

The Sacred Ruins

Chapter 3: Bronze Kunlun

“Dong!”

The clear sound of bronze was tainted by the vicissitudes of time.

Chu Feng put down the rock in his hand, certain that the tablet was indeed made of bronze. He could hardly believe that an ancient bronze antique, thousands of kilograms in weight, existed here. This was no small matter.

A great commotion could be expected if news of this was spread.

Two words “Queen” and “West” were visible on the surface. The aged words were simple and unadorned but also somewhat mystical, easily drawing one’s attention. The era from which it originated remained a mystery, however.

“Who could’ve buried it deep within Mount Kunlun?”

Chu Feng knocked on the bronze tablet, eliciting continuous metallic vibrations. Unfortunately, he was no archaeologist and he had no idea how to appraise it.

“Perhaps a magnificent bronze civilization existed here many eons ago,” he mused.

He was never quite believed in superstitions despite the many legends surrounding Mount Kunlun. Even after seeing the words queen and west, he still quite skeptical of the myths.

Chu Feng felt that even if the Queen Mother of the West did indeed exist, she was perhaps just a powerful tribal leader during ancient times, and this was probably just an ancient relic.

“The great earthquake causing magnetic field abnormalities in addition to the large piece of protruding bronze may have attracted lingering lightning and electricity.”

Chu Feng felt that this might be the actual reason.

He really wanted to dig out the whole bronze tablet and observe in greater detail, but he was powerless to do so without specialized equipment.

After walking around the area for some time, he decided to continue upwards.

The cracks up in the mountain were quite deep. Its interior was a dark and frightening scene of destruction.

There were no trails to speak of, and the topography was fraught with danger. Large boulders lay scattered in disarray, and it was becoming increasingly difficult to progress.

Walking alone along the vast mountain allowed one to appreciate its majesty. It oddly reminded Chu Feng of the many legends surrounding this place. He glanced into the distance where the mountain was seemingly touching the sky. It was quite the grand panorama.

He continued upwards for over a thousand meters. The post-earthquake hike was indeed difficult, and the loose rocks posed a considerable danger.

There were heaps of earth and stone before him where the mountainside had recently collapsed.

Chu Feng spotted something abnormal from a distance and revealed an astonished expression. He approached swiftly and climbed up to verify what he had seen.

“It appears to be bronze!”

From the distance, he had seen a large area of mottled and corroded green within the collapsed cliff. It wasn't just a small piece but a whole area.

He finally arrived at his destination and clearly witnessed it.

“Just as I thought!”

This was even more alarming than the bronze tablet he had seen earlier.

The long-hidden truth, positioned close to the main mountain, had finally been revealed after the collapse of the huge cliff.

A patch of green was leaning against the stony mountainside. An ancient and mysterious bronze architecture revealed itself gradually through the collapsing mountainside.

Three simple and quiet bronze buildings were built into the stony walls of the mountain. Some parts of it were still buried within the earth, but most of them were already visible.

The design of these bronze buildings was ancient, and their grandeur was suffused with the solemnity of history.

Neat rows of bronze tiles covered their rooftops making them appear, from a distance, as if they were covered in green scales.

Chu Feng truly was astonished, and he could hardly calm down.

It was a sensational discovery. He had found large bronze equipment and numerous bronze architecture buried deep beneath Mount Kunlun.

What era were these things from? Who had constructed them?

He believed this place was definitely hiding the remains of a whole area of brilliant bronze civilization from the distant ages, an era not even recorded in history.

But he was as puzzled as he was apprehensive.

The Simu Cauldron was known as the largest bronze craft to date, but it seemed smaller compared to the bronze tablets and houses here, the antique almost failed to appear heavy at all.

Doubtlessly, the difficulty in building such houses was much more difficult than casting cauldrons.

These houses cast from bronze appeared majestic, solemn, and somewhat mysterious.

If this finding was announced to the outside world, it would be considered priceless treasures as no one had ever discovered such large bronze antiques before. It was definitely a new discovery.

