

Primitive 461

Chapter 463: Let's watch the meteor shower together!

The night was calm and serene, with a gentle breeze rustling the bamboo, producing a soothing "rustling" sound.

The sky was clear, with a bright moon hanging high and scattered stars dotting the surrounding darkness.

The silver moonlight spilled like liquid mercury, making everything around seem distant and hazy, leaving only dark silhouettes.

In the direction of the small river, faint green fireflies fluttered among the grass, daringly competing with the bright moon.

White lines meandered in the rice field outside the courtyard wall.

As the wind blew, the rice plants, already up to the knees, swayed. The waves made these lines, which were not very wide to begin with, appear even more indistinct and elusive.

Under the night sky, Han Cheng and Bai Xue stood on the wall of the Green Sparrow tribe, feeling the coolness of the night and experiencing a unique emotion as they slowly gazed at the tribe's surroundings.

The dawn, the evening mist, and the summer moonlit nights always evoke something deep within, pulling one into a comfortable but inexpressible feeling.

This was the night of June 13th, the sixth year of the Green Sparrow tribe. Han Cheng, with Bai Xue, climbed the tribe's wall to enjoy the cool air and savor this unique tranquility.

There were more than just the two of them on the wall. In addition to the guards, others had climbed up to enjoy the coolness.

However, far fewer people were on the wall than inside the courtyard.

With summer's arrival, the heat had enveloped the earth. This brief moment of coolness after dinner was a rare leisure time for everyone.

In the rice field, the lines that seemed somewhat pale and serpentine against the backdrop of the surrounding rice resulted from the tribe's effort over the past couple of months.

These were small, scattered stone paths.

The construction of these stone paths in the fields did not damage the growing rice.

When the fields were cleared and prepared, bunds had been left in the fields.

The stone paths were laid along these bunds.

Of course, not all bunds were paved with stone paths; instead, they were constructed at suitable locations while considering the fields.

It was foreseeable that these stone paths would be highly beneficial for the fields.

Once completed, the greatest convenience was not for people but for the Green Sparrow tribe's wheelbarrows.

With these paths, whether transporting manure to the fields or moving harvested crops, the advantages of the wheelbarrows—large capacity and ease of use—could be fully utilized.

This is infrastructure!

Under the moonlight, Han Cheng admired the bright, elusive paths and reflected on the effort it took to build them, which ultimately brought significant convenience.

It was as if the heavens agreed with Han Cheng's reflection. Soon after his thoughts, a bright meteor streaked across the night sky from south to north before falling.

The red tail light momentarily brightened the night, even outshining the moon!

"Brother Cheng, what is that?" Bai Xue asked, her mouth and eyes wide with curiosity and a hint of fear as she pulled Han Cheng's hand.

"That's a shooting star. Make a wish quickly; they say it's very effective."

"What is making a wish?"

"Making a wish is when you express a desire for something you want."

"Then... I want my belly to get big soon..."

Understanding what making a wish meant, Bai Xue quickly voiced her wish without hesitation.

Han Cheng's face twitched. Does she want to have a child right now? I'm not ready to be a father yet!

"Okay, since you've said your wish out loud, it won't come true!"

Han Cheng, who wasn't ready to become a father just yet, said excitedly to Bai Xue, who looked disappointed.

Bai Xue's face immediately fell.

Han Cheng's triumphant smile barely had a chance to appear before another bright light streaked from south to north across the sky.

"Brother Cheng, another shooting star!"

Bai Xue grabbed Han Cheng's arm excitedly and shook it.

"I want to..."

She shook Han Cheng's arm several times and quickly let go to make her wish. After starting to speak, she suddenly remembered Han Cheng's earlier words and quickly shut up, silently wishing for a child with him.

Seeing Bai Xue's excitement and the direction of the falling meteor, Han Cheng felt a sense of helplessness. It seemed the heavens were deliberately making things difficult for him!

"Shooting star!"

As Han Cheng thought this, Bai Xue's voice of joy rang out again.

This time, it wasn't just a single star; it was like a fireworks display, with many shooting stars crossing the sky from south to north.

The brilliant meteors streaked across the night sky, emitting enchanting light. Bai Xue tightly held Han Cheng's hand, watching the dazzling shooting stars with a mixture of shock and awe.

Han Cheng also looked at the continuous display of light, feeling a sense of wonder. This was a meteor shower!

In later years, he had seen many brilliant fireworks, but they were still nothing compared to the meteor shower's long, trailing lights.

As he marveled at this rare meteor shower, the tribe behind him suddenly erupted into chaos.

Terrified shouts and people were running into their homes.

This unprecedented phenomenon had caused fear among them.

Han Cheng sighed, feeling a bit helpless. It seemed he couldn't enjoy a meteor shower in peace.

"Quiet down!"

"Quiet down!"

Han Cheng turned and shouted into the now chaotic courtyard.

The frightened Green Sparrow tribe members recognized the voice of the "God Child" and felt their fear ease as if a ray of sunlight had pierced through the gloom.

Finding their source of reassurance, the panicked tribe members' fear diminished significantly.

They instinctively gathered in front of Han Cheng on the wall.

"This is not a disaster and won't bring us misfortune. It is a sign from the gods, showing us their concern for our hardships..."

Standing on the wall, Han Cheng addressed the tribe with his improvised words.

At this moment, the best strategy was to invoke the gods, even if only fictitiously.

