bomb like him going with him.

Eh, wait a moment! Could it be possible that Wang Congyang was expelled because he searched Ren Xiaosu twice and offended Boss Luo in the process?

This was a very strong possibility. Which ordinary soldier would be willing to go out into the wilderness? Did they get sick of enjoying their life in the stronghold?

Hence, if Wang Congyang were expelled, his unhappiness towards Ren Xiaosu would be even greater. In that case, all the more he should not go on the expedition together with him!

It was said that the most worrying thing in this wasteland were the beasts that had grown increasingly strong, but Ren Xiaosu disagreed, as he had encountered and killed some of those before. To him, most worrying in this wasteland were not the beasts but the humans.

Luo Xinyu turned to look at Wang Congyang. She didn't expect that these two would have a grudge with each other.

Luo Xinyu turned around and glanced at the girl with the cap who gave a veiled nod at her. Luo Xinyu said, "Alright, Wang Congyang, you can return to the stronghold."

Wang Congyang looked at Ren Xiaosu. With a chuckle, Ren Xiaosu said to him, "You don't really want to go either, right?"

The corners of Wang Congyang's mouth curled up. "You're interesting."

Wang Congyang then turned around and left.

After he was gone, Ren Xiaosu said, "Actually, I still have another condition."

But Luo Xinyu had already stood up, and her smile had turned into a stern look. "Lad, my patience has run out."

Ren Xiaosu wondered why the people from this stronghold had such frequent mood swings. She was smiling at him a moment ago, so why did her attitude change all of a sudden?