

Forty Millenniums of Cultivation

Chapter 14: Little Border of Hidden Lake

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Li Yao had to stare blankly for quite a while for him to recall that “yesterday” he had made a promise with Si Jiaxue. Only when he looked at the time did he realize that it was already 5 pm in the afternoon. He had surprisingly slept for an entire day and night.

No matter what fantastic magical abilities he could conjure in the dream world, in the real world, he was still the ordinary poor youth with an embarrassing lack of money. Just a moment ago, he had eaten his entire stock of a few months worth of food provisions with a single breath. A hundred thousand credits was simply a huge sum of money for him. He had the urge to hold it physically tight within his grasp.

Li Yao hastily typed a response on the virtual glyph-script keyboard, “Where are you? In two hours — no, in one and a half hour, I will deliver it to you!”

When he hit “Send”, the glyph script condensed and transformed into a tiny virtual magic origami crane. It flew to the lower right hand corner of the hologram and faded away.

Only after exactly 3 minutes did Si Jiaxue send out an address, “I’m at this location. There will be a person waiting outside the door for you in half an hour. It will be fine to just directly hand over the goods to this person.”

It appeared as if she really did not have a good impression towards Li Yao. She did not even want to meet face to face with him.

Li Yao did not care though; everything was fine as long as he received his money. He replied with an “OK” and closed the hologram. He took out Si Xiaxue’s outdated crystal processor and with a “crack crack” of his knuckles he began to repair it.

“Huh?”

He immediately discovered something different about himself when he was opening the crystal processor with a screwdriver.

Today, his mental state was especially good and his mind was especially clear. With just a careful scan with his two eyes, he seemed to be able to clearly understand the underlying architecture of the complicated and profound interior of the crystal processor in front of him.

He softly closed his eyes. A phantom transparent image of the outdated crystal process slowly emerged into view. One by one, every piece of fine component broke away and whirled slowly in mid air, allowing him to see each component from every angle and giving him an extremely clear understanding of the details in its entirety.

Li Yao had a certain feeling that even if this job wasn't the kind of easy task that swapping a heat-sink was, but rather the challenging assignment of repairing the crystal core and the like, he would still be capable of tinkering and repairing the processor.

"It looks like it wasn't a total waste to watch Ou Yezi craft artifacts for several hundreds of years. Although I have completely forgotten about all the dream's details, my visual judgement has improved by leaps and bounds!"

And as such, his repairing speed had increased phenomenally. He only needed 30 minutes of his original estimation of at least an hour of work in order to complete the repair successfully. In addition, he also subtly modified the heat sink structure. He used a new type of heat sink structure that only existed 30 years ago and applied it within this hundred year old crystal processor. He estimated that the heat dissipation efficiency of this crystal processor would increase by 17%, increasing the clock speed needed to trigger the thermal trip by at least 9%.

"It's practically perfect. To have this job done is worth paying 100,000 credits. It's not the least bit expensive!"

Li Yao scrutinized his own work and was extremely satisfied. He felt that this was the most remarkable piece of work he had ever displayed since birth.

While engrossed in his satisfaction, an acrid stench permeated into his nasal cavity. Li Yao was suddenly aware of the sticky sweat he had produced while he was dreaming; it stained his body. He lifted his wrist to look at the time, it still wasn't too late in the night. He might as well go take a shower. He scrubbed his body up and down ferociously, changed to a clean set of clothes, and walked out relaxed and invigorated.

The address given by Si Jiaxue pointed to a buffet-style restaurant located in the upper eastern district. The upper eastern district was a rich district where the bigwigs gathered. Li Yao rarely went here in the past, and during the times he did pass through this area, he would always feel a sense of shame and inferiority. He had felt like he was a beggar bursting into a banquet hosted by high society.

But today, he lifted his head high, held his chest straight, sucked in his belly, and raised his nose to the sky. With each step, he travelled three meters. He did not care what others thought of him. He was in high spirits!

