

## **Pursuit of the Truth**

### **#Chapter 21 — Poor - Read Pursuit of the Truth Chapter 21 — Poor**

#### **Chapter 21: Poor**

The herbal storage room was very big. It was also very neat inside. There were a lot of neatly arranged shelves with all sorts of herbs properly categorized

There was a smaller room located further into the building. The herbs in there were different from the ones in the outer room. They were specifically prepared for the Berserkers and a normal member of the tribe was not allowed to go in there.

Even a common healer would require permission from the tribe leader or the elder to go into this room. It was viewed as an extremely important room in the entire Dark Mountain Tribe.

However, all these rules did not apply to Su Ming. The elder gave Su Ming a special position in the tribe since a long time ago and he could go into the room at will to learn how to identify all the herbs in there.

When he stepped into the building, Su Ming saw Bei Ling holding Chen Xin's hand. They walked towards the small room with all the precious herbs. There was an old man sitting cross-legged outside the door. The old man wore a robe made of beast skin. He was thin, his hair was white and his face was covered in wrinkles. He originally had his eyes closed but he opened them slightly to receive the introduction letter from Bei Ling and Chen Xin. He cast a glance at it then, closed his eyes once more.

Su Ming walked slowly. He knew that Bei Ling did not want to see him. So, he chose to remain silent and did not follow them into the small room. Instead, he chose to walk towards the shelves outside and look at the large amount of herbs on the shelves. He was familiar with all of them. He had practically collected all of the herbs there before.

Bei Ling and Chen Xin had not come out of the room even after Su Ming had finished looking at all the herbs outside. Su Ming hesitated for a while then, he began to pace outside the room slowly.

"Young La Su, what are you wondering about?" As Su Ming was deep in thought, an old and wizened voice traveled into his ears. He lifted his head and saw that the old man guarding the small room was speaking to him.

"Grandpa Nan Song, I'm not a La Su anymore..." Su Ming scratched his head and smiled.

"I remember now. The La Sus of your generation have completed the Awakening a few months ago. Looks like I can't call you young La Su anymore." The old man grinned as his eyes twinkled with kindness.

"Since you're here, why don't you go in? Don't be scared, I have your back! I even dared to compete against the elder for a woman in the past. I'm not afraid of anything!" The old man winked at him and joked.

Su Ming widened his eyes. It was the first time he heard about this. After a moment of hesitation, he smiled bitterly and went into the small room.

He was not hesitating because of Chen Xin as the old man had suggested rather, he was hesitating because of Bei Ling, whom he was indebted to. He did not know how to explain himself. Many years had passed since then and the man was still cold towards him.

'It's fine...' Su Ming sighed. The moment he opened the door to the small room, he saw Bei Ling with his powerful presence. He was standing beside Chen Xin, who was choosing herbs in the room. He turned around and glared at him.

Su Ming met his gaze and went towards a shelf on the other side. He chose to ignore the two and started searching for the herbs required to create Mountain Spirit.

When Chen Xin saw Su Ming, she looked as if she wanted to say something. After hesitating for a while, she again chose not to speak. As she grew up, she began to understand a lot of things. She also understood her relationship with Bei Ling. The love she felt for Su Ming since she was young was dying away as time passed.

'Night Marrow Grass...

'Thousand Leaf Flower...'

Su Ming slowly walked around the room. He swept his gaze across the precious herbs and finally found the two herbs he needed to create Mountain Spirit.

'It's a pity I don't have the last one...'

He had looked through all of the herbs in the room and was deep in thought.

Chen Xin and Bei Ling had also finished choosing the herbs they wanted. Once Chen Xin bade farewell to Su Ming, she was dragged away by Bei Ling. Before he left, Bei Ling stopped. He did not turn back but spoke calmly.

"These herbs are useless to you since you don't have a Berserker Body! Instead of wasting them, you should leave it for the other tribe members. Know your place." Once he finished speaking, Bei Ling took Chen Xin away.

Su Ming kept quiet. As he lifted his head to look at the two people leaving, he did not speak. Instead, he looked at all the herbs in the room once more. Then he took the two herbs he needed and left the room.

The old man sitting outside the room did not mind Su Ming taking the herbs from the room. On the contrary, he looked at Su Ming in amusement.

"Grandpa Nan Song... it's not what you think..." Su Ming touched his nose.

"What would I be thinking about? I wasn't even talking about the complicated relationship between you and the two young La Sus. I absolutely wasn't." The old man laughed.

Su Ming blushed lightly, feeling a little awkward. An idea suddenly crossed his mind and he squatted down to look at the old man.

"Grandpa Nan Song, did you happen to see this herb before?" As Su Ming spoke, he drew the picture of an herb on the ground.

The old man smiled and looked at the drawing. He sank into deep thought, then tapped his forehead lightly after a while.

"Isn't this the Cloud Gauze Grass? We don't have this herb in Dark Mountain. It can only grow in a special environment. Only Wind Stream Tribe sells this herb around the area. Why do you need it?"

"I read about it in one of the elder's scrolls. I've tried looking for it in Dark Mountain but I couldn't find it. So that's how it is." Understanding dawned on Su Ming's face.

"Of course not. This is an herb suitable for lower-leveled Berserkers in the Blood Solidification Realm. It's just that they're sold at a high price in Wind Stream Tribe. If you want it, you can ask the elder to bring you to the trading square located just outside Wind Stream Tribe. There are all sorts of herbs sold there." The old man shook his head and smiled.

Su Ming's interest was piqued. He asked a few more questions, then rose up and left after he bidding farewell to the old man. The old man looked at him with teasing eyes as he departed.

When he left the herbal storage, Su Ming sank into his thoughts as he walked through the snow.

"Wind Gauze Grass... I can obtain the other herbs for Mountain Spirit myself but as for Wind Gauze Grass... Grandpa Nan Song said that it's really expensive... Haa." Su Ming frowned. He searched through his pockets and found nothing besides a few stone coins he obtained from Black Mountain Tribe's Yu Chi.

They usually employed the barter system within the tribe and rarely used money. Once they left the tribe though, they would need to use stone coins to buy items.

Stone coins were coins made from a special type of stone. There was an unspoken rule that they could only be created in big tribes. If any of them were created illegally, the person and his tribe would face destruction by the hands of the big tribes.

After he searched through his entire body, Su Ming only managed to find 3 stone coins. All of them belonged to the dead Yu Chi. As for Su Ming himself, he did not own a single coin.

'I don't have coins. How am I supposed to buy them...? If only I had 100... no, 1,000 stone coins... As for the square, I know the approximate location since the elder mentioned it before. Once any members of the tribe become Berserkers, they can go there in pairs. The location of the square isn't far either...'

Su Ming laughed bitterly. He felt the beginnings of a headache forming.

