

BEASTMASTER OF THE AGES

Chapter 20 - Next: Manna!

“Big brother, our appearance here isn’t a coincidence actually. Since we parted two days ago, Qing’er said she wanted to follow you for a while more, and study why I could get a perfect synchronization with you. Therefore, we’ve been following you for a few days already. I hope you won’t blame Ling’er for this.” Jiang Feiling explained sincerely.

“Of course not.” Li Tianming replied.

He lowered his head to take a better look at the girl with the glowing skin. Her skin was so pure, as if she walked straight out from a fairy tale. As her watery eyes stared at him, Li Tianming could almost feel his heart being cleansed.

“Qing’er still couldn’t figure out the reason in the end, so she gave up. I just told her that there must be some kind of bond decided by fate between us. Next time when big brother comes to Ignispolis, remember to visit Ling’er. If I unlock any new abilities I’d want to try them out with you.” Jiang Feiling said, her eyes sparkling with anticipation.

“Definitely. Of course I will visit you.” Li Tianming replied.

“You are not worthy enough to. Probably won’t even be able to make it past the city guards, so just focus on farming at home.” Qing’er rolled her eyes long and hard. She sure was determined about asking Li Tianming to farm and contribute to her nation’s food supplies.

“Qing’er, give big brother a jade pendant, so it’s easier for him to come and find me next time.” Right before they left, Jiang Feiling had an idea.

“I don’t want to.” Qing’er pouted.

“Qing’er?”

“Fine! Ling’er you’ve changed, you weren’t like this before you met this pig!” Qing’er was clearly unwilling, but she still produced a jade pendant from her pocket and threw it at Li Tianming. “You stupid pig, better not let me catch you using my pendant for wrongdoings, or I will see to it that your chicken gets stewed alive!”

The little chick was truly unfortunate. This wasn't the first time someone wanted to make him their dinner.

"Big brother, if you get into situations like the one just now, just bring out the pendant and mention that you are under Princess Qing. This way, no one would dare to kill you," Jiang Feiling said gently.

Li Tianming kept the pendant in his pocket gratefully. The one thing he was really lacking right now was backing, and this pendant was exactly what he needed. He couldn't hope for a better gift!

"Thank you, Ling'er." He thanked the girl solemnly.

"Big brother, who else should you thank?" Jiang Feiling blinked her eyes mischievously.

Li Tianming reacted immediately. "Princess Qing, much thanks for your jade pendant."

"You are welcome. I warn you again, do not use this to scam others, and especially not to ruin my reputation!" Jiang Qingluan's cheeks were still puffed up from her little tantrum.

"No worries, I solemnly swear upon my farmer honor that I will take this pendant off while farming so as to not stain it." Li Tianming said solemnly.

Princess Qing couldn't help but crack up from the joke. Finding it embarrassing to laugh out loud, she immediately went back to maintaining a straight face.

"Big brother, come here." Jiang Feiling smiled too when listening to their conversation, and beckoned Li Tianming once they were done.

"Yeah?" Li Tianming asked.

"Got a secret for you," Jiang Feiling replied.

"I'm listening." Li Tianming lowered his head and brought his ears closer. He could smell her faint scent, a smell that he found almost intoxicating. From the corner of his eyes, the sight of the lass's cheeks made his heart pound faster than ever.

“Big brother, do you want the manna? It’s over there.” Jiang Feiling whispered in his ears, while pointing.

Li Tianming was baffled. How did she know he wanted to find the manna?! And how in the world did she know where the manna was? This must be the ‘important thing’ she was referring to previously. For a seemingly normal girl with no beast ki, Jiang Feiling surprised him yet again. Just how many mysterious abilities does this girl have?

“Ling’er, let’s go.” Qing’er rushed her. This time, they really needed to leave.

“Big brother, I’ll see you again in Ignispolis.” Before Li Tianming could recover from his shock, the pair were already disappearing. Even after the two left, Li Tianming was still dazed, complete with a bit of disappointment from not being able to see Ling’er in a while. It wasn’t just because of her looks, but more of the sense of belonging he could feel when he was with her.

Li Tianming thought about the time they had together. She looked so pure and innocent, yet she was thoughtful and was able to figure out what he was thinking about. Not only did she get him a jade pendant from princess Qing, a lifesaver for him, she also noticed his minute change in expression when he heard about the manna, which led her to point out the direction of the manna for him. Li Tianming couldn’t help but wonder just what other secrets this girl might hold!

The fateful encounter with Jiang Feiling had already left a permanent mark in his heart.