The words "Divine Child" were naturally believed by the Green Sparrow tribe.

They stood in front of the wall, looking up at Han Cheng.

The spectacular meteor shower streaked across the sky behind Han Cheng, making him appear even more mysterious and majestic.

It indeed seemed like the gods had descended.

This scene was deeply engraved in the minds of the Green Sparrow tribe, and for a long time afterward, people spoke of that night and the miraculous scene.

Chapter 464: The Horrifying loud bang and flashes

Calming everyone down, Han Cheng turned to continue watching the rare meteor shower, filled with deep emotions.

He had thought that he would never see fireworks again once he arrived here. To his surprise, the heavens had sent a meteor shower even more brilliant than fireworks.

It seemed the heavens were being quite generous with him.

The meteor shower lasted for quite a while, around ten minutes or so.

After the prominent display of the meteor shower passed and only a few meteors remained, Han Cheng looked to the side and saw that, at some point, Bai Xue had closed her eyes, her lips moving slightly—making a wish.

Han Cheng's face twitched. Without asking, he could guess what Bai Xue was wishing for.

Han Cheng wished for a meteor shower for a child but didn't know how to express his feelings about this.

“Brother Cheng!”

Opening her eyes, Bai Xue saw Han Cheng looking at her and excitedly called out like a little kitten.

Han Cheng sniffed slightly. It seemed he would have to be more cautious in the future.

The meteor shower, Han Cheng's words during it, and the emotionally stirring scene made the people of the Green Sparrow Tribe extremely excited.

For a moment, no one felt like sleeping; instead, they all discussed the unforgettable scene with great excitement.

The meteor shower streaked across the sky, illuminating the night. This awe-inspiring sight was not only witnessed by the Green Sparrow Tribe.

Such a phenomenon shocked many tribes living across this vast land!

Under the night sky, a low, Square-shaped wall surrounded an opening glowing with fire.

Though the wall was low, it was still a step up from having no wall at all, offering some comfort to those within.

A group of panicked individuals had gathered in this enclosed space, shouting wildly with fear.

These people were among the braver members of the tribe, but the rest of the tribe had retreated into the cave, too afraid to move.

The frightened cries of children only added to the night's unease.

Shu Pi, holding a bow, had a much more refined weapon now than the hastily made one he had crafted when he was first expelled from the tribe.

Even though he was outside, his body trembling uncontrollably behind the wall, he was still overwhelmed by the terrifying scene of so many flames flying across the sky above them!

If some of those flames had fallen, their tribe would have been doomed!

Shu Pi wouldn't have been so scared if it were wild animals or other enemies, but the sight of those fiery masses coming from the sky genuinely terrified him.

It gave him a sense of helplessness.

After waiting for a while and seeing no more fire in the sky, Shu Pi, still trembling, suddenly stood up, raising his bow high and shouting in celebration and pride.

The sounds of his cheers continued, and soon, others holding weapons behind the low wall joined in the howling.

Hearing the cheering from outside, those hiding in the cave felt less frightened. Some bolder individuals tentatively ventured out from the cave and joined the cheering crowd, with more people emerging from inside...

Their lack of fear did not mean that others were not afraid.

To the north of Shu Pi's tribe, about a hundred miles away, another tribe was hiding in their cave, peering out through the gaps in the stone slabs with terror.

Fear had spread throughout the entire tribe. Even the bravest among them clung to their weapons, trembling with fright.

For them, tonight was nothing short of a disaster.

While they were either sleeping or humming tunes in their cave, a tremendous roar suddenly erupted from outside. It was louder than summer thunder.

The roar paralyzed the cave inhabitants. Some looked through the gaps in the cave entrance and saw flames flickering at night near the cave.

If that had been the only occurrence, perhaps their fear would have been more manageable. But the roaring continued, accompanied by terrifying firelight.

The cave suddenly shook during this ordeal, and small stones fell from above, intensifying their already extreme fear.

They huddled together, shaking uncontrollably.

In the face of natural disasters, humanity often seems incredibly insignificant.

Under their fearful gaze, the flames continued burning for a long time before gradually dying.

This provided some comfort to those in the cave, but no one dared venture outside to see what had actually happened.

What they could do was make the fire inside the cave burn brighter to bolster their courage.

That night, many people in the stricken tribe stayed awake, unable to sleep.

The idea of relocating the tribe, leaving this terrifying place, began to take root in many minds.

The long night finally passed in this anxious state, and dawn broke.

Compared to the mysterious and frightening darkness, daylight always provided some courage.

However, it seemed not enough. The cave of the tribe remained tightly closed.

Behind the stone slab, someone was crouched, peering out through the gap.

After a long while, someone who seemed to be the leader finally mustered enough courage.

He slowly moved the stone slab blocking the cave entrance, gripped his weapon tightly, and cautiously stepped out to examine the area. Seeing nothing unusual, he cautiously stepped out of the cave.

Nevertheless, he was prepared to retreat into the cave at any moment.

He looked toward the front side of the cave, not too far from the entrance, where a large area of blackened ground lay.

That was the mark left by the fire.

He stared at it for a while, and seeing no movement, his courage gradually increased.

He picked up a stone in front of the cave, gripped it tightly, and threw it toward the ash-covered area.

When the stone was thrown, he quickly retreated into the cave.

Clutching his weapon, he and the others anxiously watched the direction of the throw.

The stone traveled a short distance through the air, lost momentum, and fell to the ground, rolling a bit before stopping.