## **Chapter 22: Are We Going to Change?**

Su Ming was immersed in his thoughts until noon. He gritted his teeth, slung a basket over his back and left the tribe. Lei Chen went with him. Lei Chen had gone to the square before. He went there just a few days ago, in fact. Once he heard that Su Ming wanted to borrow some stone coins, he immediately pestered him for the reason. Once he learned of the reason, he immediately perked up and offered to act as Su Ming's guide.

"Su Ming, those two were the only stone coins I had. I went through a lot of trouble to get them. When... when are you going to give them back to me...?" Lei Chen stared anxiously at Su Ming as they sped through the forest outside the tribe.

"You've been nagging me for the entire journey. It's just two stone coins! I've been giving you Dark Dragon's Saliva for so many years. How much do you think they're worth? Lei Chen, aren't we best friends? How could you be like this?!" Su Ming felt slightly guilty but he still glared at Lei Chen, causing Lei Chen to mumble under his breath.

"I really went through a lot of trouble to get them..." Lei Chen scratched his head. As he mumbled, he seemed to remember something and looked at Su Ming oddly.

"Say, I just remembered. What are you going to buy at the square with the stone coins?"

"I'm buying Cloud Gauze Grass!" Su Ming ran through the forest lithely, showing signs of overtaking Lei Chen with his speed.

"What is Cloud Gauze Grass?" Lei Chen asked honestly. However, when he found that Su Ming had already overtaken him, he immediately took a few wide leaps to catch up.

"Su Ming, you have to remember to return them to me..."

"Su Ming, it took me a lot of years to save up those coins..."

"Su Ming, not even my father knows about them. How did you know where I hid them the moment you came to my house?"

"Su Ming, what is Cloud Gauze Grass? Why won't you tell me..."

"Su Ming? Su Ming?! I've been asking you the entire day!"

Su Ming's ears rang with Lei Chen's voice throughout the entire journey. He knew for a long time that Lei Chen liked to talk. Once he started, there was no stopping him but he did not expect him to keep talking for the entire journey.

When dusk arrived, they had already traveled some distance away from the tribe settlement. Within the unfamiliar forest, Su Ming's stamina finally ran dry and he began to slow down until he reached a huge tree. He leaned against it to catch his breath. Then he turned and looked at Lei Chen as if he wanted nothing to do with him. Lei Chen was also panting heavily while he sat down on the ground.

"Su... Su Ming... You... have to... give it back... to me..." Lei Chen was panting heavily but when he saw Su Ming looking back at him, he immediately straightened up and repeated himself.

"I'll return it... I'll definitely return it... but you have to promise me something!" Su Ming laughed wryly. He already did not know what to say for Lei Chen to shut up.

"What is it?" Lei Chen blinked his eyes. His expression was that of a simple-minded person.

"Don't look at me like that. Even Xiao Hong looks more convincing than you. Lei Chen, I know what you want to ask but I can't tell you. You'll know later." Su Ming glared at him.

He grew up with this person and it would not be an exaggeration to say that he understood Lei Chen more than his parents.

Lei Chen appeared to be an honest and simple-minded person but he was actually pretty sensitive. A lot of people were fooled by the honest look on his face and tended to ignore the slyness in his eyes.

After he heard Su Ming, Lei Chen touched his nose and laughed boyishly.

"My request is simple. If you don't make a sound during the trip, once I finish my business and we come back, I'll tell you everything you want to know!" Then Su Ming gave Lei Chen a long, hard look.

Lei Chen froze as if his entire body was petrified. He did not move but his eyes were wide open as he stared at Su Ming.

"Lei Chen..." Su Ming laughed wryly. He played together with his friend growing up. He was not going to be fooled by his little trick.

"You were the one who told me to be quiet. I wanted to nod my head but if I did then there'd be rustling sounds. I'm just fulfilling my end of the promise! I'm not even moving and I'm not making any sound. It completely suits your idea of silence! Aren't I being quiet enough?!"

"You're asking me to be quiet, right? Don't worry. I'll be like this during the entire journey. I won't make any sound. But if I make any sound when I run, you can't blame me, I..."

"Stop! Enough! Just keep quiet!" Su Ming pinched the bridge of his nose. He saw a hint of playfulness in Lei Chen's eyes and he knew his friend was doing it on purpose.

"Fine, I'll tell you. I have a Berserker Body but it's hidden by the elder's Berserker Art. Don't tell anyone about this." As he spoke, Su Ming's face became deadly grave.

Lei Chen was stunned but he soon nodded solemnly.

"If I knew, I wouldn't have asked. I just wanted to know whether you've become a Berserker Practitioner. Now, I'm no longer worried. Haha, from now on, we'll become the future guardians of Dark Mountain Tribe!"

Su Ming laughed as well. They took a moment to replenish their strength and continued on their way. The sky gradually darkened, the moon rose in the sky and the stars shone. The snow on the ground became thicker, too and the winter wind blew against their faces. Still, they continued their journey without stopping. They even talked to each other on the way, creating an amiable atmosphere.

"I saw Bei Ling today. I feel so frustrated when I see him, especially when he has Chen Xin by his side. He knows that Chen Xin likes you!" Lei Chen grumbled angrily.

"He's changed so much. He just went to Wind Stream Tribe for a few years. Has he already forgotten that he's from of Dark Mountain Tribe? You didn't see his face that time. He even nagged me about all sorts of things!"

Su Ming was silent.

"Su Ming, I'll definitely surpass him!" Lei Chen clenched his fists as he ran.

"He's Bei Ling, our older brother. He took care of us when we were younger. Don't you recall him teaching you all he knew about training in the Ways of the Berserkers last time? He was even punished by the elder for that!"

"He even taught me how to use the bow..." Su Ming spoke calmly.

"As for Chen Xin, I already told you ages ago. I only see her as a sister, nothing else... Why are you still thinking about all these weird things?" Su Ming's voice was still calm.

Lei Chen wanted to continue speaking but he saw how calm Su Ming was so, he swallowed all his words back. He understood Su Ming just as much as Su Ming understood him.

He knew that Su Ming was a grateful man.

"Su Ming, people change..." Lei Chen spoke softly after a long while.

"As we grow up, as we experience more things, we will change... Perhaps one day, I will change... and I think, you will as well..." Lei Chen muttered.

'Will I...?'

As Su Ming ran, he fell silent.

When the sky became dark completely, Su Ming and Lei Chen stopped. Traveling at night was exceptionally troublesome. Besides, there was still some distance left before they reached the square. As such, they set up camp under a big tree for the night. They took shifts so that one of them could sit down to train while the other kept watch.

Su Ming leaned against the tree and his gaze fell upon Lei Chen, who sat down with his legs crossed. His body began glowing red and he could see a lot of red lines emerging from his body.

