

## **BEASTMASTER OF THE AGES**

### Chapter 7 - Mysterious Black Arm!

Li Tianming sat up hurriedly, sending the little chick, who was snoozing on top of him, tumbling to the ground. “What’s going on?!”

He couldn’t see anyone trying to hack off his hand in the dim candlelight, but he could see something else terrifying... Starting from his fingers, his entire arm’s skin was beginning to blacken!

The encroaching darkness began to engulf his arm at a breakneck pace as he woke up, turning his left arm into a blackness that rivaled night itself. Horror gripped him as an eerie, prickling pain, one that reminded him of innumerable ants crawling on it, began to emanate from his left arm.

“What the hell!” He was utterly disturbed to see the wriggling flesh reform into black scales! The scales were exquisite and orderly, each a perfect hexagon. A frightening aura began to pulse outwards from his left arm, and the feeling his arm no longer belonged to him assailed Li Tianming.

There were no words that could adequately describe the horrible aura emanating outwards. But at the very least, it was one that belonged to a supreme being, one that all life could only prostrate and tremble in front of. The metamorphosis didn’t just end there — his fingernails began to transform into red talons, turning his left hand into a monstrous claw.

The fingernail-turned-talons were scarlet and sharp, giving off the impression that skin and flesh would flay at the slightest brush.

“Am I still dreaming?” Li Tianming wasn’t quite sure whether he should laugh or cry. His arm was no longer hurting, and more importantly, he could feel that his arm was now capable of harnessing far more strength than the rest of his body.

However, the increase in strength was just the tip of the iceberg. His left arm had undergone some fundamental changes — an evolution into a higher organism could barely begin to describe it. That said, the left arm’s unique aura and blood had already mixed with the rest of the body without anything untoward happening.

Then, the nightmare fuel continued. A red line formed on his palm as Li Tianming opened his hand, revealing a glistening, bloody crimson eye that looked right back at him!

The fright he'd expected to feel, however, eluded him. Seeing an alarmed Li Tianming looking at 'him' had dulled whatever fear he'd expected to feel. In fact, he was beginning to feel that the 'him' being looked at... was the eye itself. It was a strange feeling, alright!

Li Tianming stared at the claw and the eye, while the eye stared back at an alarmed him. A moment passed, then another, and he suddenly understood what was going on. "So, this new eye is mine!".

He was able to see through two different perspectives, which somehow worked together through some strange method. There didn't seem to be any downsides apart from making his head a little more chaotic.

He pointed his palm behind his back and sure enough, he could see behind him. He stuck it into his pants, and he could see his leg.

"So, Li Tianming, what are you doing?" He suddenly heard.

"Nothing much!"

"No need to hide. Sticking your hand into your pants and panting... Uh huh, so many possibilities. Young people really need to learn to do it in moderation." The little chick snorted.

Li Tianming was startled. How could something the size of his palm contain so much lewdness?

"C'mere, you." Li Tianming grabbed him. Naturally, he used his right hand.

"Noooo, stawhp, I'm not your chick!" the little chick shrieked.

"..."

"Take a look, what is this?" Li Tianming revealed his black, scaly arm. In the palm of the beast claw, a bloody-red eye was looking at the little chick with schadenfreude.

“AHHH! Ghost!” The little chick jumped up a meter in fright, its feathers quivering madly as it teetered on the edge of consciousness.

With a jolt, Li Tianming realised that this arm... was identical to the giant black hand he had seen in the dream when the little chick was born!

He had been too shocked then to pay attention to if that hand had had an eye, but these black, hexagonal scales were definitely there.

“T-that hand!” The little chick realised the black arm’s aura was making it tremble on an instinctive level.

“I think so too.”

“What happened?” the little chick asked seriously.

“Not sure. It suddenly changed. My guess is that you didn’t escape your foe, and he’s come knocking?”

“Fudge!” the little chick cursed, before staring blankly at the black arm. Truthfully, the two of them seemed to lack the qualifications to know the full truth. Who was the black arm? Why did the black arm chase it down? Why was it lifebound to Li Tianming? Why did Li Tianming’s arm metamorphosize into that black arm? Guesswork alone wouldn’t answer these questions.

“No need to worry! If I were your foe, I’ll definitely give you a satisfying end. Like, we’ll first go on an excursion up a mountain, pick some mushrooms, and then prepare mushroom chicken stew together. How does that sound?” Li Tianming grinned, unable to repress his mirth any longer.

“Uh huh. Is that why you were sticking your hand down your pants?” the little chick asked, disdain ruffling up its feathers.

“Well, it’s still a better sight than a certain someone attacking a male Flaming Hawk...”

“Shut it!” The little chick shot up, and pecked at Li Tianming. Despite its diminutive figure, the power behind the peck wasn’t anything to laugh at. Sparks flew as Li Tianming blocked with his left hand.

“I guess we’re at a net positive? Probably? It seems the arm is nigh-invulnerable.” Li Tianming examined the hexagonal scales under the

candlelight. He could indeed feel a strength that surpassed himself when he clenched his fist.

In the end, he used some white cloth to wrap up the left arm before changing to a new set of clothes. At the same time, he put on a glove. Now, his entire arm was effectively hidden. Otherwise, whoever saw it would definitely take him for a monster.

The little chick accepted this development as well. As a lazy chick, it made sense to adopt a wait-and-see approach to incomprehensible occurrences.

“Maybe I have some connection to the giant black hand?” Li Tianming pondered, thinking of that giant black hand that had assaulted the Aeternal Infernal Phoenix. “Its origin may be uncertain, but it’ll give me additional chances for tomorrow’s selection!”

With breakthroughs in his cultivation, as well as the black arm, Li Tianming began to devote the remaining time to practicing old battle arts and ensuring his combat readiness. He had quite a few battle arts, having once reached the spiritsource stage.

Battle arts had two types. Martial arts, that were practiced by beastmasters, and bestial arts, which were practiced by lifebound beasts. They were synergistic in nature, and only when executed in tandem could they display their full might.

As their cultivation increased, beastmasters and lifebound beasts would have access to more and more cooperative abilities, and battle arts were one of them.

Wildbeasts were incapable of learning bestial arts.

Battle arts were divided into five ranks of beast, source, unity, heavenly, saint, based on their power and complexity. ‘Beast’-ranked bestial arts were the most basic and were suitable for lifebound beasts in the Beast Vein stage.

They were then further divided into basic, intermediate and advanced. Of course, extraordinary cases existed in the form of ‘supreme’ beast-ranked arts, which would allow one to dominate their peers in the Beast Vein stage.

Following that were source-ranked battle arts which were suitable for spiritsource stage beastmasters. Supposedly, some Beast Vein beastmasters could grasp source-ranked arts.

While Li Tianming may have fallen from spiritsource, he still had his familiarity with his old battle arts. It was only the little chick who had to master the bestial arts portion. Still, that fellow was ridiculously talented. Battle arts that Midas spent much effort to learn with Li Tianming, were easily picked up by the little chick. These past few days, they had both reached mastery of many battle arts.

“Tomorrow is the day!” Li Tianming clenched his fists, his eyes ablaze with passion in the dark night.