Even as a normally calm person, Chu Feng subconsciously felt extreme excitement upon discovering these astonishing bronze relics.

He tried pushing the bronze door open with some force and was able to get it open amidst grinding metallic sounds.

He didn't go in immediately but instead observed from the outside for a while before cautiously stepping in. The somewhat isolated interior was so quiet that one could hear a pin drop. The interior was quite bare with barely any furnishings.

Similarly, nothing noteworthy was found in the other two houses; the floors and walls were all undecorated. Without a doubt, they were all empty.

Chu Feng exited the buildings with more questions than he had before he entered. Were these buildings used as a residence or perhaps for sacrificial ceremonies?

These ancients were simply too extravagant!

Historical records stated that the Simu Cauldron of the Shang Dynasty was cast, with great difficulty, by several hundreds of bronze artisans working together.

How difficult would it be to construct such gigantic bronze architecture?

Realizing that he had spent quite a bit of time here, Chu Feng decided to continue upwards. Sweating and huffing, he finally arrived close to the peak after a few hours; only a few hundred meters remained.

Chu Feng was tall, strong, and possessed good stamina, but after climbing such a large mountain, he was still left rather exhausted.

As he approached the summit and gazed into the distance, he saw rising mountain ranges and vast lands as far as the eye could see. The view made one feel as small as a speck of dust.

He stood on the great mountain and raised his head to gaze at the blue dome above. He felt quite comfortable as if he could forget all of his worries, all honor, and disgrace. Everything else seemed relatively insignificant.

Chu Feng was baffled to see that there was no snow despite the altitude and even grasses and trees could be seen.

“Traces of lightning strikes!”

Chu Feng noticed some charred marks which signified a lightning strike. All vegetation within that area had been burnt and charred.

Moreover, some large rocks had been cleaved open and the many parts of the mountainside had collapsed.

This further reinforced Chu Feng’s theory that the dense mist and blue lights should’ve been caused by the lightning. This whole area had suffered lightning strikes.

Chu Feng had to take a detour because the road ahead was blocked large piles of rocks.

But as he circled around to the other side of the peak, his body froze in place and his pupils constricted. This was the first time he had been this overwhelmed.

He didn’t react this way even when he discovered those bronze houses.

The collapsed mountainside had produced a large defect, revealing the metal within.

It’s a bronze mountain!

The scene uncovered by the collapse of the mountainside was truly astonishing.

This mountaintop might actually be made of bronze concealed within the mountain!

It wasn't just a small area. The whole region up to the summit several hundreds of meters away was made of bronze.

This gave one the solid impression that the true mountain was made of bronze within and covered up by earth and rocks.

This was absolutely unimaginable!

The actual truth, however, is yet to be confirmed, but at least the 200-meter summit was indeed made of bronze, a number sufficient to shock the world.

Chu Feng was startled. This bronze mountain of the Kunlun Range had toppled his ingrained concepts of size and history.

He had always been quite skeptical of mysterious folklore and legends.

But he could hardly explain the peculiarity before his eyes.

The lightning strike had revealed the truth of the bronze mountain.

It was definitely a shocking discovery!

Chu Feng continued upwards and was a mere hundred meters away from the summit. The bronze terrain here was quite precipitous, making it difficult to proceed.

At the same time, he noticed a sudden fragrance drifting in the wind.

But the cold ground was made of bronze and devoid of all vegetation.

Chu Feng thus looked around in detail and eventually found a plant growing on the bronze cliff!

It was at the peak of the mountain. Chu Feng tracked back to find another way to approach the flower. He wanted to observe in greater detail.

He finally found another path which gave him a better view despite not being able to take up further upwards.

The verdant little tree, about 150 centimeters tall, was rooted firmly on the bronze cliff. There was a single flower blooming on it.

Chu Feng glanced again in order to make sure there was no mistake—there truly was no earth under the tree—the shocking plant was rooted on the bronze cliff.

Such a thing was as astonishing as it was inexplicable.

He moved to another place where he could climb upwards and get a closer look at the little tree rooted in bronze.