After watching Lei Chen for some time, Su Ming looked at the dark sky. The moon shone brightly and it looked beautiful as it hung in the sky with a curtain of stars. Yet, it made people feel small and insignificant when they lifted their heads and looked up.

‘People change... Will I... change too...?’

Su Ming gazed quietly as he recalled all the times he spent together with Bei Ling when he was still a child.

‘If I do change some day... how will I change...?’

Uncertainty appeared in Su Ming’s eyes. This was too complicated a question for a 16 year old teenager.

‘Perhaps I’ll be like the elder and become a really strong Berserk Healer. I’ll bring Xiao Hong on a journey around the world. We’ll go to places we have never been, we’ll go to all the tribes in the world and cure lots of the members of the Berserker Tribe...

‘Perhaps, I’ll even become an elder... Then I’ll find a girl I like and live with her. She’ll go on a journey with me until we grow old together... Xiao Hong will become Old Hong by then... I’ll talk about all of my experiences with the La Sus in the tribe... just like how the elder spoke to us about his life...’

Su Ming smiled. It was a pure, honest and happy smile.

‘Or perhaps... I’ll get to know my parents...’

Su Ming sighed as he smiled.

"Lei Chen, I won’t change!" Su Ming took a deep breath and spoke firmly under the moonlight on the vast plains belonging to the Berserker Tribe. He did so even though he was the only one who could hear it.

He was certain of his words just like any young man who still believed in a bright future...

Night went by. When dawn arrived, Su Ming and Lei Chen woke up as light gradually lit up the sky. They washed their faces with the snow. The cold snow made them shiver and wide awake.

"If we travel according to our original route, we’ll reach the square by noon." Lei Chen had already gone to the square a few times. He rubbed away the snow on his face as he spoke to Su Ming.

Su Ming nodded. After they washed up, they continued running in the forest as they welcomed the first rays of sunlight.

Their journey went on without problems. When noon arrived, Su Ming saw a lot of houses made of grass and wood at the edge of the forest. There were also a lot of noises coming from the tribal settlement. Some Berserkers from the tribe were also patrolling the vicinity.

"We're here!" Lei Chen looked towards Su Ming particularly at the woven basket on his back. However, the basket was covered firmly with hides. He could not tell what was in there.

Su Ming looked at the tribe square before him. It was big. Its size was comparable to the size of a small tribe but there were no fences around it. There were only several strong looking men patrolling the area in full alertness. They maintained the peace in the area and prevented wild beasts from attacking.

At the center of the square was a gigantic purple tent made of beast skins. The security was extremely tight and no one was allowed near it.

"That house belongs to the owner of the square. I heard that he's a really strong Berserker. He will only appear to welcome tribe leaders from other tribes." Lei Chen spoke to Su Ming softly as they moved out of the forest towards the square.

Su Ming only cast a glance at the purple tent before looking away. He stepped into the unfamiliar place under the guards' scrutinizing eyes.

At that moment, a girl's voice called out to them coldly.

"Lei Chen!"

Su Ming paused in the middle of his footsteps and discovered that Lei Chen immediately shuddered when he heard the voice.

## **Chapter 23: Like an Initial Meeting**

Su Ming could clearly sense that Lei Chen was not acting normally right then. It was as if he was afraid and could do nothing about it. Su Ming looked towards the direction of the voice subtly.

Su Ming was stunned!

The person who spoke was a girl. She wore a small shirt made of mink fur, and she seemed to be slightly taller than the frail-looking Su Ming. Her tall stature and her shirt managed to show off the curves of her body. Her skin was not rough like her fellow

members of the Berserker Tribe but, fair. She possessed a sort of beauty that would make others attracted to her.

Her black hair was held together by a red string made of grass. There were two little braids by her ears and the rest of her hair was left flowing behind her head. It swayed along with the wind as it blew, adding to her beauty.

Her eyes were like puddles of clear water and there was a cold fierceness within her eyes. There were beads of shiny droplets on her forehead, which became even more brilliant as they reflected the snow on the ground.

Her two white canines could be vaguely seen as the girl exhaled and they added a sort of wildness to the girl.

She was not a normal girl. She was just like Su Ming, a Berserker. However, the strength of Qi she released gave Su Ming the impression that she was only at the third level of the Blood Solidification Realm.

She was not alone. There were three other men from the Berserker Tribe behind her. They were built like little hills. Their gazes were cold as they stared at Su Ming and Lei Chen. The strength of their Qi was only slightly weaker than Bei Ling's.

There seemed to be markings painted on the three big men. As Su Ming looked at them subtly, he noticed that the markings looked like scorpions.

"Lei Chen, how dare you!" The girl gritted her teeth as she glared at Lei Chen.

Lei Chen touched his nose and the usual honest, simple-minded look settled once more on his face as he laughed in a silly manner.

"I was tricked by that dumb look of yours the last time and I got a stupid, dyed herb! Which you sold to me for three stone coins!!!" The girl marched towards Lei Chen, her face red with anger.

"You can't blame me for that. I didn't know what herb it was so, I just placed it at a random place. You were the one who wanted to buy it..." Lei Chen mumbled as though he was wronged.

"Hmph, give me the stone coins!" The girl glared at Lei Chen. Su Ming was also hated on because he was standing beside Lei Chen but he looked weak and fragile so, she ignored him once she took a glance at him.

"But I..." Lei Chen smiled wryly. He was about to speak but the girl immediately glared at him coldly. The three men behind her also looked at him with a fierce glare. He swallowed his words and could only complain about the situation in his head.

"Lei Chen, is she the one from Dark Dragon Tribe whom you and the elder spoke of?" Su Ming spoke slowly, his face void of expression.

The moment his words left his mouth, Lei Chen was stunned for a moment but quickly reacted. He knew that Su Ming had always been calm. If he said something, it meant that he would help. Besides, he knew Su Ming. The moment he heard Su Ming speaking so oddly, he immediately understood his intentions and stood behind Su Ming. He treated Su Ming as if he was his leader.

"Yes, Young Lord. That is the girl I spoke of!" Lei Chen's gaze was respectful as he spoke with his head bowed.

Lei Chen's actions and words immediately caused the girl to shift her gaze to Su Ming. She was surprised. The title of Young Lord was usually given to the future elders of the tribe. She looked at Su Ming closely but no matter what, he only gave off the feeling of a normal Berserker Tribe member. Hence, her countenance became fierce as she spoke in a coldly.

"I don't care whether you're the Young Lord. Return my stone coins!"

"Fine! I'll give you the stone coins. But I came with Lei Chen here today to find you!" Lei Chen was calm as he took out three stone coins from his bosom with his right hand.

"Give me the herb you bought from Lei Chen" Su Ming looked at the girl and spoke slowly.

