

I am a Primitive Man #Chapter 12: Food Crisis - Read I am a Primitive Man Chapter 12: Food Crisis

Han Cheng now had an additional task. Peeling off the charred skin from his body whenever he had the chance.

There was an unexpectedly satisfying feeling, more exhilarating than peeling off dead skin after a sunburn.

The skin revealed after peeling off the charred layer was pink, but it would gradually return to normal after a short time.

Han Cheng had already removed more than half of the charred skin from his face, but he had not touched the eyebrows and the area above them.

He worried that revealing these differences in his appearance would make him stand out among the tribe members and lead to rejection.

After days of internal struggle, Han Cheng finally decided to take action on his face.

He would have to face this problem sooner or later, so he might as well unveil it now rather than hesitating.

Considering the tribe's reaction to his presence so far, even if they discovered the difference in his appearance, it shouldn't provoke an overly intense reaction.

As he slowly peeled off the charred skin, Han Cheng's heart couldn't help but tighten.

Witnessing Han Cheng's actions, the shaman became curious. He stood up from the fur he was sitting on and walked over to Han Cheng, who had already removed all the charred skin from his face.

Upon seeing Han Cheng for the first time, the shaman revealed a surprised expression.

Han Cheng's heart tightened even more; it seemed that the differences in his appearance had been noticed.

He anxiously looked at the shaman, waiting for his next move.

In this tribe, the shaman's status was even higher than the leader's.

"You, good-looking," the shaman said, smiling at Han Cheng.

He spoke in their tribal language, but Han Cheng could now understand his words.

Seeing the shaman's reaction, Han Cheng's tightly held heart finally relaxed. He smiled back and replied in the tribal language, "Shaman, good-looking."

Well, Han Cheng was no longer mute. As he gradually improved, he was able to speak after pulling out a long string of dead skin from his throat.

After hearing Han Cheng's words, the shaman's smile intensified. He reached out and gently patted Han Cheng's head with some indulgence. Then, he called over the senior brother to come and see the completely new face of Han Cheng.

The senior brother's attitude towards Han Cheng was quite good. Although he found it strange that such a big thing had become such a small person, he could accept Han Cheng's presence.

This was partly because he had witnessed the miraculous scene when Han Cheng descended and partly because of the influence of the shaman, who had taken good care of Han Cheng.

Especially when Han Cheng removed the charred skin from his lower body, revealing a small birdie reminiscent of the pre-liberation era, the senior brother became even more willing to accept Han Cheng.

After all, in this era, a man was more useful to the tribe than a woman in hunting and external conflicts.

Of course, due to the dangerous nature of their work, the mortality rate of men was much higher than that of women.

This was also the main reason why, including the shaman and the lame primitive man, there were only eleven adult men, while there were as many as twenty-eight adult women in the tribe.

Suddenly seeing Han Cheng's face, the senior brother was just as surprised as the shaman. After carefully observing Han Cheng, he also said the same words as the shaman, "You, good-looking."

Han Cheng wanted to say that the senior brother was even better looking, but the tribal language was not rich, and there was no such vocabulary as "senior brother," so he could only say, "You, good-looking."

Because of Han Cheng's transformation and the sudden appearance of a half-grown man in the tribe, the joy did not last too long.

This was because a food crisis emerged in the tribe.

The consequences of someone seizing the orchard where they used to gather food began to show during the harsh winter.

Although the senior brother and others tried their best to save and store food, reducing the daily supply had little effect.

Because the meat they had stored had already been completely consumed by now.

Without the meat buffer to stave off hunger, relying solely on fruits proved insufficient. Moreover, the supply of fruits was running low, and at the current rate, they could only sustain themselves for another five or six days, after which the tribe would face complete famine.

Complicating matters was that some fruits had started to rot due to the cold weather and prolonged storage, worsening the already dire situation.

The atmosphere inside the cave, initially relaxed and lazy, gradually became tense and uneasy. Among the tribe members, the most anxious were the shaman and the senior brother, the tribe leaders.

They enjoyed certain privileges compared to the common members, but their responsibilities were also greater. The shaman and the senior brother had internal discussions on addressing the tribe's crisis.

At this point, there were no perfect solutions; it was about finding ways to increase resources and reduce consumption. The result of their discussion was to reduce the food supply to the tribe members, excluding the shaman, two elderly individuals, the lame primitive man, and half of the women who didn't need to work. This was an attempt to save some food.

Meanwhile, the senior brother took the initiative to lead a group to hunt in the harsh winter, trying to secure additional food for the tribe. Hunting in winter was extremely risky, with beasts either hibernating or becoming more ferocious due to hunger. Additionally, the pervasive cold and persistent snow severely threatened the primitive people with minimal clothing.

Despite the risks, they had no choice. If everyone stayed warm in the cave and refused to venture out, the tribe would face famine.

During these critical times, Han Cheng suddenly realizes he has been wrong. The primitive era was more brutal than the future he came from.

Even though these people could express joy from having three meals a day, achieving this simple goal required them to put in maximum effort, even risking their lives.

At this moment, Han Cheng truly understood the harshness of survival in this primitive era, where every meal was earned through relentless struggle and sometimes life-threatening efforts.

Listening to the discussions between the Shaman and the senior brother, Han Cheng couldn't help but feel perplexed. There was a small river near the cave, teeming with fish. Why go out into the wilderness to hunt when they could simply catch fish in the river?

When he raised this question, the senior brother shook his head and said, "Fish, gone."

"Gone?"

Han Cheng was puzzled. How could the fish disappear so suddenly? Could these fish be migratory, moving to another place for the winter?

Unable to understand the situation fully, Han Cheng voiced his confusion. However, the senior brother simply shook his head and reiterated, "Gone."

