

Chapter 96 - The Great Rat King

With a clang, the teeth and horns collided, like a clash of metal.

Boom! The entire cave shook.

The rat daemon pushed Li Qingshan against the rock wall, and his legs plowed two deep tracks in the ground. Even with his strength that he took pride in, he was not the rat daemon's opponent at all. Daemons with inner cores and daemons without inner cores were two completely different things. The ill omen in his heart peaked. He saw the rat daemon's eyes shine with a crafty light as another spike protruded out from the wall, stabbing at the immobilised Li Qingshan.

Xiao An wielded his sword with both hands and swung it at the rat daemon's neck, but its long tail swept him away like a steel whip.

Xuanyue attacked again. Her sharp claws produced four streaks of sharp light. Under the terrified gaze of the rat daemon, she easily pierced through the protective daemon qi around the rat daemon. The previously unstoppable rat daemon was cut to pieces, dying on the spot.

No matter how tough it seemed, it was still puny before Xuan Yue, a Daemon General that had undergone a heavenly tribulation.

Li Qingshan kicked aside the rat daemon's corpse, and the daemon core in his hand no longer moved. He touched the wall behind him, and a part of it had already protruded out. If Xuanyue had acted slightly later, he would have suffered heavy injuries even if he survived.

"You're far too dumb!" Xuanyue evaluated.

"If it weren't for you, why would I have come to a place like this?" In total, Li Qingshan had only been cultivating for half a year so far, while the rat daemon was over a century old at the very least. Before absolute strength, it would never be easy for him to triumph against a stronger opponent.

Just when Xuanyue wanted to refute him, she suddenly sensed something. Her expression changed. "Let's go! We need to change where we stay!"

Li Qingshan did not sense anything, but seeing how stern she was, he immediately grabbed Xiao An and left.

The cave trembled. The entrance that was originally several meters wide seemed to become alive, rapidly retracting together. As such, the cave was sealed off completely, where not even a ray of light could make it in anymore.

Xuanyue said softly, "Withdraw your daemeown qi. Then she concealed herself again.

Li Qingshan withdrew his daemon qi and listened as hard as he could. Sounds appeared from the depths of the cave again.

A huge rat emerged. It was actually standing on two feet. It did not even look at Li Qingshan, yelling out as loudly as it could with a strange voice, "The great rat king has arrived!"

Li Qingshan was dumbfounded. Not only did the fact that the rat could talk surprise him, but how orderly they were surprised him even more.

Soon afterwards, sixteen rats standing on two feet emerged from the depths of the cave as they carried a throne on a shoulder carriage.

On the carriage was a great big fatty. He even wore a glistening crown on his head, just like a king. However, he had a thievish, shrewd appearance, and there was a rat's tail beside him.

Behind him were two female rats who seemed like maidservants, each holding a large fan.

Xuanyue found this hilarious, but Li Qingshan was unable to laugh at all. Having assumed a human form, this fatty was a Daemon General at the very least. And, the daemon qi that the rat daemons carrying the carriage gave off even surpassed the rat daemon from earlier.

The rat king said lazily, "Who has intruded upon my Black Rat mountain and killed my great general Whitefang?!" He completely ignored Li Qingshan who stood over ten feet right in front of him. If it were not for his overly-shrill voice, he did seem rather like a king.

A rat who seemed to be a eunuch cried out, "Great king, it's him!" The rats all said together, "Wise be the king."

As if the rat king had just spotted Li Qingshan, he studied him. "What kind of daemon are you?" He saw Li Qingshan's humanoid appearance and became wary. Normally, only Daemon Generals who had undergone a heavenly tribulation could achieve that.

However, he failed to sense any daemon qi from Li Qingshan at all, so he could not help but become even more careful. The mutilated body of the daemon rat on the ground seemed to prove his strength as well.

Li Qingshan could closely sense the changes in the rat king's expression, and he suddenly understood why Xuanyue made him conceal his daemon qi. He could not help but admire her quick thinking. He said boldly, "I am the Old Daemon of Black Mountain. Your great general Whitefang was far too reckless. He actually launched a sneak attack against me, so I've already killed him. Now that you're blocking the way, do you want a fight to the death against me as well?" He even took a step forward as he said that.

Note: The Old Daemon of Black Mountain refers to a character from a Chinese movie, who was then included in another Chinese movie, the more renowned fantasy-comedy, *A Chinese Odyssey*.

It had to be mentioned that Li Qingshan's stature as a daemon was extremely imposing. His ox horns were like spears, while his sharp claws were like blades.

The rat king shrank back, living up to the simile of as timid as a mouse. If Li Qingshan were a regular daemon, it definitely would have leapt at him and gnawed him to pieces, but he suspected Li Qingshan to be a Daemon General, so it immediately shrank away, giving up on avenging his subordinate. "It's a misunderstanding! A misunderstanding! May I ask which Daemon Commander do you serve?"

Li Qingshan never thought daemons would follow such a strict hierarchy, and they would even be protected by the daemon they served. Xuanyue gently whispered a name into Li Qingshan's ear.

Li Qingshan said immediately, "I serve sir Mo Yu. He has specially sent me to the Boundless mountains to deal with some matters."

The rat king showed deep respect, even leaping off his throne. "So you've come from the Ink sea. You're an envoy of sir Mo Yu. Is it regarding that cat daemon?"

Li Qingshan was surprised inside, but he nodded on the surface. "Yes!"

The rat king said, "Haven't we received orders already? As long as we see it, we will definitely capture that cat daemon. We won't make sir Mo Yu disappointed." Meanwhile, he thought to himself, No wonder he sent this person. He can hide his daemon qi so well, so he is suitable for tracking down someone.

Li Qingshan's eye twitched. No wonder Xuanyue would be so careful deep in the mountains, constantly maintaining her Moon Concealment. As it turned out, it was not just humans. Even daemons were looking for her. As expected, she did not have anyone to rely on at all in the Green province. The dangers of this mission had completely exceeded what he originally imagined.

If she revealed herself right now and engaged in a chaotic battle, she would alarm all of the daemons in the Boundless mountains even if she were triumphant. They would all hunt her down, which would result in her escape attempt ending in complete failure.

Li Qingshan became more careful inside. He casually slighted him. "How ironic. You're a rat, and she's a cat. Aren't you afraid of being eaten?"

Xuanyue pinched Li Qingshan from behind. Why would I eat something so dirty?!

The rat king said to the eunuch rat who was responsible for announcing his presence. "Tell me, what is this king's nickname?"

The eunuch rat said, "The Cat-eating Mouse!" All of the other rats said again, "Wise be the king!"

Xuanyue gritted her teeth angrily as she made a full twist with her pinch of Li Qingshan's back.

The rat king laughed complacently. He saw Li Qingshan's face twist. "What's wrong?"

Li Qingshan gritted his teeth. "Nothing! Keep an eye out. I have more important matters to attend to, so I'll be taking my leave."

The rat king waved his hand, and the cave returned back to normal, allowing sunlight to pour in.

Li Qingshan turned around and left. The rat king stroked his whiskers. "Why do I feel like something is off? This is the Black Rat mountain, so shouldn't I be the Old Daemon of Black Mountain?"

The rats cried out, "Wise be the king!"

Li Qingshan left the Black Rat mountain and travelled several dozen more kilometers.

Xuanyue said, "I'll have those group of damned rats fried in oil sooner or later!"

Li Qingshan growled, "Get off me!"