The girl was stunned. She did not expect to get her stone coins back so easily. She grew suspicious as her gaze fell upon Su Ming and Lei Chen.

"What herb is that?" After a moment of hesitation, she did not reach out for the stone coins instead she chose to question.

"That is..." Lei Chen was about to speak when a stern voice cut him off.

"Quiet!" Su Ming glared at Lei Chen. It made Lei Chen shudder and lower his head respectfully.

When she saw his compliance, the girl blinked in confusion. She hesitated briefly and took out a purple herb. The herb looked normal. The only difference was that it was completely purple, which made it look terrifying.

When she brought out the herb, she immediately handed it to Su Ming but she kept her eyes fixed on his face. When she saw Su Ming's eyes light up and how he lifted his hand as if he could not wait to grab onto the herb, the girl laughed and retracted her hand.

"What are you doing?! This is my herb. I bought it! Are you trying to snatch my herb?" The girl wrinkled her nose and clicked her tongue.

"Girl, do you still want the stone coins?" Su Ming was surprised but he quickly frowned.

"Why wouldn't I want it? But I just thought about something, if you can show me proof that you are Dark Mountain Tribe's Young Lord, then I'll return the herb to you." The girl's eyes were cunning. Her slyness only made her wild presence stronger.

Even Su Ming felt his heart race but he kept his expressions as bland as possible.

Su Ming was quiet As he looked at the girl, he took a deep breath. He raised his left hand and the sudden presence of Qi belonging to a second level Berserker of the Blood Solidification Realm spread from his right hand.

"Is this enough proof?"

The sudden change instantly made the girl narrow her eyes. Even the three men behind her became serious.

It was not hard to understand why they were suddenly wary. Su Ming was until a moment ago, just a normal person. There was not even a hint of Qi from him. The sudden difference caught them all off guard.

"Young Master, a strong Berserker must have cast an Art on him. That is why the presence of his Qi is hidden. The Berserker is also much more powerful than us or else it would not have been impossible for us to detect it."

"That's right. I've been watching for a long time and I didn't detect anything. The only person who can do this is the elder of Dark Mountain Tribe..." The three men standing behind the girl whispered softly into her ear.

The girl lowered her head and looked at the purple herb in her hands. She hesitated. It had been some time since she bought the herb. She even spent a lot of time persuading Lei Chen to give her the herb. She had thought it was an unknown item and wanted to ask her elder. However on the second day, she found that the purple tinge had spread to her hands. It was obvious that it was dyed.

The discovery made her angry. Deeply offended, she brought the herb to the square to try and find Lei Chen again.

Just as she hesitated, Su Ming spoke in a frustrated manner.

"I've already shown you proof. Are you breaking your promise? These are the three stone coins... whatever, I'll give you five stone coins!" Su Ming gritted his teeth and took out another two stone coins, passing all of them to the girl.

"Five stone coins for the herb!"

The girl blinked. He managed to identify that she was from Dark Dragon Tribe immediately so, it was clear that Lei Chen told him about it. Besides, he also mentioned the elder of Dark Mountain Tribe...

"Then it's true! This is a rare item!" The girl showed a pleased expression and shook her head.

"So what? So what if I break my promise? This is mine. If you want to get it back, give me 30 stone coins!" When she saw the bitter look on Su Ming's face and the dismal look on Lei Chen's face, she became even more proud of herself. She turned around, snorted and quickly left the place.

The three men quickly followed her and left the square.

When the four of them went away, the dismal look on Lei Chen's face disappeared almost instantly. He smiled boyishly at Su Ming and touched his nose.

"Su Ming, how did you know she was from Dark Dragon Tribe?"

"So you had three stone coins? There's still one more, right? Give it!" Su Ming looked at Lei Chen and put away the stone coins as he spoke slowly.

"No way! That... I bought something with that stone coin last time... Um, I still have something to do. Let's leave it for now. We'll split up for now. I'll wait for you here later at night. We'll go back to the tribe then." Lei Chen felt his eye twitch and immediately spoke up. He did not even wait for Su Ming to reply. He ran away quickly and disappeared into the bustling square.

As he watched Lei Chen escape, Su Ming shook his head. If he was not too poor, he would not have revealed that he had Qi. The elder's Berserker Art was extremely powerful. If Su Ming refused to reveal it, no one would have been able to see it.

However if he did not do it, not only did Lei Chen have to return the stone coins to the girl, Su Ming himself would have needed to give up his stone coins too.

"Ha... Looks like I'll really have to do this..." Su Ming scratched his head and headed towards the square, troubled.

The square bustled with activity. Within the tents were plenty of people trading with each other and there were some who had spread hides on the snow. There, they placed various herbs as well as items for trade as they sat on the ground waiting for someone to buy their wares.

It was Su Ming's first time there. Everything was new to him. As he walked through the square, he saw a lot of items he had never seen before. Among them were bones from beasts and all sorts of weird herbs. There were even a couple of refined medicinal potions being sold.

"They even sell Dark Dragon's Saliva here. One bottle is worth one stone coin!" Su Ming faltered in his footsteps when he saw that Dark Dragon's Saliva was sold as an item. It was on one of the hides on the ground beside him. He blinked in surprise.

"I've been drinking Dark Dragon's Saliva... since I was young... just how many stone coins was that worth?! Xiao Hong also drank a lot of it..." Su Ming was just about to leave, mumbling when he caught the glimpse of something on one of the hides not far away.

"That is..." Su Ming took a deep breath and went towards it. He cast a glance at the owner of the stall. He was an old man in his 50s. He wore a loose hide shirt and sat still with his legs crossed atop the snow.

## **Chapter 24: Now, It's Dead**

When he felt someone coming towards him, the old man opened his eyes and looked at Su Ming. There was a hint of shock in his eyes but after he looked at him carefully, he closed his eyes again.

Su Ming eyed a blue object placed on the hide. The object was shaped like a plate. The edges were sharp but there were a few cracks on it. There was even a deep cut like the object had been pierced through.

It laid quietly on the mat but would let out a faint glow occasionally. Anyone who saw it would have thought that it was alive.

The cracks seemed to form a drawing. It was the drawing of a terrifying face and it was frightening to look at.

"This is an incomplete Berserker Vessel. You won't be able to afford it." As Su Ming was looking at it, he heard an old and wizened voice. Su Ming lifted his head and looked at the old man, who spoke.

"Berserker Vessel?" Su Ming sucked in a breath. He had suspected it. He had read about it before in the beast skin scrolls. Berserker Vessels were extremely rare items. Only the powerful Berserkers in the Transcendence Realm could obtain and make one. As for the people in the Blood Solidification Realm, it was difficult for them to obtain it.

Even if they had one, it was usually an inheritance within the tribe. There also had to be people in the tribe who were capable of guarding the vessel from being taken away by Berserkers in the Transcendence Realm.