“Hyperactive hormones, eh?” The little chick didn’t miss this opportunity to laugh at Li Tianming.

“I’ll give you a choice. Grilled or stewed?” Li Tianming kept the pendant, his eyes still staring in the direction where Jiang Feiling left.

“Ha! I can beat you single-wingedly.” The little chick jeered back smugly.

“And now?” Li Tianming brought up his left arm, the dark arm in full view.

“Ahh brother!” The little chick’s attitude took a hundred eighty degree turn. “Do you need a nice massage? Perhaps I can get you a drink?”

“Much better now,” Li Tianming teased.

“Hmmm... Manna.” Li Tianming tried to recall the stories he heard about this treasure.

It was said that manna was divine blessings given physical form. It came in all sorts of shapes, some stones, some gems, and some even appeared as liquids. Whenever a lifebound beast or a wildbeast obtained a manna matching their type, it could trigger an evolution that enhanced the beast, boosting both the beast and its beastmaster's limits.

Out of the four different tiers of manna, even the most common imperial ones were said to evolve a lifebound beast to seven-stars. Seven-stars! That was sufficient to forge the scariest beastmasters! In Vermilion Bird, seven-star lifebound beasts were known as 'Royal Beasts', crowned as the king of lifebound beasts!

Profound and terrestrial manna had even more absurd effects. For example, terrestrial manna was capable of evolving lifebound beasts to legendary 'Saint Beasts'! Saint beasts stood at the pinnacle of the entire Flameyellow continent, and the Saintbeast War-Soul that Li Tianming once had was related to them!

As for celestial manna, they appeared only in legends and myths.

“Ying Huo, you mentioned that manna would be of great benefit to you?” Li Tianming asked on a more serious note.

“That's right. When I heard about it, I managed to fish out quite a lot of information from my memory. Although my abilities as a Primordial Chaos Beast were restricted when I became a lifebound beast, the evolution caused by manna can help me get rid of these restrictions. My primal instinct tells me that if I keep evolving, I may eventually go back to my original form as the Aeternal Infernal Phoenix.”

“Then what are we waiting for? We know you need the manna, and we know where it is, so let's not dillydally any further.” Li Tianming told the little chick.

“Are you telling me you want to rob Lightning Manor's manna? They have seven contestants, each of them guarded by parents or seniors who could easily squash you,” The little chick exclaimed.

“The pendant will come in handy against their parents. From the way Zhang Chong reacted to the princess, they’re probably middle-class members of the Lightning Manor and do not have that much power in Ignispolis,” Li Tianming explained. The jade pendant meant that he had princess Qing protecting him.

“Therefore all I need to deal with are the younger generations.” Li Tianming’s eyes shrunk. While Lin Xiaoting may be the main culprit for Midas’s death, plenty of disciples from Lightning Manor were at one side watching and cheering him on. Even if the ones in Red Twill Mountain were not present on that night, Li Tianming just couldn’t see them being friends, and probably would not resist his urge to punch them on sight. After all most of them, like Zhang Zixuan just now, were rotten to the core.

“Hey, I just realised something.” The little chick suddenly said.

“What?”

“Liu Qianyang mentioned that he would be staying in Flamehaven for a month, right? The only reason for him to stay that long is because he is contesting for the manna as well! As someone in ninth level Beast Vein, he probably has the highest chance of getting the manna!” The little chick spoke with a hint of disgust, as it remembered how that teenager robbed Li Tianming of his Flameyellow Order.

“You are right, he must be here! That means his sister Liu Qing and my father would be here too. Now this is getting interesting.” The challenge ahead had gotten Li Tianming burning with anticipation.

“What kind of a father is he? Giving the Flameyellow Order to Liu Qianyang, then bringing him here to win the manna. Are you sure you are his real son, not Liu Qianyang?” The little chick spat. Indeed, how ironic it was that his father ousted him from the family and gave everything to an outsider!

“He used to come to Red Twill Mountain quite often, so you probably can’t find someone more familiar with the terrain here. This Liu Qing, you reckon she married Li Yanfeng for her brother’s Flameyellow Order and manna?”

“Quite possible.”

“Touching.” Li Tianming stood up, looking at the direction Jiang Feiling left once again.

“Then that’s even more reason for me to snatch this manna from you and ruin your plans, Li Yanfeng! And Liu Qianyang, just you wait, because I will take back what is rightfully mine!”

With that, Li Tianming and Ying Huo delayed no further, as the two of them marched on towards an inevitable fight!