

Desolate 48

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 3: Comprehending The Way by the Pond Chapter 12: Serpentwing Lake

The three black beasts were travelling through the desolate terrain.

“Young master.” Autumn Leaf couldn’t help but speak out. “That son of River He has tremendous hatred towards you. If we let him grow up, in the future, it will most likely be detrimental to you, young master.”

Ji Ning cast a sideways glance at Mowu.

Autumn Leaf hurriedly said, “It wasn’t Mowu who said this to me. I knew that you wouldn’t be happy, but after thinking about it for a long time, I felt I had to say this.”

Ning let out a sigh. “My enmity was with River He. I have no enmity with his son. I went to get revenge. Why do I have to harm his child as well?”

“But when tribes engage in battles against each other, we generally utterly destroy any remaining threats...” Autumn Leaf wanted to speak.

“I understand.” Ning nodded. “For the sake of the tribe’s survival...any sort of measures and means can be used! But how can a small child like him possibly affect my Ji clan? My Ji clan controls this area, and has put countless people to death. Who knows how many people secretly hate our Ji clan? The reason that my Ji clan is able to remain in command isn’t because we didn’t offend people, but rather because we ourselves are powerful!”

Autumn Leaf began to understand a bit.

“Even if we don’t offend others, if we aren’t powerful, others will still come and destroy you.” Ji Ning said calmly. “But if we are powerful, then those secret enemies might secretly feel resentment, but publicly they will still be very respectful. Most likely, a century later, their sons and grandsons will have truly become loyal subjects of our Ji clan.”

“In addition, when experts train, the heart and mind is very important.” Ning said.

The mind and the heavens become one! One with the world!

The mind gains insights into the Dao, and learns the true meaning of the Dao!

Ning understood that a person who was training in the Dao had to be true to himself. Only with a clear mind and clear conscience could one improve at a faster rate when training.

“If a person is not true to himself, not only will he be frustrated, he will also come to a halt in his training, or perhaps even lose ground.” Ning shook his head. “If I, Ji Ning, want to kill someone, I will only kill him and him alone. I will not harm his wife and children! This is my true self!”

In his past life, his illness had tormented him and caused him to always be alone. Lonely people often would become accustomed to think about many things. Some thought about too many things and would go insane, while others would see through their own heart and mind and become wise. Ning was one of

those who had seen through his own heart, which made him all the more broad-minded and calm. If he hadn't seen through his own heart, how could he have had such resolve to keep training so bitterly in this life?

Autumn Leaf and Mowu glanced at each other.

Be true to themselves?

They didn't understand!

"Enough." Ning saw the looks on their faces and shook his head. "Don't overthink it. Let's go to Serpentwing Lake."

"Young master, aren't you going to the Blacktooth Tribe? Didn't you say...that you wanted to help take care of the little brother of Spring Grass?"

Autumn Leaf asked.

"No rush." Ning shook his head. "I'll make a trip to Serpentwing Lake first and kill Serpentwing, then head to the Blacktooth Tribe...the original cause of this disastrous affair was still Serpentwing. One of Spring Grass' two little brothers died to Serpentwing as well. I will use Serpentwing's death to commemorate Spring Grass, and then I'll take her only brother to the West Prefecture City with me."

"Let's go."

Ning rapped his black beast on its chest slightly, and it instantly began to gallop forward.

Autumn Leaf and Mowu followed him towards Serpentwing Lake as well.

They travelled by day and rested at night. Given the rapid pace at which the black beasts travelled through even mountainous terrain, they still spent three full days before arriving at a place near Serpentwing Lake.

"Greetings, young master."

Ten black armored guards fell down to one knee.

Ning, seated on the black beast, nodded while instructing, "Mowu, Autumn Leaf, the two of you can stay here and rest for a bit. Serpentwing Lake is a few kilometers up ahead. I can't take you there. I will go to Serpentwing Lake by myself."

"Yes." Mowu and Autumn Leaf were both very respectful.