"This vessel is already broken. You can't use it. But since it was made by a Berserker in the Transcendence realm, it'll be for 1,000 stone coins." The old man spoke slowly.

As Su Ming stared at the blue plate, his gaze was filled with longing and envy. He only had 5 coins with him so, he could not afford it.

He sighed. Su Ming looked at the blue plate again and left reluctantly.

'I wonder when I'll ever own my very own Berserker Vessel... '

Su Ming thought as he wandered through the square. There were a lot of people who opened up shop by selling items on hides. However, even after Su Ming went around the place, he did not see anyone else selling Berserker Vessels.

He did however find some Cloud Gauze Grass being sold. Just that, it was sold by different people. The price for one was rather expensive. Just one alone was sold at the price of one stone coin, which was the same price as Dark Dragon's Saliva.

It was beginning to grow dark. The sun was setting in the sky and the light cast a red glow on land. Yet, there were even more people gathered at the square and it continued to bustle with activity.

As he looked at the sky, Su Ming decided to continue walking around. He even went into one of the tents. The tent was also a shop. The price for each item was expensive but at least the quality of each could be guaranteed. There were quite a lot of people going in and out of the tents.

As Su Ming watched, he saw some members of the Berserker Tribe who were the same as him. They were also carrying baskets on their backs as they went into the tents to sell the contents within to the tent owners.

When Su Ming saw this, he smiled. He had been observing since noon and he saw a lot of things. After he pieced up all the details he obtained, he understood most of the rules there.

As the sky darkened almost completely and torches were lit around the square, Su Ming went to a corner where the light did not shine.

He looked at his surroundings carefully before quickly putting down his basket. He wrapped the hides on the basket around his body and put on all the other hides he had prepared in the basket. Finally, he brought out a black beast skin that looked like a robe and wore it, covering up his whole body.

Su Ming's face could no longer be seen. From the size of his body, he looked swollen. He looked completely different from his frail self.

He shook his limbs slightly, then he wrapped the beast skins even tighter around himself. Su Ming took a look at the basket. There was still one more thing in the basket. It was something he prepared specifically for this trip. It was heavy but it had its uses.

He swung the basket over his back and lowered his head. He stopped after taking a few steps forward. Then he hunched his back. He then quickly walked towards a tent he had chosen a while ago.

The light in the tent was dark. Since noon, the people who went into this tent were mostly like Su Ming. They hid their faces so that no one could recognize them.

It may have been Su Ming's first time at the square but he had been observing the proceedings since noon. As such, he had already understood most of the rules of the square. He did not immediately enter the tent he chose. Instead, he paced about outside the tent for a while as he looked at the tent occasionally.

Before long, a person dressed in a similar fashion as Su Ming came out from the tent and left the square in a hurry.

Su Ming had seen a lot of people like this since noon. He was somewhat certain that once he left, no one would chase after him. He opened the flap and went into the then empty tent quickly without any hesitation.

Once he entered the tent, he felt a gaze fall upon him. The person looking at him was a middle aged man. He was half nude and sitting cross-legged. There was a bonfire before him. As it lit up the tent, it crackled as it burned.

One of the man's eyes was empty but the other gave off a sharp glint. He was watching Su Ming closely without a word.

"The fire is quite dazzling." Since Su Ming was covered up by hides, he was not worried about the man seeing his face. He also spoke slowly with a hoarse voice and it was completely different compared to his normal one.

The one-eyed man looked at Su Ming for a while before looking away. He felt no Qi from Su Ming and he did not look any different from the rest who came.

He may not have felt Qi from Su Ming but, one who could enter the tent and seem so familiar with the rules could not have been just any person.

He raised his right hand and pressed it on the bonfire. The bonfire immediately grew dimmer. The light from the bonfire became darker as well.

"Take it out. If it's good stuff, I'll give you a fair price." The man put out his right hand and spoke slowly.

Su Ming scrutinized the man behind the hides that hid his face. Then all of a sudden, he laughed. His laughter was also hoarse as it echoed in the tent. It made the man frown.

Just as he frowned, Su Ming raised his right hand. Immediately, a round object was thrown at the man as a medicinal scent spread in the air. The man caught it in his hands. When he saw it, his right eye shone brilliantly as he took in a sharp breath.

"How much does this thing cost?" Su Ming spoke hoarsely.

"What is this? Where did you get it? What are the effects of this thing?" The man stared at the object in his hand for a while before looking at Su Ming seriously. A flash of curiosity appeared in his eyes.

"When I was on the way to the square, I saw this beast." Su Ming did not answer his question but chose to talk about something else. As he spoke, he put down the basket and grabbed something inside with his right hand. Immediately, the basket shook and Su Ming took out a mink raccoon that was tied up before placing it on the floor.

The mink raccoon looked listless but there was a fierce glare within its eyes. There were wounds on its body that had not healed. It also could not escape as it was tied up.

The man was stunned. It was clear that he did not know what Su Ming meant. His gaze fell on the mink raccoon for a while but he quickly looked away. It was just a normal beast. There was nothing about it that required his attention.

"I just caught it on a whim. Look, it's still alive..." Su Ming's voice was slow and hoarse. Nonetheless, it sounded odd in the dim tent.

"What are you saying?"

The man frowned.

"I'm saying that it's still alive. Do you know why I caught it? Because it was too curious. It had been following me for too long..." Su Ming raised his left hand and caressed the beast. However, just as his hands swept through the wounds on the mink raccoon's body, it shivered!

There were no cries, no screams. There was only a brief shudder before the mink raccoon's body turned into red mist as if its blood was burned. As the man looked at the scene dumbfounded, the mink raccoon's entire body disappeared. Only a pile of red and black bones were left behind.

"Now, it's dead..." Su Ming touched the pile of bones with his left hand and the bones immediately turned into dust which scattered on the ground.

The man took a sharp breath and retreated a few steps instinctively. There was shock and fear in his eye, which could not be concealed. After a moment, he once again turned towards Su Ming with fear and respect.

"Fallen Berserker..."

"Hmm?" Su Ming snorted.

The man shivered and was about to explain himself when Su Ming waved his hand as though he was growing impatient.

"Tell me how much that thing in your hands is worth! The effect of the item is simple. It will increase the effects of all the herbs you take while you train by one fold! As for the other question... you're too curious for your own good." Su Ming spoke slowly.

The man's face grew pale. What he saw earlier shocked him. He did not even feel any Qi circulating from the person's body. Nevertheless, the beast turned into red mist right before his eyes.

"This thing..." The man took a moment to think as he looked at the round medicinal object in his hand.

"Sir, I've never seen this thing before in my life... This is..." The man spoke hesitantly. He never spoke this way to his normal customers but due to the shock of what he just saw, he did not dare offend the person before him.

