

## Primitive 41

Chapter 41: Salt Mountain, deer, making salt

The delicious taste of salt lingered in the memory of every person in the tribe. After eating food seasoned with salt, even the previously flavorful grilled meat and fish without salt seemed difficult to swallow.

Due to a successful hunt the previous day, the Eldest Senior Brother and others, armed with tools, joined Han Cheng on the way to Salt Mountain today.

Salt Mountain was the name Han Cheng gave to the salt mine.

Without a name, things were inconvenient.

On the way to Salt Mountain, they passed where Han Cheng discovered rapeseed. The rapeseed flowers were still vibrant, although some had only left behind empty stems without flowers.

Pointing at these yellow flowers, Han Cheng informed the people in the tribe that this was another good thing he had discovered, warning them not to step on it.

Because they were yearning for the deliciousness of salt, the wild grass mentioned by the Divine Child did not receive enough attention from them. After all, they encountered many wild plants daily and didn't find this flowering weed particularly remarkable.

Following the marks he remembered from yesterday, Han Cheng led the people to the east.

Luckily, he led the tribe to the location of Salt Mountain. Han Cheng didn't face such misfortune unlike the unfortunate fisherman in the Peach Blossom Spring story, who became lost despite marking the path everywhere. In this place, there was only a group of deer lazing around, and unlike the people in Peach Blossom Spring, deer wouldn't change landmarks and track signs.

The deer, led by their leader, were leisurely basking in the sun, nibbling on grass, and occasionally licking the rocks with tongues.

Upon seeing this large group of deer, the eyes of the Eldest Senior Brother and the others accustomed to hunting gleamed. Without being instructed by the Eldest Senior Brother, they wielded their weapons, preparing to launch an attack on the deer.

Han Cheng quickly stopped them.

He had his thoughts about this group of deer.

Han Cheng conversed with the Eldest Senior brother and ordered everyone not to disturb the deers.

Afterward, he led the reluctant group of people a considerable distance to the south, maintaining a distance of about a hundred meters from the deer, observing each other without disturbing them.

At the beginning, the deer lord and his group were somewhat wary of the unexpected guests. However, when they found that the leader was the two-legged creature that had been bullied by them yesterday and the others were also two-legged creatures walking on two legs, and these creatures did not approach them, they gradually relaxed.

After calming itself, the deer lord even walked elegantly, displaying a royal demeanor. It strolled toward the two-legged creatures and practiced tongue movements against the rock in front of them.

Han Cheng quickly stopped the Eldest Senior Brother and others eager to hunt. He picked some rapeseed that he had pulled from the roadside grass and handed it to the deer lord, who was exuding an air of majesty.

These were things he had thought about and specially prepared for today.

Originally, he planned to try approaching the deer if they were still here. However, before he could take action, the deer lord, who had seen the world, had come over to collect protection fees.

Facing the rapeseed handed over by Han Cheng, the deer lord did not hesitate to open his mouth and eat.

After eating, seemingly satisfied with Han Cheng's well-behaved actions, the deer patriarch lifted its head high, showing a proud and triumphant appearance, then walked back to its herd with an elegant stride.

With the addition of strong individuals like Eldest Senior brother, who often engages in combat with wild beasts, smashing rocks for salt becomes much faster.

The large chunks of salt are carried away directly, while the smaller pieces are stored in animal skins to be used later for wrapping fruits in the autumn.

Since the salt mountain is about ten miles away from the tribe, there is concern about the safety of the round trip. Therefore, when transporting the rock salt to the tribe, they don't go individually. Instead, they wait until enough rock salt is smashed for half the group and then set out together, much like when they transported fruits to the tribe in the autumn.

All these efforts have been accumulated over a long period of living.

Although carrying the salt by hand and on the shoulders is slow, there is no other option since no efficient tools are available at the moment.

However, after a day of hard work, a pile of various-sized rock salt has been gathered near the small river not far from the pottery area. There is at least more than a thousand pounds.

This is not an exaggeration. Rock salt is not too hard to break when it falls from the mountainside. Additionally, seven or eight semi-grown children are participating in labor today.

Even though it's not much, transporting over a thousand pounds of rock salt in a day with so many people is no small feat.

There is no salt production. All efforts are focused on transporting rock salt.

It's difficult for them to gather when Eldest Senior Brother and his team don't need to go hunting.

Making salt is a task that Han Cheng and some children in the tribe, as well as the Lamé and a few women who are either physically weak, pregnant, or have children to take care of, can handle.

However, transporting rock salt from the mountain seven or eight miles away is challenging for the elderly, weak, women, and children.

On the second day, the Eldest Senior Brother led the team to continue hunting while Han Cheng took the pottery maker elderlies to start salt production.

The Eldest Senior Brother and the others also wanted to stay, as they were keenly interested in extracting delicious salt from the rocks.

However, if they don't go hunting, the tribe will have no food tomorrow, so they have to go hunting.

Next to the small river, the bustling salt production business is in progress, with Han Cheng assigning tasks based on everyone's strengths.

Those with greater strength, such as Heiwa and the Lame, are responsible for smashing large rocks into small pieces and then further into powder.

Several women with less strength are responsible for using basins, dry grass, and charcoal to filter the mined salt.

Xiao Mei, Xiao Li, and others with even less strength are responsible for the fire and boiling the salt.

Han Cheng acts as a technical guide on the side, extracting the final salt from the pottery jar, crushing it into pieces, and placing it in jars.

Moving the salt production site to the small river is necessary because salt production requires considerable water, and the space needed is large. If everything is done in the cave, which is already damp, it will become uninhabitable.

When it comes to labor, there is no rest, and everyone is exhausted after a day.

However, smiles appear on everyone's faces when they see the half-jar of delicious salt. This tasty salt makes the exhaustion worthwhile, even if they work a bit harder.