It landed some distance away from the ash-covered area.

Everyone held their weapons tightly inside the cave, staring fixedly at the ashes, fearful that something might suddenly leap out from there..

Chapter 465: Meteorite Iron

When the people inside the cave quieted, a deathly silence fell over the surroundings.

The birds and small animals had fled in panic the night before, leaving this eerie place behind.

After a while of silence, the people in the cave grew bolder. This time, in addition to the leader, two others joined him in leaving the cave.

Under the watchful and tense eyes of those inside, they reached the spot where the stone had fallen and picked it up to hurl it again.

After throwing the stone, they ran back as before, but they didn't go straight into the cave this time. Instead, they stood a short distance away, nervously observing...

Through repeated cautious advancements, more people gradually emerged from the cave. Eventually, the entire tribe reached the edge of the ashes.

They approached with a mix of fear and anxiety.

This area, which had once been relatively flat, was now dotted with large and small pits.

The larger ones were deep enough to bury a person standing upright, while the smaller ones resembled the marks left by someone sitting on soft sand.

The pits and the surrounding ground had been upheaved, with cracked earth that looked terrifying.

Black stones were visible in some pits, while others were buried deeper, having been driven directly into the ground.

After standing there for a while, the leader spoke up. After a brief hesitation, the people hurriedly retreated, keeping a safe distance.

Only the leader and a few others remained near the ashes.

Seeing that the others had backed off, the leader took a deep breath and issued a command.

Together, they hurled the stones they held into the pits and at the black stones within them.

Once the stones were thrown, they quickly turned and ran back.

After a tense and silent wait, they returned to the edge of the ashes.

The stones they had thrown lay quietly in the pits, with one even striking a black stone directly!

This result encouraged them even further.

After waiting a while, someone cautiously ventured into the ashes, while others stood guard with weapons, watching the person and their surroundings intently, fearful of any sudden danger.

The area remained deathly quiet. The person walked through the ashes and reached the nearest pit.

Inside was a black stone, not particularly large.

Standing at the edge, under everyone's tense gaze, the person carefully prodded the partially buried stone with a wooden spear.

The leader lifted a fist-sized black stone into the air, one he had just dug out of the ground. It was heavier than any stone he had ever seen.

He held it up and shouted triumphantly to those around him, showing off his strength.

The others cheered, for they wouldn't have to relocate; they could continue living on this familiar land.

The leader then carefully tossed the heavy black stone aside and led the group to hunt.

That black stone was useless to him because it was too heavy to be thrown effectively...

Life in the tribe gradually returned to normal, though they still harbored some fear of the ashes and the black stones that had come with the loud noises and fire.

As days passed, the strange phenomena in that area never reoccurred, and the tribe's people grew increasingly brave, venturing there more often.

One day, when most adults had left the cave to hunt, a mischievous young boy wandered away and found himself at the site.

He rummaged around and found a small black stone. Unlike the others, it had a sharp, angular edge, probably caused by colliding with other stones as it fell.

The boy ran his hand over the stone, pressing down too hard. The sharp edge cut his hand, causing him to drop the stone in fear and dash back to the cave. Once inside, he clutched his bleeding finger and stared fearfully back at the uneven ground where he had found the stone.

The small black stone, now discarded, lay silently on the ground, exposed to the elements just like the others...

Later, the hunting party returned to the cave. Although they hadn't caught any live prey, they found a dead creature, unlike anything they had seen before. Nevertheless, they knew it was edible.

As soon as the creature was laid down, someone grabbed a stone knife to skin it. However, the creature's hide was exceptionally tough, and despite his efforts, the man couldn't cut through it.

The leader, growing impatient with hunger, kicked the man aside and took the stone knife himself, but even he couldn't make any progress.

Frustration spread through the group. They had food but couldn't get to it, an irritating situation.

The leader gestured towards the fire and the creature, indicating they should roast it whole. Although this would waste some meat and take longer to cook, they could at least eat something, unlike their futile attempts.

The young boy with the injured hand, still eager to eat, recalled what had happened earlier in the day. He told the others about his discovery and showed them his wounded hand.

After a brief hesitation, some of them accompanied him back to the site to find the sharp stone.

After some searching, they found the small black stone lying quietly on the ground. They picked it up and brought it back to the cave.

The leader examined the black stone for a moment before gripping it firmly and slashing at the creature's tough hide.

To everyone's amazement, the hide, which had resisted their efforts, was quickly cut open, revealing the meat inside...

As the scent of roasting meat filled the cave, everyone crowded around to get a closer look at the small, sharp black stone. They hadn't expected this strange, heavy stone to be so incredibly sharp.

This unexpected discovery gradually opened a new door for them...

Chapter 466: The Eight Sufferings of Life

A magnificent meteor shower provided the people of the Green Sparrow Tribe with much to talk about. Several days after the event, the tribe's members were abuzz with discussions about the spectacular meteor shower and the heroic display of the "Divine Child" during the celestial event.

The excitement persisted for five or six days before gradually dying down. However, despite all the talk, work did not stop.

About one-third of the adults, mostly women, were seen daily in the millet fields, weeding and loosening the soil with bone hoes. Compared to other tasks, working the fields was relatively light work. These individuals wore cool bamboo hats on their heads and had towels made from freshly

woven hemp draped around their necks. From a distance, they looked very much like the people who toiled endlessly in the fields in later times.