"You can try it out right now. If there are no effects, I'll leave. But if you can feel the effects, we can negotiate the price." Su Ming spoke calmly and slowly as he sat down.

The man breathed out a sigh of relief and agreed to Su Ming's terms respectfully. He took out a bell from his bosom and shook it lightly. Immediately, the ringing of the bell filled the tent.

There was an indescribable look in Su Ming's eyes. He stole a glance at the bell and he tightened his left hand, which he kept hidden within the robe. There was still a bit of Scattering Blood Powder left in his left hand.

## **Chapter 25: Her Name is Bai Ling**

Su Ming was nervous. The Qi within the man standing before him felt stronger than Lei Chen's. He was probably around the fifth or sixth level of the Blood Solidification Realm.

Su Ming could not hope to win against such a person. If the man decided to attack him, Su Ming would have had a hard time dodging it. However, he needed a large number Cloud Gauze Grass, which would require a lot of stone coins.

Due to this, he had to take a risk. Besides, after he killed Yu Chi in the forest, he felt that his mindset had changed somewhat. The knowledge he obtained by reading the beast skin scrolls he got from the elder were now deeply ingrained in his mind.

Somewhere in his mind, he thought that if he could not overpower the other party with his Qi, he could at least make his opponent hesitate. Then, his opponent would not act rashly.

That was why he chose to disguise himself before going into the tent at first. Secondly, he brought the wild beast with him. All of it was to create shock at the right time.

It seemed that his actions produced pretty good results but Su Ming was still nervous. He did not dare let his guard down.

In truth, Su Ming was not the only nervous one in the tent. The man was possibly even more nervous than Su Ming. He would occasionally glance at the spot where the creature died. When he saw the pile of dust, his heart would race; not out of excitement, but out of fear.

In the man's sight, the person before him, covered entirely in hides gave off an enigmatic air. It put a lot of pressure on the man especially with the shocking scene that happened just moments ago. The anxiety and nervousness he felt towards Su Ming was far stronger than what Su Ming felt towards him.

'This man is very experienced. He speaks calmly but he is a ruthless man. He must be a Fallen Berserker who went into hiding in one of the mountains... but from his mannerisms, he seems to be someone reasonable... But I don't think this weird medicine will be very strong. '

As the man was drowning in his own fears, there were footsteps outside the tent. Then, the flaps of the tent were lifted and a man walked in.

The man's face was blank. When he walked into the tent, he did not say a word. He stood by the side waiting for the one-eyed man's orders.

When the other man came in, Su Ming only cast him a glance. The presence of his Qi was not thick. He was the same as Su Ming. They were both practitioners at the second level of the Blood Solidification Realm.

"Eat this and this as well!" The one-eyed man did not hesitate and handed the pill along with an herb to the other man who just came in.

The other man took the pill and the herb, his face still blank and swallowed it after a few bites. Then he sat down with his legs-crossed, circulating the Qi in his body. Very soon, his whole demeanor changed as if he was surprised. He opened his eyes before long and looked at the one-eyed man with uncertainty.

"There aren't really any major effects... I just felt the effects of the Prime Spirit Grass increase... maybe about one fold."

When the one-eyed man heard his words, he immediately narrowed his eyes as his heart hammered against his chest. He knew what the increase of effects for any herbal medicine by one fold would bring. If it was just a normal herb, the effects would not be obvious. However, if it was the sort of herb taken by Berserkers above the eighth level of the Blood Solidification Realm, the value of the pill would practically be immeasurable.

'For a normal herb worth 10 stone coins, this item would only be worth one stone coin. But if it were an herb that was worth 100 or 1,000 stone coins, the increased effect...'

The one-eyed man grew more excited as he thought of the possibilities but he could not be sure that the item would have the same effect for higher-leveled herbs.

'It's a pity I don't have a lot of stone coins on my person...'

He quelled his excitement and sent the other man away. Then he stood respectfully before Su Ming and forced a smile.

"Sir, this medicine of yours is really mysterious. I'll give you 30 stone coins in exchange for one, how does that sound?" The one-eyed man did not dare offend Su Ming. To him, Su Ming was a Fallen Berserker. If he could produce such a powerful medicine, he was definitely not a common Berserker Practitioner.

"Thirty coins?" The price offered made Su Ming's heart pound in excitement but he spoke with a colder voice instead.

"This... Sir, 30 coins is my final offer. I can't even be sure whether this medicine works the same for higher-leveled herbs." The one-eyed man immediately explained himself but before he could finish, Su Ming cut him off.

"If you consume this medicine, no matter what herb you take, the effects will increase by one-fold. If I didn't want to buy a Berserker Vessel, I wouldn't even sell this."

The one-eyed man struggled internally for a while before he gritted his teeth and nodded at Su Ming.

"How many do you have?"

"Besides the one you just ate, there's still one more!" As Su Ming spoke, he produced a small bottle from his chest. There was only one Scattering Dust pill in the bottle.

When the man heard this, he felt his heart twisting in pain at the loss of the first pill. As he hesitated, he saw Su Ming standing up and putting away the bottle. Then Su Ming lifted his hand which turned the small creature into red mist earlier. He was also glaring at him from behind the layers of hides that covered his face. The man immediately remembered that he wasted a pill as an experiment and quickly spoke up.

"Sir, sir! This... 50 coins! This is really all I can give you!"

Su Ming did not want to linger around for too long so, he spoke flatly, "Fine. Along with the pill you used just now, that'll be 100 stone coins!"

The one-eyed man only hesitated for a short while before producing a beast skin pouch from his chest. He handed it to Su Ming respectfully. There were two white stone coins inside.

The value of the stone coins were decided by their color. The gray ones were worth one each and one black coin was equivalent to 10 gray coins. As for the white coin, it was equivalent to 50 gray coins. If it was a purple coin, it was worth 100 gray coins.

"Give me black coins!" Su Ming only glanced at the two coins before he spoke all of a sudden.

The one-eyed man was taken aback but only for a moment. He did not ask any questions instead, he produced 10 black stone coins and gave them to Su Ming.

After placing the stone coins into his pouch, Su Ming threw the little bottle to the man. He picked up the basket on the ground and left the tent without another glance at the man. Once he left the tent, Su Ming did not act immediately. He chose to walk around the square. The moon and stars were shining brightly in the sky and there were torches lit everywhere. Yet, there were still a lot of people at the square. However, most of the people who were shopping at that moment were all dressed up like Su Ming.

He wandered around the square until he was sure no one was watching him. Then he went to the places selling Cloud Gauze Grass that he singled out in the morning. He bought more than 60 of them. After that, he went to a more secluded place to change his attire. He left quickly and went to the place he promised to meet up with Lei Chen. Lei Chen was already at their meeting place, yawning up at the sky. Su Ming did not speak but walked past Lei Chen.

