

Primitive 28

Chapter 28: Pottery firing without building an earthen kiln

The next day, Senior Brother did not lead the group for hunting after the meal as usual. Instead, he followed Han Cheng, the seven or eight children, and Lame towards the small river. Accompanying them were Shaman, as well as other people from the tribe who were curious about what magical items Divine Child had created.

After a night, these clay embryos had dried considerably. The surface water had evaporated, and with a gentle touch, one could feel that these clay embryos were much harder than the previous day.

Shaman, looking at this area, revealed a thoughtful expression. If these things were sturdy enough, they could hold many items. As Divine Child mentioned, they were far better than stone bowls or basins.

However, the key was that these things were made of clay. How could they possibly be sturdy?

The shaman was puzzled. Even with the knowledge passed down through generations of shamans, he couldn't understand how Divine Child can make these clay items solid.

Shaman is intelligent. He knew the Divine Child also knows mud is not sturdy. Since Divine Child knew this and still continued to do it, he must have a way to make them solid.

"Use fire, burn them," Han Cheng said in Mandarin.

However, Shaman and Senior Brother were even more confused after hearing this method. In their understanding, fire could burn and destroy many things. Shouldn't burning these mud items turn them into ash?

Communication became difficult at this point because explaining these concepts was too cumbersome.

Han Cheng could only resort to his usual method, attributing everything to the will of the gods, and he wouldn't provide much explanation. He would demonstrate the final results, saving a lot of unnecessary words.

Senior Brother, who had become even more confused after this visit, took the bewildered group to hunt, while Han Cheng continued to make clay embryos with the children inside the cave.

Shaman stayed and observed Han Cheng and the tribe's youngsters playing with clay. After understanding the process to some extent, the shaman also joined the fun.

On the third day, the clay embryos made on the first day had dried halfway. Looking at the over fifty clay embryos laid out on the ground, Han Cheng temporarily stopped making more. Instead, he led the people to collect dry grass, fallen leaves, and small twigs.

As it was spring, and these people did not have the habit of setting fire on the slopes, there was a thick layer of dry grass on the ground.

After hearing that their handmade items could be made sturdy through burning, these youngsters were eager to participate in the process. They worked energetically, and soon, a large pile of dry grass and small wood was collected in the vicinity.

By the afternoon of the fourth day, the first batch of clay embryos had dried almost completely. Due to weather conditions, the rest were intact apart from three that were cracked and discarded. Han Cheng breathed a sigh of relief, considering it a good start.

Han Cheng threw away the three damaged ones and then marked out an area of about two square meters. He had the people dig about thirty centimeters deep, and then he covered it with a layer of dry grass.

With the help of Senior Brother and others who came to see what was happening, the clay embryos made on the first day were carefully placed on top of the dry grass, neatly arranged with about five centimeters of space between each one.

Following Han Cheng's demonstration, everyone filled the gaps between the clay embryos with the dry grass and twigs collected the previous day, pressing them down by hand to compact them. Then, they further crushed the dry grass, mainly using sturdy stalks, to cover the clay embryos. Each layer was about ten centimeters high. They pressed it down with their hands and continued layering until the height exceeded one meter, covering the large jar made by Hei Wa. They stopped there.

At this point, all the pottery was covered with crushed dry grass, completely concealing them.

When everyone, including Shaman, thought they could start the fire, Han Cheng gave an unexpected command.

Instead of lighting the fire, Han Cheng instructed them to fetch water from the river and wet the loose soil that had been dug up, mixing it with the clay. Unlike the relatively hard clay used to make the clay embryos, according to Han Cheng's request, this clay mixture was softer referred to as slurry.

Yes, Hei Wa and the others were now playing with slurry.

Under the gaze of the onlookers, Han Cheng scooped up the slurry and pasted it onto the pile of dry grass, covering it from top to bottom. All the grass had to be completely sealed wherever he went, and the grass should not be visible from the outside.

After a few days of playing with clay, Hei Wa and the others had become familiar with it. Following Han Cheng's demonstration and orders, they began imitating him, applying slurry to the pile of dry grass from different angles.

Han Cheng did it for the bottom of the grass pile instead of letting Hei Wa and the others do it. He left four square openings, about twenty centimeters on different sides, without sealing them with slurry.

"Bring the fire over," Han Cheng ordered, and without him specifying, Sandy, who had been watching, quickly ran to the cave.

Although Sandy didn't understand why Divine Child was doing this, he could still sense the difference in the orderly process.

The fire arrived.

Han Cheng took the burning logs from Sandy and placed them near the four openings he had left. He lit them one by one. Since they had used specially crushed dry grass and leaves for filling and

they had pressed it down firmly, these fires did not burn quickly. They didn't even produce a strong flame.

Especially after ensuring that the fires wouldn't go out, Han Cheng used slurry to seal the four ignition points separately, leaving a hole with a diameter of less than half a centimeter for each to allow ventilation. As a result, the flames inside burned even more slowly.

Relieved, Han Cheng turned to Shaman, Senior Brother, and the others, stating that it would take three days to see the results.

This made the impatient crowd a bit anxious.

However, there was nothing they could do. After staying there for a while and realizing they couldn't see the results in the short term, Senior Brother, eager to know the outcome, took the hunting team out for a hunt.

As the spring ice melted, catching fish was not as easy as in winter. Hunting wild animals became the primary source of food.

Shaman stayed behind with Han Cheng and the others.

After playing around for a while, at Han Cheng's call, the group of primitive youngsters started making clay embryos again.

However, unlike the previous days when they were focused, today they seemed a bit distracted. They occasionally glanced at the pile of clay-covered firewood, hoping for something magical to happen. They and even Han Cheng looked at it occasionally, sometimes crawling on the ground to check if the fire inside had gone out.

After all, this was Han Cheng's first time making pottery. He had only watched a video once. Even in his mind, whether it would succeed on the first attempt was uncertain.