Another group was engaged in land clearing on the other side of the small river, working a certain distance from the water. This was a long-term task. The land on the opposite side of the river was more suitable for cultivation than the land they had on their side.

The former members of the Green Tribe were now pushing stone slabs along the paved roads, moving from the quarry past the gates of the Green Sparrow Tribe and heading eastward. To the west of the tribe, a winding stone path had already been laid. Now, they were extending the path eastward, branching off along the ridges of the fields and continuing to extend it deeper into the farmland.

Han Cheng sat in the shade, watching a nearby spot where two trees, transplanted two years ago, had now grown to provide a vast expanse of green shade.

Bai Xue, dressed in short sleeves and shorts, placed freshly picked mulberry leaves into silkworm baskets. As she bent over, her clothes stretched tightly across her body. Although Han Cheng was already well-acquainted with the secrets hidden beneath those clothes, he still felt his heart race at the sight. But all he could do was keep those feelings in check.

Recalling Bai Xue's wish made during the meteor shower, Han Cheng, not ready to become a father so soon, could only force himself to resist...

A sudden downpour swept away the oppressive summer heat. Summer rains come quickly and leave just as fast. The air turned cool, but the atmosphere within the Green Sparrow Tribe grew even more tense than before the rain.

It wasn't because Han Cheng was about to become a father; instead, it was because someone in the tribe was nearing the end of their life.

Many people had gathered in a series of twelve connected tiled houses. In the room at the easternmost end, the crowd was even larger. The key figures of the Green Sparrow Tribe were present: Han Cheng, the Shaman, the Eldest Senior Brother, the Second Senior Brother, the Third Senior Brother, Shang, and Gu. They stood silently, their expressions filled with concern and sorrow as they looked towards the earthen heated bed built against the mud wall.

Lying on the bed was a frail figure—this person was Fire One. Beside her were two women, one holding a half-bowl of deer milk sweetened with honey and the other sitting on the bed, supporting Fire One's head so that it tilted slightly upward.

The woman holding the bowl brought a spoonful of deer milk to Fire One's lips, but the milk trickled down her mouth without being swallowed.

"Enough, don't force her. Let her rest," Han Cheng said solemnly. The woman put down the spoon and carefully wiped away the spilled milk. She gently laid Fire One back down and quietly got off the kang.

Fire One had been growing thinner for some time, mainly due to her advanced age.

Han Cheng, who wasn't even a half-trained doctor, was equally helpless. All he could do was prepare some fine food for Fire One and ensure she was well accompanied.

Fire One had fallen into a coma the previous night, and it had continued until now. Strangely enough, after the two women got off the kang, Fire One woke up. She glanced around the room and tried to sit up. Seeing this, Han Cheng quickly went over to help. By now, Fire One's body was so light it seemed almost weightless.

"Divine Child... Shaman... Leader..." she greeted them weakly. Han Cheng and the others responded with smiles.

Han Cheng pointed to the deer milk nearby and gestured for the others to let the Shaman handle it. The Shaman personally brought the bowl over.

"Drink some deer milk to regain your strength, and you'll be able to get up and walk soon," Han Cheng said.

Fire One nodded, and Han Cheng fed her. She slowly drank down half a bowl of deer milk. Seeing her awake and able to drink the milk, Fire Two, the Shaman, and the others breathed a sigh of relief. To them, being able to eat meant a healthy body.

Han Cheng wanted to be as optimistic as they were, but deep down, he knew this was a sign of the "final rally" before the end...

Fire One passed away about ten minutes after finishing the deer milk. She went peacefully, with a smile on her face.

The passing of life cast a deep sorrow over the Green Sparrow Tribe. The atmosphere in the tribe was weighty, and Han Cheng felt a deep weight in his heart.

Birth, aging, sickness, death, separation from loved ones, prolonged suffering, unfulfilled desires, and the inability to let go—these are the eight sufferings of life, and they are hard to avoid.

He squatted by the wall, silently lost in thought.

The Shaman approached and squatted beside Han Cheng. After a moment, he said, "Divine Child, Fire One lived a good life. She enjoyed a quality of life that no one in the tribe had experienced before... Compared to those before her, she lived a long life..."

Han Cheng nodded silently, knowing that the Shaman's words were true, but he still felt sad. Fire One, who had been with the tribe since he arrived, was now gone...

"Let's go, let's send Fire One off on her final journey," Han Cheng said after a long silence, rising to his feet.

Fire One was dressed in a new outfit, and her face had been washed. Some people felt that using newly made hemp clothing for the deceased was wasteful, but Han Cheng insisted. For the deceased, everything should be done with respect. It was their final journey, and it was fitting to be dressed well.

Fire One was placed in a wooden box hastily crafted by Lame and then carried by others to the western side of the tribe. The people of the tribe followed behind in silence.

A pit over a meter deep had already been dug not far from the millet fields. The wooden box containing Fire One was placed in the pit. Following Han Cheng's lead, everyone began using bone shovels to scoop up soil and gradually fill the pit. The loose earth slowly covered the wooden box, forming a mound shaped like an overturned bowl.

In front of the mound, a small stone tablet was erected, inscribed with four characters: "Fire One's Grave."

Chapter 467: Start of the Great War

As the sun set in the west, the day's heat dissipated, and a coolness began to rise.

The birds chirped as they returned to the forest, and the deer, back from grazing, called out softly.

The newly piled grave mound appeared taller and more lonely in the evening.

