

# 48 Hours a Day

## **Chapter 16: Desert Island Survival X**

Bell was in excellent physical shape. Even though he had drifted for so long in the ocean, exhausted and on the brink of dehydration, when given enough food and drink, proper rest and favorable environment, he bounced back to full strength in less than two days' time.

Even so, Zhang Heng was in no hurry to leave. The island's acreage was neither large nor small; walking around the island's entire periphery only took Zhang Heng about eight hours. Going into the virgin forest would take a longer time, but even then, it would only take about three days to get from the hut to the center of the island.

If his assumptions were right, Bell had nineteen days to live, which meant that they still had more than enough time to prepare.

After being in each other's company for two days, Zhang Heng had a basic understanding of his new companion's abilities.

Bell's survival expertise was indeed different from Ed's and the lad in shorts'; his leaned towards hunting and self-preservation—precisely the kind of skills necessary for exploring the virgin forest.

At the present time, Zhang Heng was capable of making a large variety of tools, equipped to seek out a place to stay, water, and many other basic survival skills.

From the simple variety of vegetable in his garden and the bareness of the breeding garden except for Micky Mouse, it was obvious that Zhang Heng did not understand too much about the nature that he was living in.

This was especially true in species identification—a weakness that Zhang Heng and most city-living modern people possessed.

There were many types of plants in the forest, but not knowing which ones or which parts were edible, and afraid of falling victim to food poisoning, Zhang Heng had only taken the potatoes and onions—which were the only things that he recognized.

It was pretty much the same with animals. All this while, he had thought that Mickey Mouse was ugly as sin; never once did it cross his mind that it was actually the extinct national bird of Mauritius.

This explorer that he rescued could finally help him make up for this shortcoming of his.

Seeing that there was not a lot of time left, Zhang Heng decided to bring Bell on a tour around the island.

Bell taught him how to identify and obtain a variety of resources from the forest.

Zhang Heng could not help but be surprised. For the past one year, he had been recklessly wasting natural resources—he had been sitting on a pile of treasure-trove and he was completely clueless as to how to use them.

But the more Zhang Heng listened to his companion, the more uneasy he felt because it seemed that Bell was deeming practically everything that he laid eyes on to be ‘edible once the head is removed’.

On the afternoon of the tenth day, both men returned to the house. Zhang Heng was very pleased with the yield of this short little trip. Even if there was nothing in the heart of the island, he had learnt a lot in the past ten days.

Beyond that, Bell was also very good listener and conversational partner.

After taking a day’s rest, Zhang Heng planted the seed they had collected from the trip in the vegetable garden. As he was doing so, he suddenly received another message.

*[Successfully collected more than ten varieties of vegetables. Wilderness Survival Skills advance from level 1 to level 2. Game Points +5. You may refer to the character panel to view the information...]*

Until now, Zhang Heng still had no idea how the game points were used in the game. Including what he had accumulated previously, he now had a total of 16 points, which was displayed on his character panel.

It seemed to him that this was a sort of reward system. Once certain criteria were met, points would be rewarded, just like previous 11 points which came from starting a fire, building a house and hunting.

Anyway, Zhang Heng was not too caught up in these sorts of things. He had always been the kind of player who let things run its course as long as he completed a level; definitely not the hardcore-bigot kind who had to attain complete dominance of the game. This time, it was only because he had played this game on his own for too long, he had to attain those achievements even if he did not want to.

In addition to that, he also noticed that some changes had been made to the evaluation portion on the panel.

It read,

*[Evaluation: The player is unremarkable with no quality worth commending, but has some wilderness survival skills and archery skills. He is not expected to be able to last longer than the first five rounds.]*

Zhang Heng found this rather puzzling. He thought that his archery skills were pretty good, and he had enough knowledge to survive harsh environment—how could he not last longer than five rounds? What about the other players?

The thought merely flashed through his mind. After that, Zhang Heng focused his attention on matters that needed to be done.

After a night's rest, the pair had almost completely recovered from the fatigue of their little expedition, and the conditions of their physiques were at optimal level.

Next, it was finally time for the main event.

Zhang Heng slung the longbow and quiver over his shoulder. The night before their departure he had already prepared two persons' worth of rations and water. He and Bell each carried their own. If they were frugal, these provisions could very well last them for a week in the forest.

With Bell the human hunting machine next to him, there was no need to worry about running out of supply anyway.

When Zhang Heng handed the two spears he had prepared to his partner, Bell shook his head and then showed him the knife on his waist. "This is enough for me."

Zhang Heng felt a twinge of envy. Seeing the knife brought back memories about that Swiss army knife that he had... Ever since he was thrown to this island, he never saw that piece of ironware again. He thought about how he, when he was with Ed, had completed the feat of sawing a tree using a shell. The tip of the spear he was holding had to be carbonized and then sharpened.

While it was a pretty effective weapon, it was still not nearly as good as the real deal.

Moreover, the workmanship on the knife appeared to be exquisite. Bell's name was even carved on it.

"If you like it so much, I can give it to you once we're safe. You can also come to my house to visit. I'll introduce you to my wife and son."

Even though he knew that that day would never come, Zhang Heng thanked the explorer politely.

Once they were ready, the pair began their journey into the virgin forest. On the first night alone, Zhang Heng realized how lucky he was to have Bell with him.

Even though he had made ample preparations, he had clearly underestimated the dangers in the forest.

One person could not be on constant alert for twenty-four hours, especially at night when the forest was not particularly quiet. There always seemed to be bushes rustling in the dark.

For the first half of the night, Zhang Heng was constantly on his toes, tightening his grip on the spear at every sound or movement. Eventually he realized that he could not go on like this. One sleepless night meant that his mind would suffer and his response slow.

Eventually, Zhang Heng had to force himself to close his eyes.

It took a while for him to ignore the suspicious sounds all around him and enter the half-asleep state. But it was then, he suddenly felt something rubbing against his midriff.

This was also the time when Zhang Heng was most lethargic, so he did not bother to open his eyes until whatever it was tangled around his body and began to squeeze. It was when he suddenly felt suffocated that his eyes flew open and he saw the thing stacked around his body.

It was a python, about three meters long and a body that was thicker than Zhang Heng's forearm. Its belly was white and its back was covered in brown cloud-like spots.

Zhang Heng attempted to free himself from its grasp but realized that he could raise his arm at all. The thing was tightening around him and it felt as if all the bones in his body were broken.

Luckily, his struggling woke Bell from his sleep.

"Burmese rock python, a subspecies of the Indian python—one of six of the largest snake species in the world. Commonly seen in tropical rain forests. They have great strength and few enemies, but they are not without weaknesses." Bell reached to touch the giant serpent's tail and very lightly jabbed at a spot, and the Burmese rock python actually loosened its grip.

When Zhang Heng finally freed himself, Bell explained, "Anus—they are python's most vulnerable spot. Attacking this body part will allow you to

have time to escape.” And then he plunged the knife into the snake’s head.

“Not such bad luck at all. Our breakfast for tomorrow morning has fallen into our lap.”