Chapter 4: Foliage and the Beasts

A solitary tree, roughly one meter tall, was growing at the highest point of the Kunlun Summit.

It had forcefully taken root within the bronze as if it was soil from which to absorb nutrients. Its body was green and translucent with a radiant luster.

The tree trunk was as thick as one's wrist and it, although not very tall, possessed cracked bark like that of an old tree. The scaly exterior gave it a vigorous appearance.

Its leaves, shaped like the palm of an infant, were seemingly carved of jade with a touch of penetrative spirituality. The dew hanging upon them rolled around with the gentle caress of the wind like pearls upon a tray of jade.

A single fist-sized flower was growing at the top of this tree. It was silver in color with some gold spots, blooming at the cliff edge and overflowing with a sweet fragrance.

This bewitching little tree stood in proud silence.

Chu Feng tried several times, but it was impossible to approach from this side of the mountain. He decided to take the risk, and he climbed from the collapsed side. He had to be extremely careful because the slightest mistake might lead to his death.

He retreated from the mountainside and arrived at a more level area where he circled to the other side and looked up.

"How is it able to grow on a mountain of bronze?" Chu Feng was puzzled.

The fast-changing world was becoming increasingly incomprehensible.

Chu Feng was calm, but he frowned thinking about this curious little plant and the odd bronze mountain. None of this followed common sense.

A figure appeared within his heart; this person had once told him some things which he didn't take to heart at the moment. But now his emotions were stirred.

“When one day you see the roadside weeds bearing brightly colored fruits, the ordinary world as we know it has perhaps ceased to exist.” [1]

Those words were once spoken by Lin Naoi. She had spoken them casually and with relative calmness.

It was the same tone she had when she broke up with Chu Feng. Her voice seemed distant and somewhat apathetic as if she was speaking from somewhere high above.

Chu Feng had thought she was referring to their relationship—about how life and feelings were all fleeting and prone to change.

“Did her words have a deeper meaning?”

This world had undergone several changes since the post-civilization era, many of which weren't known to the general public. However, there should be a small group of people who knew the actual truth.

What did Lin Naoi know and how much?

Chu Feng let out a sigh when her image appeared in his mind. He was frustrated and disappointed, but one should ultimately learn to let go.

He raised his head once again and gazed toward the bronze summit. Surprise flashed across his face.

Did she really mean something else? Following her train of thought, it seemed everything normal was soon about to change. Then what of this inherently extraordinary tree?

This tree should've been out of the ordinary even before experiencing any type of change!

There were several loose rocks under his feet. Chu Feng had already arrived at the edge of the mountainside and could hardly progress any further.

A gust of wild wind suddenly kicked up and jolted Chu Feng from his reverie. He saw a fast-moving shadow on the ground which soon covered him.

Something was approaching, fast!

He reacted with great agility. His well-built body dived out of the way and rolled for a certain distance on the ground. During this process, he retrieved his crossbow and assembled it with great efficiency.

As a lone traveler, he naturally brought a weapon he could use to defend himself. With a twist of his body, he stood up and took the shot whereupon the bolt flew out with a thump.

He discovered his assailant at that same moment!

An expression of great astonishment appeared on Chu Feng's face. The animal was so much bigger than its peers.

A bright golden bird of prey almost five meters in wingspan had rushed down toward him from the high above and nearly caught him in its claws.

With a clang, the crossbow bolt struck a distant limestone rock amidst a shower of sparks. The bird evaded swiftly, causing the projectile to miss narrowly.

At the same time, its sharp claws also struck the rock and earth on the ground to emit a terrifying scraping sound. It then soared upwards amidst rushing winds.

Chu Feng felt a chill run down his spine. He would've been in unimaginable danger had he not reacted quickly just now.

Normal falcons could easily crack the bones and skulls of its prey. It wasn't difficult to imagine the strength such a large beast would possess. He would be in a rather miserable situation if he was just one step late.

Chu Feng retreated immediately to more advantageous terrain and took cover near a giant rock. He then cautiously aimed his crossbow toward the sky once more.