Even though his wrinkled jacket had its colors already washed out, even though the top of his knees were patched cloth, even though the toes of his pair of feet met the open

world with a smile, even though, with a glance of an eye, one could tell that he was a destitute youth who did not know when his next meal would be...

His expression was like that of a tyrannical guild leader who was just about to sign a billion dollar contract, carrying a chunk of gold in his pocket.

This fiery aura came from the dream world, from amassing countless imperceivable influences from countless high stage cultivators. It was a pure state of mind of the utmost superiority that had nothing to do with physical strength, rank, or status.

He was like a person who had lived dozens of years dealing with prehistoric dinosaurs. An encounter with a tiger would only be considered meeting a fat housecat to him.

The upper eastern district was located in the center of Floating Spear City and encompassed a total of 7 areas of the artificial lakes. Each of these areas were concealed, isolated from each other. The address provided by Si Jiaxue pointed to the border of one of these areas of artificial lakes, "Hidden Lake of Winter". It was a buffet restaurant called Little Border of Hidden Lake.

This restaurant had bamboo forests orbiting around its surroundings and the restaurant also utilized the natural environment. Weather glyph arrays were set up to cause the drift of snow all year round within the radius of a hundred meters.

The snowfall wasn't heavy but instead gave the restaurant a trace of an astral zen.

This restaurant wasn't considered one of Floating Spear City's highest class of luxury restaurants. The price was relatively cheap and its environment was not bad; it was very stylish. For those in power who have not seized great wealth, for the children who were supported by rich parents and were given allowances, spending money at this location matched quite well with their status.

A woman wearing a silk skirt uniform was standing outside the door of Little Border of Hidden Lake. This beautiful waitress was in costume for she carried a paper fan. She greeted Li Yao as he swaggered inside with large steps. The manner which Li Yao walked and the clothes he wore were completely contrary to one another. It was awkward to look at, causing the waitress to actually stare for quite a while. Only after did she act with her shallow procedure of etiquette, "Hello sir, may I ask if you are a student of Crimson Nimbus Second, Li Yao?"

"That's correct. Si Jiaxue must have made you wait for me. I have the goods here. Do you need to give it a test run?" Li Yao did not waste words as he grabbed and handed the crystal processor over.

The costumed waitress smiled and said, "There's no need. Young lady Si said that she will naturally go and find her fellow student Li Yao should any problems really occur. Please, accept this card."

With a slight bow, the costumed waitress held a translucent glass card covered in glyph script in both hands and handed it over with the utmost respect.

This was an anonymous instant cash card. The glyph script inscribed on the card can be read by a crystal processor and the money contents inside can be transferred to a bank account. The card can also be used at most stores by swiping. It was very convenient.

When Li Yao received the instant cash card, he gently brushed against the light purple glyph characters that were twined in silver on the upper left corner of the card. The instant cash card trembled slightly, and on the card's surface emerged a string of digits — 100,000.

Si Jiaxue unexpectedly pooled in the whole price in one card. Li Yao's eyes were bright. With a somewhat unintended boasting whistle, he said, "Fair lady, many thanks! Oh that's right, when it's convenient, help me convey my thanks to Si Jiaxue. And if she wants to do any sort of further business, remind her often that I will totally give her a large discounted price!"

Li Yao took the instant cash card and stuffed it very gently and cautiously into his skin-tight pocket. He turned around and left with smiles and giggles. He was calculating what he would buy at the supermarket located in the commoner district. He would buy several hundred more pounds of the Giant Creatures of Starry Skies canned meat to bring home, and buy an entire flat bread beef sandwich. He was excited to eat this midnight snack.

It was right at this moment that a "Tsss" sound traveled through the air from within Little Border of Hidden Lake. It was the sound of a small fresh and tender beef steak searing against an iron grill.

The faint smell of meat mixed with the aroma of a dozen or so rare spices into a unique fragrance that rose as an intoxicating breeze and floated outside.

Li Yao's stomach rumbled. He suddenly stopped still. It was as if an invisible rope was tugging at him.

"Damn it. How am I hungry again so soon!?"