Ning descended from the black beast, and then, moving as agilely as a great bird, charged into the distance. With but two flashing movements, he disappeared from the field of vision of those ten black armored guards, Mowu, and Autumn Leaf. This was the first time the black armored guards had seen Ning displaying his footwork techniques, and they stared in amazement and disbelief.

Serpentwing Lake was currently forbidden territory.

The Ji clan had arranged for dozens of scattered little squads to be spread around the area, each of which had ten black armored guards. They were located in different areas around Serpentwing Lake, so as to keep a close watch on Serpentwing.

“Huahuahua....” The hundred-kilometer long Serpentwing Lake was vast. One couldn’t see the other side of the lake. Such an enormous lake would of course have three-foot high waves, even when it wasn’t windy.

Ning stood by the shore, staring at Serpentwing Lake. In a soft voice, he said, “This lake truly is immeasurably deep. Even though I can control water, if I were to enter its depths...my speed would probably still be far inferior to Serpentwing.”

The deeper one went, the greater the water pressure would be, and the harder it would be to control water.

A human who was in water wouldn’t even be able to bring out 10% of his power, but a water monster would be more powerful than usual.

“Right now, although I am powerful, compared to a peak Xiantian Diremonster...most likely, I’m just slightly more powerful.” Ning said to himself. And this was because he trained in the [Windwing Evasion], and had gained a hint of understanding into the true nature of the Dao. After all, just by relying on the four stage of the [Crimsonbright Diagram of the Nine Heavens] alone, he would only roughly have power comparable to other late-stage Fiendgod practitioners.

Compared to Serpentwing, his power would actually be slightly lower.

Swoosh!

With a series of movements, Ning travelled a kilometer, walking atop the water as though it were land.

“Serpentwing!” Ning let out a loud bellow.

“Serpentwing!” “Serpentwing!” “Serpentwing!”

The sound echoed like thunder, spreading everywhere and piercing deep into the depths of the water of the lake.

Moments later....

In the depths of the sea, within a twisting, dark lair, the Diremonster, Serpentwing, was currently slumbering. His enormous scaled wings surrounded him, protecting his body.

“Serpentwing!” A sound pierced through the water, directly arriving to him.

The slumbering Serpentwing suddenly opened his scarlet eyes.

“What’s going on?” Serpentwing let out a low growl. “Investigate immediately.”

“Yes.”

The sound of screams from terrified lesser water monsters could be heard from outside. Although humans usually weren't able to understand the languages of these lesser monsters, these lesser monsters could all understand each other.

There were two black armored guards hiding within the wild grass fairly close to Serpentwing Lake.

"Serpentwing?"

"Someone is challenging Serpentwing." The two black armored guards exchanged glances of amazement, then hurriedly turned to look. However, they were dozens of kilometers away from Ning, and thus they couldn't see him at all.

"I'll keep watch. You go make the report."

There were over ten black armored guards on watch at all times around Serpentwing Lake, and right now, the three black armored guards closest to Ji Ning were all able to see him. This group of black armored guards had been dispatched from West Prefecture City. Naturally, they were able to recognize Ning.

"It is young master Ji Ning."

"Young master Ji Ning has come to challenge Serpentwing? But young master Ji Ning truly is powerful. He is able to stand atop the water as though it was flat ground. Just like Commander Ji Yichuan had been!"

"Stop talking. Hurry and go back to make the report."

The amazed black armored guards quickly spread the news to all of the little squads, but given their speed...as one might imagine, it would take them at least a day before they were able to reach West Prefecture City.

Ning continued to walk calmly on the surface of the vast waters of Lake Serpentwing.

Huahua....

The head of a large green snake appeared, along with the head of a large black fish. Breaking through the surface of the water, they stared into the distance.

"A human youth?" The two monsters exchanged glances.

Hua!

They both dove into the deeper water, making haste to the watery lair of the Diremonster, Serpentwing.

"Mighty King, mighty King, there is a human youth in the water above." The green serpent monster and the black fish monster both growled out frantically.

"A human youth?" Serpentwing's scaly wings spread out, and his scarlet eyes stared at those two lesser monsters, who were so terrified that they trembled as they nodded.