Lei Chen was surprised but followed suit. Both of them disappeared into the forest soon and ran once they were in there. Su Ming even changed his path multiple times. He did

not stop to rest until the sky started to darken the next day. Even then, his face was pale due to fear.

Lei Chen was panting hard. He did not understand it but he chose not to ask. He especially decided to keep his silence when Su Ming threw five stone coins in his direction. Once he caught them, he laughed excitedly.

They took a short break before Su Ming stood up once more. He ran with Lei Chen towards the direction of their tribe. He did not stop this time but ran at full speed. In fact, his speed seemed to increase with each step he took. His Qi might not have been as powerful as Lei Chen's, but in terms of speed, even Lei Chen struggled to keep up.

'I had a pretty good haul this time... I originally thought that if I could not sell the pills, I would experiment with five pieces of Cloud Gauze Grass first. I didn't expect things to go so smoothly.'

As Su Ming ran, he appeared to be deep in thought.

'The one-eyed man should be scared of me but I still can't let my guard down. I have to return to the tribe as soon as possible.'

Su Ming was careful all the way back to the tribe. They were far away from the square by then but they would still change their paths occasionally. Su Ming even used his experiences in the forest to erase their tracks.

The sun lit up the sky but there was still some time before noon. Su Ming and Lei Chen caught sight of their tribe some distance away. When he saw the tribe, Su Ming finally relaxed. There was even a smile on his face.

"We're finally back. Su Ming, you still haven't told me how you knew Bai Ling was a member of Dark Dragon Tribe." Lei Chen was gasping as he tried to catch his breath. As Su Ming slowed down, he grabbed the chance to ask him the one question that had been on his mind.

"Bai Ling?" The image of the tall and beautiful girl surfaced in Su Ming's head. He thought especially of the girl wrinkling her nose and looking at them with her bright eyes. She seemed feral but it was a wild sort of beauty.

"I didn't know that she was from Dark Dragon Tribe." Su Ming smiled. The girl named Bai Ling was the prettiest girl he had ever seen since he was young.

"No way. If you didn't know, how did you manage to get it right in one go?" Lei Chen had been thinking about it for a long time but he still could not get an answer. Now that Su Ming did not intend to tell him the answer, he became desperate.

Su Ming took one look at Lei Chen and laughed out loud.

"Lei Chen, you like her?"

"Nonsense!" Lei Chen shook his head fervently, then began mumbling under his breath.

"She's too thin for my liking. I like those who are a bit on the plump side..." Lei Chen scratched his head. He had always liked women who were a little more built since he was young. Even now, it was still the same.

Su Ming continued laughing and joking with Lei Chen as he ran back towards the tribe. The sounds of carefree laughter and camaraderie resounded in the cold winter.

"The tattoos of the Dark Dragon were on the three men behind Bai Ling. The only ones who like painting Dark Dragons on their body around this area are the people from Dark Dragon Tribe." As they were near their tribe, Su Ming told Lei Chen between laughs.

When Lei Chen heard the answer, he immediately laughed wryly. He did not expect the answer to be so simple.

Su Ming and Lei Chen returned to their houses safely. As Su Ming brought out the Cloud Gauze Grass he bought, his eyes were bright with anticipation.

'Mountain Spirit... I wonder what its effects are once I finish making it! The elder told me to not leave the tribe for the time being... I'll return as soon as possible. I don't think I'll be gone for long.'

Su Ming made his decision after he was deep in thought.

At the same time Su Ming made his decision, something big happened at the square far away from Dark Mountain Tribe!

The cause of it all was the round pill Su Ming created.

Once Su Ming left, the one-eyed man pondered for a long time in his tent and refused to accept any more clients who wanted to trade with him. As he was thinking, he gritted his teeth. He quickly took the bottle containing the pill to the owner of the square, who resided in the large purple tent.

## **Chapter 26: The Night of the Blood Red Moon**

The one-eyed man waited for a long time before he was summoned. When he was called, he entered the tent respectfully. After an hour, he exited the tent with an ecstatic expression, his mannerisms still respectful as he left.

Within the purple tent, were two elderly men with completely white hair but their eyes still held a lot of life and vigor. Before them laid a very normal looking, empty small bottle.

One of the old men who wore a white robe held a pill between his fingers. He looked at it for a while. Then slowly, his gaze was filled with surprise and uncertainty.

He sank into deep thought for a moment after which, he brought the pill to his nose and took a sniff. He closed his eyes in concentration. After a long moment, he opened his eyes abruptly.

"It's just like he said. This pill has unbelievable effects! I've been in Wind Stream Tribe for many years but I've never seen such a thing in my life. By the looks of it, it doesn't seem to be a medicine made from a long time ago either. There isn't any sign of age on it so, it's clear that it has just been made recently!"

"Just what is this...?"

"It's a pity a long time has passed since the trade took place. The Fallen Berserker is not an easy person to deal with either or else we might get to know how this pill was made," the other old man spoke slowly.

"Don't be reckless. A person who can produce such an item is either a very powerful Berserker in the Blood Solidification Realm... or a Fallen Berserker at the Transcendence Realm who came from somewhere else. Brother Zhou, let me take this thing back to the tribe. Perhaps the Elder in Wind Stream Tribe can identify it." As the old man in white spoke, he carefully placed the pill back into the small bottle. Then he waved his right hand and the small bottle disappeared.

"You do that." The old man sitting before him nodded his head.

"This item is too important. I'll be taking my leave first. If I get any information, I'll tell you." The old man in white stood up. He then held his fist and palm together as a salute towards the old man called Zhou. He quickly left the purple tent. The moment he stepped out of the tent, the outline of his body became distorted. He turned into white mist and rose into the sky. Instantly, he disappeared.

Daylight had almost arrived. On the vast plains some distance away from the square, was a big tribe. The size of the tribe was almost equivalent to the size of a city. It was surrounded by six other tribes the size of Dark Mountain Tribe. In the very middle was a big city made of stone and dirt!

The city looked magnificent like a giant beast had arrived on the land. The citizens within the city alone numbered more than thousands. It was not something Dark Mountain Tribe could ever hope to overcome.

The six surrounding tribes were affiliated with the city. Some of them were conquered by Wind Stream Tribe while some sought protection when some sort of disaster befell them and they became part of Wind Stream Tribe.

Wind Stream Tribe was a medium sized tribe but it was still considered weak for a medium sized tribe. After all, Dark Mountain was located at a rather rural area in the world. However it was precisely because of that, Wind Stream Tribe could rule over the entire area and accept tributes offered by numerous smaller tribes. It was also the only tribe in Dark Mountain that was qualified to contact members of the Berserker Tribe belonging to the upper class.

As the sun began to light up the sky, a white mist flew across the sky. It gathered outside the city and transformed into the old man in white.