He contested in intellect and in bravery while he was joined with Ou Yezi within the dreamland. The energy he consumed, from his mental will to his physical stamina, was too great. He had simply overtaxed his life force. Consuming several dozens cans of Giant Creatures of Starry Skies meat was simply not enough to restore him. He was fine before, but when he smelled the fragrance of meat, he was simply sent back to the same drug addicted state he had experienced a few moments ago. His stomach turned into an empty pit. Every part of his body down to his bones ignited with the raging flame

of hunger. His face twisted to the extreme and drool dripped down away from the edge of his mouth.

Li Yao automatically reversed his steps and charged inside with a blank stare.

His fiery aura like that of a hungry tiger frightened the costumed waitress. The young lady blocked the entrance subconsciously.

“Hmm?”

Li Yao squinted his eyes. His molars were rubbing against each other, creating a “ka ka” ringing sound. He was like a velociraptor that could only eat grass for the last three days.

The young lady was about to burst into tears. Her heart cried, “Where did this savage man come from? Based on his appearance, is he going to swallow me too?”

She could not help but fall back two paces. She composed herself and with great difficulty put on a smile as she said, “This, this guest. Sir has come at the right time. We of Little Border of Hidden Lake are celebrating today. We have 15% off all items and are waiving the service fee. The self-served dinner is only 1280 credits per guest. It also comes with a 30 year old bottle of maiden wine. The owner personally buried them in our basement in those years past.”

This was a restaurant winery located in the rich district. The waiters and waitresses received special training in serving people. Their skills were extremely high. Naturally, they wouldn’t kick someone out based on appearances. They would not commit the folly of using his clothes to determine if he was poor sick person.

This was especially because they were located at a Cultivator Hub which housed a sizeable population of bizarre individuals with somewhat twisted mentalities. These people were dragons who liked to wear the guise of fish. They disguised themselves as pigs in order to eat tigers. It was a sin if their eyes could not recognize the greatness of these people. Not to even mention what great fortune could happen in a fraction of a second. The entire staff could end up using sick leaves at the hospital’s intensive care unit.

And thus, in the rich district, as long as a guest did not come to eat food just wearing his boxers, all guests are treated equally and favorably in this luxurious food joint.

The costumed waitress also did not know what place this rough god Li Yao came from. She had been extremely tactful with her clear speech on the restaurant’s quality and had quickly ducked to the side.

“1,280 credits?”

Li Yao's pair of eyes went somewhat blank. This number ran through his mind and transformed in a flash to a number of Giant Creatures of Starry Skies meat that filled every nook and cranny. His number one thought was to turn around and leave.

Nevertheless, the body is more honest than the mind. The fragrance of barbecue seemed to transform into full-bodied, juicy beautiful women in front of him who licked her red lips, flicked with charming eyes, and laughed lightly with a musical tone.

It was like he swallowed a giant walnut. His adam's apple rolled up and down continuously. The devil and angel in his heart were raging war. He was completely paralyzed.

He was in a deadlock for an exact... half a second. His heart's defense was completely shattered. A flame burned in Li Yao's eyes. Hunger was etched upon his face. He loosened his waist belt by a bit and was like a fierce tiger stepping off the mountain. Like a hungry dog let out of a cage, he howled as he entered.

"It's only 1,280 credits right? I just got 100,000. One meal won't make me poor. Today will be an exception!"

The interior design of Little Border of Hidden Lake was complete genius. The dining area was made into a long corridor. Lanterns and gardens divided into a dozen or so private areas. Tables placed full of food could be found all around in each of the areas. This guaranteed that each guest could eat in their own private environment.

And what a bounty of fine delicacies there were! How could it even be described? At this point, Li Yao felt that his knowledge of biology had been swapped with that of his combat training class. Not only could he not name most of the exotic delicacies, but he had not encountered most of them ever before!

Li Yao found a more peaceful corridor, and he unrelentingly grabbed an over 20lb strip of lamb leg roast without restraint. He ruthlessly bit down the meat, blood and all.

"Twelfth level attained. The Realm of Completion. Overdrive Mode — The! Great! Art! Of! The! Swallowing! Whale!"