The ferocious golden bird made a sharp turn in the air and flew close to the mountainside, kicking up powerful gales.

He had truly never seen such a large bird.

From its appearance, it was likely a golden eagle. Its bright plumage was polished and sleek with little if any blemish at all—its size was staggering and its nature ferocious. The eagle's golden pupils shone brilliantly with a certain spirit of the wild.

There was no way for a normal eagle to grow this big. This was definitely a mutant. This was grossly abnormal!

The ancient people might consider such a large bird as the legendary great roc—

—because many ancient records were somewhat exaggerated. A bird five meters in wingspan was definitely something that would cause a great sensation if discovered.

This was especially true for the Mount Kunlun region because the whole place was shrouded in myths and legends.

The golden bird was extremely violent, yet it didn't charge back immediately but instead circled overhead. The animal, with its keen senses, had seemingly noticed the might of Chu Feng's crossbow.

Suddenly, Chu Feng noticed a certain fishy odor.

Three snow leopards were silently climbing up the mountain. Their eyes were distant, and traces of blood were discernible on their sharp fangs. It was clear that they had just finished hunting other prey.

They were staring at Chu Feng with their bodies slightly arched. At the same time, they glanced at the golden bird in the air and were greatly intimidated, letting out low, uneasy growls.

The three snow leopards were bigger and stronger than what was normal for their race. Their sharp claws suffused with a cold glow, poised to pounce for the kill at any moment.

Chu Feng frowned. He hadn't expected to encounter such a dangerous situation. There was a vicious bird in the air and prowling leopards on the ground—the situation appeared rather dire.

Suddenly, the three leopards began to tremble as their fur stood on ends and soon vanished into the rocky mess.

A yak had appeared seemingly out of nowhere. Its jet-black body was enshrouded in flowing black light while a pair of large horns was pointed towards the sky.

It could even be called a yak monarch since it was over three meters long, with stout limbs and a large body. It stood there like a small black hill.

Chu Feng was greatly astonished to find that this gigantic animal had approached as silently as the snow leopards and was almost impossible to discover beforehand.

Furthermore, the three snow leopards had immediately darted away after seeing the great yak. This was quite abnormal!

The black yak raised its head and glanced at the golden bird in the sky and later stood there silently and motionlessly, gazing at the bronze peak.

Why were these three animals gathered here?

Chu Feng knew that he was in a precarious situation and dared not move carelessly. He was waiting for an opportunity.

In the distance, the silhouettes of several beasts could be seen running up the mountain. They were extremely fast with glaring white fangs, appearing extremely ferocious.

These six wolves were extremely large in size and much bigger than their peers. The fierce alpha wolf was snow white in color and had only one eye within which flowed a faint green light.

They temporarily halted their steps after arriving nearby. They seemed rather uneasy, apparently fearful of the black yak and golden eagle.

Suddenly, the peace was broken as the six wolves rushed through the rocks and swiftly made their way towards the summit.

At the same time, the three snow leopards also made their move. They ran straight toward the summit at lightning speed.

Chu Feng gradually retreated at that point, hoping to escape the place.

The roar of beasts resounded continuously at the mountaintop as they fought their way up the mountain.

A thunderous sound was transmitted from afar as a grossly deformed snow leopard came tumbling down. It'd been mangled into a bloody mess after being struck by a yellow figure.

The assailant was like a flash of lightning as it suddenly appeared from one side and rushed into the group of beasts with great swiftness.

It was a mastiff roughly the size of a regular Tibetan mastiff. The hair on its neck was thick and long akin to a lion's mane and its claws were drenched in snow leopard blood.

But it was truly violent. A single leap took him several meters as it pounced forward yet again.

Wolf howls rang out in great misery as flowers of blood bloomed in all directions. One of the wolves had been bitten in the neck and flung away.

Another was stunned after it was struck flying and crashed into a giant rock.

"That's the rumored true mastiff!" Chu Feng was surprised.

According to the locals, the true mastiffs lived in the wild and could fight against tigers and leopards. Their numbers were few and rarely ever appeared in human sight.