Fire Two sat quietly in front of the grave, her cloudy eyes staring at the stone tablet and the mound behind it.

She was closest to Fire One in the tribe; they shared the strongest bond. They were about the same age, and the tasks they managed were similar, so they had long been accustomed to each other's presence.

Now that Fire One was suddenly gone, Fire Two felt an emptiness inside her, as if something important was missing.

However, compared to the past, things are much better now.

In the past, when someone in the tribe died, they would be burned in a fire. It was a clean break, leaving no trace behind.

Now, the Divine child had changed the custom, burying the deceased in the earth and placing a stone engraved with their name on top.

This gave people something to hold on to and look forward to.

Even if Fire Two missed Fire One terribly in the old days, she could only think about it in her heart. But now, with this grave, she could sit here for a while.

It made her feel a bit better as if Fire One hadn't completely left but was still present in another way...

At dinner time, Han Cheng looked around but didn't see Fire Two. After thinking for a moment, he led a few people to the grave.

By then, the light was already dim, and Fire Two crouched there in front of the grave looked even smaller and lonelier in its shadow.

The wind blew, stirring her thin, white hair and rustling the leaves.

Seeing this, Han Cheng felt a pang in his heart...

Time passed, slowly yet swiftly.

In the blink of an eye, the hot summer had ended, followed closely by the lingering heat of early autumn.

But no matter how strong it was, autumn was still autumn. Though the days remained hot, the nights grew cooler.

If they didn't cover themselves with a thin layer of animal skin at bedtime, they would feel the chill.

Time is mysterious; it not only brings changes but also heals the wounds in people's hearts.

People were gradually getting used to Fire One's passing, and when they thought of her, it no longer brought the same sadness. Even Fire Two visited the grave less frequently.

Life is like that—you can't dwell in sorrow forever. Moving forward is the only way.

As the early autumn heat finally subsided, the millet that the Green Sparrow Tribe had planted in the spring turned golden.

The threshing floor outside the main gate had been cleaned, and the sickles, wooden forks, brooms, and wheelbarrows had been prepared.

After a hearty meal, the people of the Green Sparrow Tribe, sharpening their tools, set out joyfully to the golden fields.

Sickles moved swiftly, and one by one, the heads of the millet stalks, heavy with grain, fell to the ground with a soft rustling sound.

Sweat rolled down their bronze-colored skin, which seemed to shimmer like gold in the autumn sunlight, reflecting off the golden millet.

The creaking sound of wheelbarrows filled the air as their wooden wheels rolled lightly over the newly built stone road, carrying the heavy harvest to the threshing floor...

Threshing, winnowing, flipping, gathering...

After going through the entire process, the clean millet grains appeared before them. Once dried, they were stored in the granary.

Last year's remaining millet was cleared and dried, then stored separately. It would be consumed first before the new grain was eaten.

This year, the Green Sparrow Tribe harvested even more millet than the previous year.

On one hand, the people of the Green Sparrow Tribe were more familiar with all millet cultivation aspects than last year. On the other hand, they planted more millet this year.

In addition to the original 800 mu of land, after the rapeseed harvest, the 100 mu was also used to plant a late millet crop under Han Cheng's orders.

Just as the early millet was harvested and stored, the late millet was also ready for harvest.

Although the yield wasn't quite as high as that of the early millet, it wasn't much less per mu, either.

This 100 mu of land, which was used for late millet, would lie fallow this winter.

Han Cheng planned to select another 100 mu of land that had never been planted with rapeseed for this year's crop.

Different crops have different nutrient requirements from the soil, which is why Han Cheng practiced crop rotation between millet and rapeseed...

The seemingly similar days passed in a repetitive yet subtly new way.

After the people of the Green Sparrow Tribe harvested the hemp and buried it in the retting pit, the leader of the Donkey Tribe also set out to trade with distant tribes using the goods they had exchanged from the Green Sparrow Tribe.

Compared to his former enthusiasm, the leader of the Donkey Tribe now appeared more reserved.

His silence was understandable. As trading continued, the fur supplies from the surrounding tribes had already been mostly exchanged for their precious pottery and salt.

It had become increasingly difficult to obtain large quantities of fur from these tribes.

He could only lead his people further afield, carrying pottery and salt on their backs. Only those tribes that had never traded could still offer a substantial amount of fur.

The ever-lengthening journeys were a significant burden for the people of the Donkey Tribe.

This was why the leader of the Donkey Tribe had become more reserved...

Cao Geng picked a few early-ripening fruits and placed them in the grass basket on his back.

He had scars on his body, and his already crooked nose had become even more bent.

The second leader of the Flying Snake Tribe hit him, and the reason for the beating was simple.

Despite waiting here for so long, the black tribe Cao Geng had mentioned had never appeared.

After placing the fruit in his basket, Cao Geng straightened up and looked again from where the black tribe had once come. All he saw were trees and wild grass.

The black tribe was still nowhere to be seen, just like the herd of deer he had hoped to encounter.

Cao Geng's longing for the black tribe had surpassed his desire for the deer.

If the deer didn't come, he might go without some meat, but if the black tribe didn't come soon, he feared he would be beaten again in a few days.

"Damn it!" Cao Geng cursed anxiously. Because of his crooked nose, his voice sounded muffled.

But after cursing, all he could do was continue to wait...

"There! Look!" A man from the Donkey Tribe, carrying three nested pottery jars, excitedly pointed ahead.