“But that human youth is standing on the water, just like that Ji Yichuan had done so in the past. The water doesn’t sink down at all.” The green serpent monster said hurriedly, while the black fish monster also nodded. “Right right right.”

“Standing on the water without it sinking at all?”

Serpentwing disappeared into a black mist, then reformed into a black clothed man.

The black clothed man stood there, his slender, narrow eyes filled with suspicion. Serpents were by their very nature cautious. Given that he had also been pursued and often tricked into traps on multiple occasions by the Xiantian experts of the Ji clan, he had long ago become an easily startled creature. Now, a human youth who could walk on water had suddenly come to challenge him. How could he not be suspicious?

“Have you seen him before?” The black clothed man looked at the two lesser monsters.

“Never, never. Before this, we have clearly memorized the appearances of those Xiantian lifeforms surrounding our Serpentwing Lake. This human youth definitely isn’t one of those Xiantian lifeforms.” The green snake monster hurriedly said, and the black fish monster nodded.

The black clothed man nodded. “Then I will go take a look.”

Swoosh!

He stealthily slipped out of his watery lair. Although in his human form Serpentwing wasn’t nearly as fast as when he was in his true form, his true form was simply too enormous. If he appeared at the surface of the water, he would cause an enormous commotion and would definitely be noticed.

“Who is it?” The black clothed man quickly and stealthily lifted his head out of the surface of the water to take a look around him.

He immediately saw that roughly eight or nine kilometers away, there was a fur-clad youth. The youth looked very fine and delicate, but he casually walked atop the surface of the water. The area around the youth was completely barren and empty. There were no other human experts there at all.

“It is him!”

The black clothed man’s narrow eyes instantly became filled with a terrifying, ferocious light.

A murderous look!

A hateful look!

These feelings instantly filled his mind, causing the water around him to begin to tremble with the force of his emotions.

The distant Ji Ning seemed to have sensed him, as he turned to look. Ning instantly saw him. Although Serpentwing was currently in human form, Ning immediately recognized that this was the Diremonster, Serpentwing.

“Serpentwing!” Ning let out an angry shout.

The black clothed man gave Ning a cold, sinister glance, and then sunk down slowly into the depths of the lake.

“Serpentwing.” Ning ran over at high speed over the surface of the water, quickly arriving at that part of the lake. Staring downwards into the depths, he shouted, “Didn’t you want to kill me? Don’t you have a hatred for me which is so deep, it is engraved into your bones? Come out, come out...I am waiting here for you to come kill me.”

Deep within the water.

The narrow eyes of the black clothed man were burning with the flames of rage. He truly was filled with an incomparable desire to fly upwards, attack, and devour the flesh of this Ji Ning.

“I personally killed that big crimson snake.”

“Hahaha, I killed him with a single blow. He really was pathetic!” The voice from above continuously transmitted downwards, further stoking the flames of Serpentwing’s rage.

The black clothed man was trembling slightly, but he managed to suppress the killing urge in his mind. “I can’t be hasty. Can’t be hasty. If I am hasty, I will fall into the Ji clan’s crafty trap. Before this, Poison Dove Ridge and the Ji clan only agreed that I would be restricted from leaving Serpentwing Lake for a century, and that only the highest level members of the clan, the Zifu Disciples, would be restricted from acting. There was no agreement forbidding those Xiantian lifeforms from acting against me.”

Humans and the monsters fought viciously against each other.

However, there were some limits and some restrictions. For example, the true leaders of each side wouldn’t act against and bully the weaker members of each side. That old monster at the Zifu level wouldn’t kill...and the Zifu Disciple of the Ji clan wouldn’t kill either.

After all, the Zifu level experts were the foundation.

Once Zifu experts began to fight each other, once one fell, that would shake the very foundations of a clan. Neither humans nor monsters wanted their foundations to be shaken.

“The area around that Ji Ning is empty. There are no humans there.” The black clothed man’s eyes flashed with a ferocious light. “But why would he come to throw his life away? Most likely, his father, Ji Yichuan, and some other Xiantian lifeforms are nearby, utilizing some sort of concealing formation technique to hide there. Once I come out, I will most likely instantly be attacked en masse.”