This true mastiff was even more powerful than the rumors suggested. It charged into the pack of beasts like a bolt of lightning and had disabled one leopard and two wolves in the blink of an eye.

Chu Feng guessed that this was likely a mastiff king or something even more powerful.

The mastiff leaped up once again and swiftly crossed over eight meters, whereupon its claws once again came down with a bear-like force. One of the wolves' eye was gouged out and sent tumbling.

After it landed, the mastiff pounced upon yet another snow leopard. Their roars were terrifying as they rolled on the ground in a discharge of bestial rage.

The snow leopard finally collapsed in a pool of blood after having its neck torn off. Apparently, it didn't have much to live.

The mastiff was still unwounded with all the hairs on its leonine mane standing on end. Although it wasn't incredibly large in size, the mastiff possessed a certain imposing manner like a mythical lion as it leaped once again toward the remaining beasts.

Chu Feng almost couldn't believe there existed such a powerful and ferocious mastiff! It had almost finished off a pack of wild beasts after a few pounces.

The final snow leopard had died, leaving only the single-eyed alpha wolf fleeing for his life. It rushed down the mountain, hoping only to leave this place alive.

But soon, the mastiff caught up to it. A bloody maw bit into and broke the wolf's neck, almost decapitating it on the spot.

Thus, the nine ferocious beasts were all killed in a short period of time.

Chu Feng grasped his crossbow tightly. He was on high alert at this time because this place was simply too dangerous.

The mastiff once again became silent, its body completely drenched in the blood of the other animals. It raised its head and gazed at the small tree on the cliff.

It wasn't particularly large in size but was indeed exceptionally ferocious. Its earthen yellow fur, dyed red with beast blood, was a testament to its imposing might.

During this whole process, the black yak simply stood there, gazing at the little tree on the bronze mountain. It was completely unperturbed by the nearby battle and hadn't bothered to move at all.

The golden bird of prey was still circling high in the sky as before with its eyes fixated on the area below.

The three mysterious life forms appeared rather calm as if they possessed human intelligence. Their target was obviously the little tree, but none of them made a move, seemingly waiting for something.

Chu Feng felt deeply astonished because the three animals were truly extraordinary.

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[1] The original sentence was “when the roadside weeds bear fist-sized bright-red colored fruits” which I thought was too specific and made no sense, so I modified it somewhat.

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Chapter 5: The Flower Blooms

The summit of the mountain fell into absolute silence; not a sound could be heard.

The three life-forms ignored Chu Feng entirely.

Chu Feng guessed that the animals didn't consider him a threat as he was quite far from the summit; they couldn't be bothered about him and simply let him look on from below.

These three were, after all, extraordinary animals with great intelligence.

“I should take this chance to leave!”

Chu Feng decided to descend. Although he was fairly curious about the flower rooted in bronze and wanted to understand more, he understood that it was too dangerous for him to stay around as he could lose his life anytime.

The fragrance, originating from the summit, was becoming increasingly dense.

The mastiff made its move with lightning speed. It pierced through the haphazard rocks within a few leaps and was rushing toward the summit along the precipitous mountainside.

The three-meter long yak was glowing with jet-black radiance, and the large horn on its head was rather intimidating. It stepped out and followed suit at a steady pace.

It traveled with great stability along the rocks on the other side of the mountain and was actually able to climb onto the steep bronze peak.

The vicious bird, seemingly cast from gold, was shining with a brilliant glow. Golden light flashed within its eyes as it lowered its altitude and approached the cliff, all the while focused on the little tree.

The fragrance in the air intensified several times over just as Chu Feng was prepared to retreat. Apparently, the flower bud was about to bloom.

Pop!

Chu Feng clearly heard the flower bursting into bloom despite the distance. The fist-sized flower on top of the little tree had unfurled one of its petals.

The blooming flower made sounds!

The dense floral fragrance invaded the senses and almost seemed to possess a special magic that caused one to become intoxicated.