The somewhat dazed leader of the Donkey Tribe quickly focused his gaze...

Chapter 468: Trading with a viper

After carefully observing the situation in front of him for a while, the leader of the Donkey Tribe shook off his earlier gloom and became excited.

Following his gaze, he saw a few people in a sparsely wooded area ahead, carrying stone spears and moving around as if hunting for prey.

The Donkey Tribe leader was naturally thrilled. Since he had never been to this land before, encountering people here meant they were likely dealing with a new tribe they had never seen.

Meeting such a tribe meant they could exchange for many beast hides.

This was something he had learned from years of trading.

After watching the situation for a while, he excitedly called out to the people behind him and took the lead.

The rest of the tribe members, also quite excited, carried their pottery and salt and followed the leader toward their new trading target...

The former Second Leader of the Flying Snake Tribe walked through the woods with a stone spear, feeling satisfied as he observed the hunters around him.

He had become a leader in the tribe again. Initially, he had no chance of becoming a leader, but during the summer, the newly elected Fourth Leader stepped on a venomous snake while leading people on a hunt and died soon after.

With the position of Fourth Leader vacant, the shaman allowed the tribe to hold a competition to select a new Fourth Leader.

This time, the shaman permitted the former Second Leader to participate.

This man had fought his way to becoming the Second Leader of the Flying Snake Tribe, and no one could match him in the competition.

After a fierce battle, he had become the Fourth Leader of the Flying Snake Tribe as he had wished.

Although he was only the lowest-ranking leader, he was finally a leader.

Aside from him, no one knew why the previous Fourth Leader had stepped on a snake and died...

Holding his stone spear, he smiled and looked at the hunters around him.

There were nearly thirty people, all under his command.

They were not in the large tribe now but had left it, as usual, to hunt in the surrounding area.

A hint of gloom marred the Fourth Leader's joyful mood as he remembered another matter.

That was the white, snowflake-like "salt."

From the crooked-nosed commoners and other leaders, he had learned how delicious food with added salt could be.

However, when he became a leader and wanted to taste some of that salted food, the shaman forbade it.

Only the shaman could enjoy food with added salt because the precious salt in the ceramic jars was running out...

This frustrated him, but he had no way to change it. In the tribe, no one dared challenge the shaman's authority, not even the Great Leader.

He muttered angrily, not at the shaman but at the Flying Snake Tribe's Second Leader, who led people to wait for the tribe with salt and pottery.

It had been such a long time, and they still hadn't found the salt and pottery, which made him very angry.

While lost in these thoughts, the Fourth Leader of the Flying Snake Tribe suddenly focused his gaze and looked with surprise and caution toward one direction.

Some people suddenly appeared there and were coming directly toward them, carrying something.

"...~ap;!"

He shouted out, and those around him quickly gathered at his side.

They assembled, weapons in hand, and watched the unexpected group approaching them.

While feeling some caution, the fourth leader of the Flying Snake Tribe was more excited because it meant they had discovered another new tribe.

When he saw what the newcomers were carrying on their shoulders, he rubbed his eyes to ensure he wasn't mistaken and became even more excited.

Precious pottery!

So much precious pottery?!

He shifted his gaze from the pottery to the people carrying it. Most of these people were dark-skinned.

He suddenly remembered what the crooked-nosed commoner had said: the traders who used to come to their tribe were a group of dark-skinned people, and these dark-skinned people carried precious pottery, which contained the equally precious salt!

The tribe that the Second Leader and others had been searching for so long had suddenly appeared before him, leaving him with a dizzying sense of amazement.

Amidst this dizziness was an indescribable, intense joy!

The Donkey Tribe leader also had a broad smile. He wasn't surprised that the arriving tribe had become wary and gathered together.

He had seen this kind of reaction many times before.

Typically, when new tribes saw them, their reaction was almost always similar.

But once they realized the value of the pottery and salt, they would genuinely appreciate the value of his tribe's goods.

Thus, they would willingly exchange their surplus hides for precious pottery and salt.

With this thought in mind, the two tribes gradually moved closer.

To show that he meant no harm, the Donkey Tribe leader instructed his people to lower their weapons and carry them behind.

He set down the salt jars and approached the Fourth Leader of the Flying Snake Tribe to greet him.

Just like the other tribes they had encountered before.

The Fourth Leader's eyes were fixed on the pottery before him, and he pointed at it, his eyes shining with eagerness.

He could hardly wait to find out if the jars contained salt.

Although the Donkey Tribe leader could not understand the words of the Flying Snake Tribe's Fourth Leader, his extensive trading experience allowed him to grasp the meaning.

With a smile, the Donkey Tribe leader knew that exquisite pottery always had a significant impact on those who had never seen it before.

When meeting a new tribe, the attention of other tribes was quickly drawn to the pottery. This wasn't the first time he had experienced such a reaction.

Thus, even though the Fourth Leader of the Flying Snake Tribe seemed more enthusiastic than the tribes they had encountered, the Donkey Tribe leader took it in stride.

He felt even more pleased because the response indicated they might be able to obtain more hides from this new tribe.

After a brief exchange, the Donkey Tribe leader was even more delighted because he found that the pottery and the snow-white salt attracted the people of this tribe more than the people of other tribes they had met before.

So, he didn't bother with further discussion and went straight to the point...

Chapter 469: The Flying Snake Tribe, Disdained by the Donkey Tribe

In the not-so-dense forest, a cleared area was prepared.