Accepting the explanation, Han Cheng couldn't help but feel that the harshness of survival in this era was beyond his initial comprehension. The uncertainty of resources and the struggle for survival were much more challenging than he had initially thought.

In this primitive world, people had to strive and fight for every morsel of food, making him realize that survival was never easy, regardless of the era.

The atmosphere in the cave seemed somewhat solemn. Led by the senior brother, wrapped in as much fur as possible, the group bowed to the shaman before heading into the vast snow.

As they trudged through the snowy terrain, the group gradually became tiny dots, obscured by the dense trees, disappearing. Due to the cave's opening, the temperature dropped rapidly, causing some children to shiver.

The shaman instructed a few women left in the cave to seal the entrance. Returning to his usual spot, the shaman appeared even more contemplative.

Han Cheng stood silently on the side, feeling the severity of the impending food crisis. Having just arrived and already hungry for two days and nights, he deeply understood the terrifying sensation of hunger. The burning feeling in the stomach was unbearable, worse than any torture.

It was this intense hunger that weighed heavily on his mood.

After silence, the shaman stood up and began to busy himself in the cave. He took out an item adorned with colorful bird feathers resembling a crown, placing it on his head alongside a feathered crown. These were then offered, along with the bone staff, in front of a stone resembling a totem pole.

Using a bone knife, the shaman cut open the palm of his left hand and smeared the flowing blood on his face. After instructing Han Cheng to leave the cave, the shaman dripped his blood onto the ground before the totem pole, uttering words incomprehensible to Han Cheng.

Subsequently, the shaman's actions became even more peculiar. He danced around, occasionally waving the white bone staff.

Although Han Cheng had never witnessed such a ceremony before, he understood that the shaman was performing a ritual, communicating with their sky god, and praying for blessings and relief from calamities.

After observing the shaman's rustic dance, Han Cheng wrapped himself in two more layers of animal hides, took a rudimentary fishing spear used by the tribe, and headed towards the cave entrance.

Now a tribe member, Han Cheng felt the urgency of the food crisis. However, being too young to join the hunting party with the elder brother, he had to find other ways to contribute to the tribe. He wanted to check the nearby river to see any fish.

Concerning the elder brother's claim that there were no more fish, Han Cheng had doubts. Judging by the distinct seasons and the appearance of the tribe members with their black eyes, black hair, and yellow skin, he could reasonably conclude that he was still in the land that haunted his dreams.

In his memories, the rivers in that land did not have many fish migrating seasonally like birds. However, given the several thousand or even tens of thousands of years' time difference from his original era, encountering different situations was expected.

Despite this, he wanted to investigate for himself.

"Where are you going?" The limp-legged primitive man asked in a hushed voice, afraid to disturb the shaman communicating with the god.

"I'm going outside," Han Cheng replied.

He pointed at the fish spear in Han Cheng's hand, questioning why he was taking it outside.

Han Cheng said, "Fish, stab fish."

The primitive man looked at him as if he were a fool. Even three or four-year-old kids in the tribe knew that there were no fish at this time. This seemingly shrewd guy said he wanted to catch fish. This... was something.

"No fish," he warned Han Cheng with a concerned expression. Despite the overpowering stench when Han Cheng defecated last time, he couldn't help but try to remind him to avoid unnecessary exposure to the cold.

Han Cheng looked at the man and suddenly realized a problem. Given the current temperature, the river would likely have frozen over. This wouldn't have been a problem for him in the past, but now, breaking the ice would be challenging.

The guy before him seemed like a good candidate for hard labor.

Han Cheng decided to deceive him.

Although his leg was lame, he could still walk, albeit very slowly. However, for primitive people, this was already a severe issue. Running slowly meant there was no way to chase after wild beasts, and when being chased by wild beasts, there was no way to escape. Running could be considered an indispensable condition for survival in this era.

Shaking his head, Han Cheng said, "Fish, not gone. Fish, hiding."

He gestured with his hands while saying this.

The primitive man didn't believe Han Cheng's words and stubbornly insisted, "No fish."

Shaking his head, he turned around and pointed to the cave's depths where the shaman was conducting a ritual. His meaning was that this information came from the shaman.

Han Cheng shook his head again. "Fish, not gone. Fish, still here."

He pointed to the sky and then to his head, indicating that the sky god had told him.

The primitive man widened his eyes, seemingly stunned by Han Cheng's expression. He somewhat believed it because, firstly, no one in the tribe dared to joke about the sky god. Secondly, Han Cheng's origin was strange. Falling directly from the sky, he had never heard of anyone who could ascend to the heavens, let alone communicate with the sky god.

He looked hesitant as he stared at Han Cheng, slowly standing up.

"Fish, still here," Han Cheng repeated.

He then told him that they wouldn't go hungry once they found the fish anymore. Under the dual attack of the god and Han Cheng's promise of not going hungry, the hesitant man finally agrees to join Han Cheng in catching fish for the tribe.

The entrance to the cave was opened, and Han Cheng, holding a fish spear, and the lame primitive man, carrying a stone for smashing, walked out of the cave. The women left the cave, watched these two dreamers leave, and sealed the entrance.

Taking a stone from the cave when going outside was necessary. Otherwise, picking up a stone from the ground in the ice and snow would be difficult. The biting cold seeped through the gaps in the animal hides, causing Han Cheng to shiver involuntarily. He now strongly felt the urge to return to the cave and sew some clothes.

Wrapping animal hides crudely around his body and tying them with tough grass was uncomfortably inadequate.

Braving the cold and stepping on snow, they walked towards the river. Just as they reached the riverbank, the lame man began to regret it. He shouldn't have listened to this guy and followed him outside. There was no fish here.

"跛" (Bǒ), meaning "Lame," was the name Han Cheng silently gave to the lame primitive man, as it was inconvenient without a name.