At that split second, the three life-forms rushed toward the cliff and looked on nervously, trying their best to breathe in the fragrance. It appeared as if they were gulping down the aroma.

Chu Feng turned his head around and so happened to witness this spectacle. Their odd behavior astonished him greatly.

The three animals could no longer hold back and were poised to attack one another. Their primal nature had resurfaced.

Continuous sounds rang out as the silver white flower bloomed completely. Glimpses of sparkling translucence could be seen within the hazy white mist which now hung around it. The fragrance had also increased by no less than tenfold!

Chu Feng was truly amazed by what he had seen. What sort of flower was this? The fragrance was truly bewitching; it made him want to turn around and rush toward the summit.

A silver-white flower was blooming atop this one-meter tall tree wherein white mist spilled forth and diffused throughout the mountaintop, making it appear like an immortal realm.

The flower glowed with intense light within the white mist while the dazzling golden spots on its petals sparkled like the stars.

The scene was exceptionally beautiful and captivating.

The three beasts were waiting for this very moment—the moment of its maturity!

Their primal instincts had taken over them as they fought tooth and nail over this flower, attacking madly in hopes of obtaining the flower for themselves.

The mountaintop trembled slightly with every powerful step taken by the black yak.

The golden bird in the sky brandished its great claws and clashed with the thick horns of the great yak, emitting deafening sounds with every strike.

The mastiff growled with a muffled voice akin to rolling thunder.

The three animals sought to kill each other and win this blooming flower.

They were also breathing heavily during this process, trying to take in as much of the fragrance as possible and at all costs.

Hazy mist spiraled around the summit of this bronze mountain as traces of gold glimpsed out as if a sea of stars was hidden within. The scene was as mysterious as it was beautiful.

As they approached the sparkling green tree, the mastiff's large claws caught the flower.

A whirlwind kicked up as the vicious bird dived down toward the mastiff, its descending claws poised to tear the latter apart.

They were previously refraining from taking action because they feared one another, but they had thrown caution to the wind after the flower bloomed. They had to obtain it at all costs.

As the vicious bird flapped its wings, a few petals from the flower were blown away from the mastiff's claw and drifted down the mountain.

The petal drifted swiftly along the steep mountainside and soon neared Chu Feng's position.

He caught one with a grasp of his hand and was soon intoxicated in the intense and lingering fragrance. Upon closer observation, a layer of sparkling particles was visible on the gold-adorned petal.

“Pollen!”

A lustrous layer of pollen was stuck on the surface of the petal.

Chu Feng reached out and caught all four of them in quick succession. Two of them were less fragrant with apparently less pollen on them. The other two were strongly fragrant and speckled with dense translucence—its fragrance was strong and lingering.

The three animals on the summit of the bronze mountain gazed down at him with cold eyes before resuming their melee once again in order to fight for the petals that hadn't yet dropped.

Chu Feng grasped the petals tightly after seeing the situation.

But he soon noticed something odd. The petals in his hand no longer felt warm and almost felt as if they were withering. He opened his palm to find that the crystalline radiance had faded, and the petals had indeed dried!

They had lost their vibrant radiance in but a moment and turned a dried yellow.

What happened?

One of the small petals was crushed with barely any strength at all.

Chu Feng was stunned. He dropped the other three petals and shouted toward the mountain, “I'm returning this!”

He turned around decisively afterward and fled, rushing down the mountain without giving the flower any further thought.

Although he was in a hurry to escape, he couldn't help pondering over why the petals had dried up in his hands. The change was simply too odd!

He didn't stop even as he passed by the bronze houses and tablet. There was only one thing on his mind and that was to escape to safety. He was able to raise his speed as the topography became evener.

By the time Chu Feng had reached the foot of the mountain, the red sun was already descending to the west.

Fortunately, the three extraordinary beasts didn't chase him down the mountain and kept on fighting among themselves.

Chu Feng was drenched in sweat after the intense episode of exercise at such a high altitude. He felt completely exhausted despite his fit constitution.