Without needing much direction from the Donkey Tribe leader, members of the Donkey Tribe brought dry firewood and fetched water with a clay pot. They placed it on the stones they had set up, beginning a performance that, despite being something they had done many times, still required significant effort.

As the flames rose and the water in the clay pot gradually began to boil, the Donkey Tribe leader skillfully added some food and waited for it to cook.

The fourth leader of the Flying Snake Tribe sat by eagerly awaiting his first taste of food with added salt!

However, the Donkey Tribe leader's following action puzzled him. Instead of adding the snow-white salt into the pot, he scooped some of the soup into a bowl and brought it to him for tasting.

He received the hot soup from the Donkey Tribe leader, pointed to the nearby jar filled with a large amount of salt, and inquired.

Seeing the Flying Snake Tribe leader point towards the jar of salt, the Donkey Tribe leader felt even more pleased. Today had been remarkably smooth, and the leader of this tribe was adapting quickly to these new things they had never encountered before.

Despite this, the Donkey Tribe leader did not immediately add salt to the bowl but insisted on having the understanding leader first taste the plain soup. This was something he had learned from the powerful tribe's divine son. When he introduced pottery and salt to them, he used this method.

It turned out that drinking plain soup first, followed by salted soup, did indeed have a greater impact.

Unable to refuse the Donkey Tribe leader's insistence, the Flying Snake Tribe leader drank a small amount of plain soup in the bowl. The taste was quite similar to what he had at home.

The Donkey Tribe leader took the empty bowl from him, generously refilled it with soup, and, with great ceremony, added a considerable amount of salt. He stirred it well and returned the bowl to the Flying Snake Tribe leader.

He then watched expectantly as the Flying Snake Tribe leader hesitantly tasted the salted soup.

The other members of the Donkey Tribe also watched the Flying Snake Tribe leader intently.

They had seen the astonished expressions of other tribes trying salted food for the first time many times, but it never failed to delight them. Each time, it brought them immense satisfaction, a feeling even better than eating the delicious salted food themselves.

The Flying Snake Tribe leader did not disappoint them. After tasting a small sip of the salted meat soup, his eyes immediately brightened, and he could not hide his astonished expression.

Although he had anticipated that salted food would be exceptionally delicious, the taste still surprised him. At this moment, he suddenly understood why the leaders who had eaten salted food found other foods less appealing afterward. He also realized why the shaman often sighed over the dwindling salt jars and frequently asked about the availability of salt.

So this was the taste of salted food!

Seeing the expression on the Flying Snake Tribe leader's face, everyone from the Donkey Tribe broke into knowing smiles.

Noticing that other members of the Flying Snake Tribe were drooling over the steaming clay pot, the Donkey Tribe leader, understanding their eagerness, allowed them to add salt to the remaining soup and serve it to others.

The Flying Snake Tribe leader sincerely praised the deliciousness of salted food.

The Donkey Tribe leader's smile widened even more.

He took the empty clay bowl, pointed at the pottery and salt, and then pointed at the furs wrapped around him, indicating to the fourth leader of the Flying Snake Tribe that he was willing to exchange the furs.

Since he had heard about the Donkey Tribe from Cao Geng earlier, the fourth leader of the Flying Snake Tribe quickly understood the Donkey Tribe leader's intention.

However, he had no plans to use the furs for trade.

Firstly, he had not been at the cave for long, and the furs he had collected were not substantial.

Secondly, he didn't need to trade for these items; he could seize them. He was not foolish like the Cao Geng people.

Seeing the Donkey Tribe leader enthusiastically flaunting the pottery and salt, the fourth leader of the Flying Snake Tribe maintained a smile on his face.

The fourth leader of the Flying Snake Tribe then led the Donkey Tribe people to the cave they were temporarily residing in, which had initially been occupied by another tribe.

The Donkey Tribe leader, carrying the pottery and salt, happily followed with the rest of his tribe.

They were not being held captive but were following the fourth leader of the Flying Snake Tribe to exchange furs.

At this moment, the fourth leader of the Flying Snake Tribe no longer intended to kill and rob the Donkey Tribe for their salt and pottery.

This change of mind was due to the realization that their tribe's salt was dwindling, and the shaman had been sighing over the decreasing salt jars.

Although the Donkey Tribe had a lot of salt, it wouldn't last forever. Once they consumed the looted salt, where would they find more?

Thinking about this, the fourth leader of the Flying Snake Tribe changed his approach. Given his cunning nature, this change was not surprising.

Upon arriving at the temporary cave, the Donkey Tribe leader's mood soured.

Seeing the small number of animals hiding before him, he even felt an impulse to strike someone.

He had hoped to acquire many furs from this new tribe, only to find their collection so meager.

The high expectations turned into disappointment, which was indeed disheartening.

This tribe, despite having many adults, was surprisingly poor!

The Donkey Tribe leader developed a sense of contempt for this tribe.

However, he didn't leave empty-handed. He left behind a clay bowl and a small portion of salt and took all the available furs.

As the Donkey Tribe leader and his people left, someone inside the cave pointed at the departing Donkey Tribe and spoke to the fourth leader of the Flying Snake Tribe.

The suggestion was to chase down and kill all the Donkey Tribe members to seize all their pottery and salt.

Such an action would yield the greatest reward for their group.

