

# COL Volume 3: Chapter 11

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## **Volume 3: Chapter 11 – Having a Bandit as a Friend**

The chief bandit cheerfully said: “Alright then brother. You and your friends can go now. I’ll just go and receive the spoils of war now. Haha.”

I really didn’t expect that in the end there would be this sort of result. Simply too dramatic. Unexpectedly, I became friends with the bandit robbing me.

When the caravan leader, Mr. Meng saw that we had turned enemy into friend, his heart felt unwell. Within his heart he was unceasingly scolding himself for having such poor judgement. Without looking at me, he quickly walked over to Long Meng and begged: “Ah, Long Meng. Talk with the Great Mage Zhang Gong to help us by getting these older brothers to let us off. If we lose all of this merchandise, our losses will truly be too big.”

With a disdainful look, Long Meng coldly replied: “Isn’t it too late now? Who told you guys not to trust Zhang Gong? Who is to blame? Blame yourselves. I wouldn’t have any face if I helped you guys to plead.”

“Yes, yes. It’s all because of my poor judgement. I was too selfish. But we, the elderly are above and below are the young. There are a lot of people this time whose loss would be the same as losing their family fortune. I beg of you, help me talk to him.” Mr. Meng was already shedding tears as he said this.”

Even though Long Meng looked the fool on the outside but within, he was extraordinarily kindhearted. After seeing Mr. Meng, a grown man, crying, his heart softened. Helplessly, he said: “Fine then. Don’t be like this. I’ll go and try but I can’t guarantee that Zhang Gong will agree.”

“Thank you, thank you! You truly are a good person!”

I heard their conversation long ago since I was right behind them. I contemplated this for a bit. Ah! It isn’t easy for a merchant to survive either! Forget it. There’s no need to lower myself to their level.

Without even letting Long Meng to open his mouth, I hurriedly said: “Fine then. No need to say anymore Long Meng. I’ll go and try pleading for them.”

I walked over to the bandits that were currently taking inventory of the merchandise and embarrassingly said: “This is really embarrassing. I will have to inconvenience you.”

The Bandit Chief straightforwardly said: “What’s there to feel embarrassed about? If you have something to say then just say it.”

“It’s like this you see. It isn’t easy for these merchants either so would it be possible for you guys to let them off this time? After all, this is the first time I’ve received a mercenary mission so I wouldn’t want to stop midway and pay the fees.”

The Chief Bandit shook his head and awkwardly said: “I’m afraid that it’s impossible for us to spit out that fat meat that’s already in our mouths. Why do you still want to help them? Didn’t you see the true face of that band of profiteers just now? They don’t trust you at all so why do you still bother with them?”

While also feeling very awkward, I let out a sigh. “Ah. There’s nothing to be done about it then. First of all, they’re my customers, and second, they also have wives and children. I only hope you wouldn’t be too harsh on them. I know that you must have your own difficulties, but everyone have to give themselves a way out.”

The Chief Bandit’s face sank with gloom. “Are you threatening me?”

I stared at him in the eye unyieldingly. “Of course I’m not threatening you. I just hope you will agree to me request. In the future I will certainly pay you back the favor.”

Under my resolute gaze, he gradually softened and released a gentle sigh. Helplessly, he said: “I truly can’t say no to you but I really like your character. I can agree to releasing one horse for them, but not the rest. I want half of the merchandise since I have so many brothers following me. I definitely can’t let them return empty-handed. Besides that, I have one more condition.”

His answer was already very satisfying since these unscrupulous merchants should also be taught a lesson. This is the best possible outcome. With a smile, I said: “Then I’ll thank you first. Just tell me what condition you have and I will do my best to satisfy you.”

"My condition is very harsh. Your heart must be prepared. If you can't do it, then the previous agreement will have been a waste."

My heart tensed up and I clenched my teeth. "Say it then. I'll do it if I can." Will he deliberately, embarrass me? He wouldn't want me to strip would he...?

Laughingly, he said: "My condition is——" He deliberately drew out this word to cause me to feel suspense. "It's to invite you to go to our mountain stronghold as a guest."

After hearing his words, it was like unloading a ball of gas. I became soft and nearly fell collapsed onto the ground. I collapsed. I violently collapsed. Ah! How can this be considered a condition? It's too simple!

I said with a weak voice: "Boss, I'll do it."

Flabbergasted, he replied: "What? You don't wish to go to our place as a guest? Then forget about it. I'll cancel the agreement."

I hastily replied: "No no no. I want to go. I want to go see what it's like at your place. Are you trying to scare me to death?"

Abruptly, he gave out a hearty laugh of rejoice. "Haha! You've been fooled by me. This is my revenge.

I was speechless.

With the Chief Bandit's promise, the crowd of bandits returned half of the merchandise to the merchants. These profiteering merchants thanked me until I grew annoyed. I don't care about them at all. I told Long Meng the Chief Bandit's condition and told them to escort the caravan to Xiuda first. I need to go to the bandit's nest for a few days as a guest after all.

Initially, Long Meng was firmly opposed to this but after my unceasing explanations of how the Chief Bandit definitely won't harm me, he finally agreed. He said he definitely follow me in the future, so I must arrive at Xiuda safely. I accidentally received so many little brothers. I also have some means. I told him we would speak of this in the future when I arrive in Xiuda and find them.

After watching the walk away, I turned around and looked at the Chief Bandit. I said with a smile: "Boss, let us go then. Oh, that's right! I still don't know your name. My name is Zhang Gong Wei. I'm 16 but I'll be turning 17 this year."

"Everyone calls me Zhan Hu so you can call that too. I don't wish to carry my former name anymore. This year I'm 29 years old so I'm much older than you. Then I'll be your older brother."

Inwardly I thought, surely he has some extreme circumstances in his past. It would be best not to touch upon it. I answered: "Of course. It goes without saying that you're the big brother. Let's go then. Let me go and see what your nest is like." While saying this, I made a bandit give me horse before rushing onwards.

"You know the way? It'd be better if I lead the way." Zhan Hu's horse was evidently much more excellent. In a moment he already caught up to me and rode besides me.

Their nest is within the mountains of the border between Aixia and Xiuda. It wouldn't be accurate to call it a bandit's nest. It would be better to call it village due to its large scale. Furthermore, Zhan Hu was precisely the village's chief. Whether young or old, when the women and children saw the bandits return with so many valuables they all welcomed the bandits as if they were heroes.

The scale of this bandit village wasn't small at all. The mountains encircled this small village situated in a depression within the mountains, thus providing a natural barrier for them. It was as if the whole village fused together with the surrounding mountains. How verdant and lush. If I didn't know any better, I would think this was an isolated world.

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