He sat, gasping for breath, at the foot of the mountain and could still hear his own heartbeat even after a long while. He quickly gulped down large mouthfuls of water.

Turning back to glance at the great mountain, everything still felt like an enigma.

The bronze tablet, the mysterious bronze buildings, and the bronze mountain—was this majestic mountain really made of bronze?

If only he could, he wanted to tear down the earth from this gigantic mountain and see for himself what the interior was like.

This mountain was only one of the peaks within the Kunlun Mountain Range. Just what kind of secrets could be hidden in this area?

“I should leave soon. It’ll be dangerous if the three beasts come rushing down the mountain.”

The mountain was riddled with cracks due to the earthquake a few days ago and its foot was no exception. Chu Feng had to proceed cautiously in order to avoid them.

He inadvertently noticed a certain rock within one of those cracks. It was oddly square and about three inches in height.

Chu Feng picked up the curious rock and continued on his way.

Along the way, Chu Feng almost felt as if a faint warmth was flowing through his body, but he wasn’t quite certain whether or not it was a misconception.

It would disappear when he focused on the sensation, but then it would appear once more when he wasn’t paying attention.

Was it an illusion? Or was it some type of allergy?

He momentarily suspected whether his perception had been thrown into disorder.

“It starts from this hand.”

He opened his left hand. It was precisely in his left palm that he had first noticed the sensation, but there was nothing of note there.

“The four petals withered in my left hand.”

Chu Feng pondered about this matter along the way and felt that things were not so simple. This case was indeed odd and made him feel somewhat uneasy.

The flower petals, suffused with white mist and adorned with specks of light, were odd no matter how one looks at it.

The bronze Kunlun mountain behind him back had toppled many of his original beliefs and concepts, giving him much to contemplate.

“The flower should be harmless since even those three extraordinary animals were fighting over it.”

Although he had his misgivings, Chu Feng felt that this flower shouldn't be harmful to the body. If it was, the three vicious beasts wouldn't be killing each other to obtain it.

He shook his head and decided to temporarily stop thinking about it as he headed toward the shepherd settlement in large strides.

The boundless plateau was exceptionally quiet under the curtain of the night. Some beast roars would occasionally be transmitted from the distance, adding a touch of vastness and desolation to the landscape.

Chu Feng asked to lodge in one of the shepherd's tents and decided to return on the morrow.

He spent the night reading a book in silence, trying to experience the stream of warmth he had sensed earlier. He wondered if there would be any change to this faintly discernible sensation.

He sighed long afterward, “Oh well, I should just let nature take its course.”

Because after trying every possible method, he found out that the sensation would vanish the instant he focused on it and would faintly resurface when taking no notice of it.

“Pollen, catalyst,” Chu Feng muttered these words as he recalled a certain scene from the past.

Just after graduation, he had once overheard Lin Naoi mention them to one of her family members albeit only vaguely due to the distance.

Chu Feng wanted to see her off even though they had broken up at the time, but after noticing the Lin Family's cold eyes staring at him, he could only leave after waving his hands.

He was sent into a momentary daze and, at that moment, noticed the small rock beside him.

“Why is this rock so regularly shaped?”

He sat within the tent, studying the rock he had picked up. Although it was square in shape, the edges were rather smooth and rounded as if it had been polished.

On closer inspection, he found out that there were certain patterns on its surface. They were quite dark and barely noticeable unless one was paying attention.

“Could they have been formed naturally? Or were these patterns crafted by hand?”

He hadn't given it much thought at the foot of Mount Kunlun and had only picked up this regularly shaped stone out of convenience. He had been lost in thought along the way and had absent-mindedly carried it back.

Only now did he discover that the stone was somewhat special.

Chu Feng washed the stone clean and observed it further under the lamp.

It was about three inches tall and of a dusty brown color with indistinct vine-like patterns all over its surface. These archaic patterns appeared somewhat like naturally formed marks.

“Could this be a stone equipment left behind by a primordial civilization?” Chu Feng guessed.

He flipped it around and looked all over, stroking along those traces when, suddenly, a loud click rang out in the silent night.

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