The fourth leader of the Flying Snake Tribe disagreed with this proposal. Instead, he waited until the Donkey Tribe people were nearly out of sight, then called over two people to follow the Donkey Tribe quietly.

After the two left, he instructed others to carry away all the food in the cave and, armed with weapons, exited the cave.

Chapter 470: The Alarm Sounded

During the Mid-Autumn, the daytime temperatures were still high.

Most of the trees were still lush and green, with only an occasional yellow leaf falling gently to the ground like a butterfly.

The leader of the Donkey Tribe, carrying a thick bundle of furs, walked at the front.

He had a relaxed smile on his face. After this travel period, he finally managed to exchange all the pottery and salt he had carried for many animal hides.

What's more, he had found two new tribes to trade with in the future.

This would be their last trade of the year. After returning to their tribe, they would rest for a while.

Then, they would transport these numerous furs to the powerful and wealthy tribe, exchange them for valuable pottery and salt, and stop trading. They would wait for the heavy snow to melt...

Surrounded by joy, the Donkey Tribe did not realize that two people were trailing behind them, marking trees along the way.

Further behind, a tribe deemed lazy and weak by the leader was following these markings.

The fourth leader of the Flying Snake Tribe felt a mix of emotions.

On the one hand, he was frustrated by the tribe's refusal to fight and their continued exchange of valuable pottery and salt for less useful furs, feeling angered by the stupidity of the black tribe.

On the other hand, he was secretly pleased.

Seeing so much pottery and salt being exchanged, it was clear that the tribe had a large amount of these goods.

Moreover, by following this tribe, he discovered two more tribes.

These discoveries and gains expanded their food sources.

The fourth leader admired his decision to track the tribe and find their cave instead of directly attacking them.

When he returned to the large tribe with the numerous pottery and salt, even the shaman would cheer for him.

He recalled the shaman's obsession with salt and pondered the possibility of regaining his position as the second leader.

The more he thought about it, the more excited he became, almost eager to reach the tribe's cave ahead.

“Phew!”

Seeing the cave before him, the Donkey Tribe leader sighed a sigh of relief.

The other members of the Donkey Tribe behind him also showed delighted expressions.

This time, they had been away longer than ever and were finally returning to their tribe.

The people following them were smiling and looking relaxed as if carrying furs was no longer heavy.

At the partially concealed entrance of the cave, some of the people who had stayed behind ran out to greet them.

At the forefront were the short but quick children, followed by some adults who were not very strong.

They cheered and jumped to welcome the returning tribespeople.

The Donkey Tribe leader set down a bundle of furs from his shoulder and cheerfully took out a fur-wrapped bundle.

Inside were some bright red fruits.

These were found on the way back.

The children happily received the fruits from him, their smiles even wider.

The people who came out to greet them carried the furs back into the cave without needing help.

The Donkey Tribe leader looked at the bustling tribe with genuine joy.

They entered the cave, untied some furs, and took out some food.

This was the preserved food they had exchanged for pottery and salt with the other tribes.

In their trades with other tribes, the Donkey Tribe did not only exchange for furs but also for food.

The furs were used to trade with the wealthy and powerful tribes for pottery and salt, while the food was for their consumption.

Similarly, when trading these furs with the wealthy tribe, they were exchanging them for pottery, salt, and food.

The flames grew larger, and the ceramic pot on top was steaming. The aroma of the food gradually filled the cave.

The Donkey Tribe leader was the first to serve the food, followed by the others.

Amidst the rich aroma of the food, the entire cave of the Donkey Tribe was filled with cheerful laughter and voices.

After eating, while it was still bright outside and plenty of time before dark, the entrance to the cave was blocked.

The long journey with heavy loads had exhausted most of the Donkey Tribe members.

Now, back in the cave, their bodies and minds relaxed. They eagerly needed a good night's sleep to restore their energy.

Not long after the cave was sealed, the sound of snoring filled the cave.

The children also behaved well, not running around or making noise but quietly staying to allow the adults some peaceful rest...

In a concealed location near the cave, the fourth leader of the Flying Snake Tribe and his group sneaked up.

He inquired about details from the two individuals following closely, then carefully surveyed the blocked cave for a while before turning to give the order to attack.

After the long journey following the Donkey Tribe, they were exhausted even without carrying anything, let alone the Donkey Tribe members carrying loads.

At this time, with the cave entrance blocked, they were most likely sleeping.

This was a perfect opportunity for a surprise attack.

The fourth leader of the Flying Snake Tribe, who had experience attacking other tribes, was confident in his plan.

Upon receiving his orders, the Flying Snake Tribe members began to move.

Instead of rushing out recklessly, they used the surrounding trees and grass to approach the Donkey Tribe's cave quietly.

This was based on their experience from previous attacks on other tribes.

If only the strange horned beast were here, they could have charged directly without such caution.

The fourth leader of the Flying Snake Tribe thought to himself, smiling at his timidity.

This tribe didn't have such a strange cave and was most likely sleeping. There was no need to worry too much.

Without the horned beast, they could still take this tribe down!

"Help!"

Inside the quiet Donkey Tribe cave, a woman peeking through a gap at the entrance suddenly cried out loudly. Her voice was so loud that even the approaching Flying Snake Tribe could hear it.

The sleeping members of the Donkey Tribe quickly woke up, scrambling to find their weapons.

While sleeping, they hadn't previously kept watch at the cave entrance, but after frequent trades with the Green Sarrow Tribe, they had learned to be on guard.