The old man looked solemn as he immediately walked into the city. On the way, he met other members of Wind Stream Tribe. All of them would stop and bow towards him respectfully.

At the center of the city was a completely dark altar. The altar was built in the shape of a pentagon and was 100 feet tall. There was a drawing of a bird on it. The altar looked as if it was left behind since ancient times.

The old man in white stood underneath the altar respectfully. After a moment, a gentle voice traveled from the top of the altar.

"Shi Hai, what is it?"

"Elder, I was at Zhou Ran's square and saw a medication I've never seen before. The effects of this herb are incredible..." The old man in white took a deep breath and spoke in a low voice.

"Oh? Let me see it," the gentle voice spoke slowly from atop the altar.

The old man in white lifted his right hand and bright light appeared from his palm. A small bottle materialized itself instantly. Then, as if there was some mysterious force attracting the small bottle, it floated upwards slowly towards the altar.

It was quiet around the area. The only sounds were that of the wind passing by. The wind caused the old man's robes to flutter. He stood there, as still as a statue and waited silently.

After a moment, the gentle voice spoke once again but this time, there was a tinge of surprise in it!

"There's only one?"

"Only one," the old man in white replied immediately.

"I've never seen a medication like this before... The makeup of this medication is something I don't understand... And it's clear this was made not too long ago... Who brought this to the square?" The gentle voice spoke solemnly.

"A Fallen Berserker," the old man in white spoke in a low tone.

"Find him. Use all the resources we have and find him! Tell him to join Wind Stream Tribe and I will treat him as a permanent guest here!" The gentle voice exclaimed almost immediately after the old man spoke the last syllable.

The old man in white took a deep breath and complied to the order respectfully. He could identify that the medicine was out of ordinary but he did not expect the Elder to invite the person to Wind Stream Tribe as a permanent guest. The status of a permanent guest was treated with extreme respect. Besides the tribe leader, the Elder and few other people, they were treated almost with the same importance as the other leaders of the tribe.

As the old man in white went away, he immediately had the entire Wind Stream Tribe carry out the Elder's orders. He had cast a huge net to search for the Fallen Berserker!

As for Su Ming, he had just made a decision at home in Dark Mountain Tribe. Hence in the morning of the second day, he left the tribe alone and went into the forest. Then, he ran towards Black Flame Mountain.

Su Ming traversed through the forest without any hesitation. After reaching the second level of the Blood Solidification Realm, his speed and agility had increased so much even Lei Chen had a hard time keeping up with him at full speed. As he ran through the forest, his speed increased even further due to his familiarity with the place. By noon, he had arrived at the foot of Black Flame Mountain.

He climbed up Black Flame Mountain and went to the cave which he used for the quenching of herbs. Su Ming placed the basket down on ground. There were a lot of herbs in there, all of which he prepared for the purpose of quenching.

Xiao Hong was not in the cave. It was most probably out playing. Su Ming cast a glance around the cave. Once he was certain there were no signs of abnormality around, he sat down cross-legged on the ground. He concentrated on circulating the blood in his body until the 10 blood veins shone brightly on his body and his body reached the best condition possible.

There were even vague signs of the 11th blood vein manifesting itself, which could allow Su Ming to reach the third level of the Blood Solidification Realm.

'The elder helped me to truly Awaken and he did say I was about to reach the third level... Not a lot of time passed since then but I feel that there's enough blood within me now... The ancient Berserker Art is truly amazing.'

Su Ming opened his eyes and the scene of the black substance oozing out of his body surfaced in his mind.

'I might as well put aside creating more pills for now and break through the second level!'

Su Ming only took a moment to make his decision and brought out the Sky Stone he pillaged the other day from his bosom. He took a look at the herb and swallowed a Scattering Dust before plucking a leaf from the herb and swallowing it as well.

He closed his eyes and meditated once again. After a moment, Su Ming's body was covered in sweat and surrounded by blood red light. The 11th blood vein showed signs of manifesting completely.

After a few hours, a muffled sound resounded throughout Su Ming's body and the 11th blood vein manifested itself completely. A much stronger presence of Qi immediately erupted from Su Ming's body.

Su Ming opened his eyes, which shone brilliantly.

'The third level of the Blood Solidification Realm!'

He stood up, his face bright with excitement. After he moved his body to remove the numbness in his limbs, he brought out the herbs. He began the process of creating Mountain Spirit according to the methods in his memory.

Su Ming was no longer as clueless as he was a few months ago. He was already familiar with the process of quenching herbs and even more so at controlling the fire in the cave. As the temperature within the cave increased, Su Ming took off his clothes and stood beside the stone cauldron half-naked. At times he would bring one of the herbs to his nose whereas other times, he would crush the herbs and throw them into the cauldron.

Time passed by. The sky gradually began to darken. Silence also fell upon the forest and mountains. Even the sounds of the birds and beasts became a muffled whisper.

As the sky darkened, the moon rose into the sky but, the moon that night was different from the other nights. It was in a shade so red like there was a blood red moon in the sky.

The strange sight immediately covered the land with a strange atmosphere. It was especially so for the area around Dark Mountain. The sounds from the birds and the

beasts completely disappeared. There was not even the slightest whisper from them. It was as if they did not dare to make a sound.

A red shadow sped through the forest at the foot of Black Flame Mountain. It was the little monkey. At that moment, its gaze was solemn and alert. It would lift its gaze towards the red moon occasionally and distress would flicker across its features.

As it ran forward, it hesitated. It still did not know that Su Ming had returned. It changed its direction and no longer ran towards Black Flame Mountain. Instead, it hid itself somewhere in the forest.

As the sky grew darker, the moon shone a brighter shade of red. By the time midnight arrived, the entire Dark Mountain seemed to have been dyed in blood.

At that moment, a weak cry came from within Dark Mountain. The cry grew louder as time passed and eventually grew so loud it traveled past Dark Mountain.

The cry seemed to be filled with endless resentment. Those who heard it were filled with fear. It was a cry that seemed to shake the soul. If anyone listened to it for a prolonged amount of time, they would feel like their blood was boiling. It terrified them.

The cry echoed through the skies as if it reflected the blood red moon. It made Dark Mountain appear to be shrouded in mystery.

That night, the three tribes around Dark Mountain were filled with wariness. The normal members of the tribe in Dark Mountain Tribe all returned to their houses under the protection of the Berserkers within the tribe. They were told not to leave unless it was absolutely necessary. The tribe leader also personally took command of the Berserkers to protect the tribe.

The elder stood at the highest place in the tribe. It was a stage made of giant wood. In his hands was the black bone cane. As he looked afar, his eyes were tainted with a hint of worry.

He felt Su Ming leave the tribe earlier but he did not expect the blood moon which only occurred once every three years to happen that night. It was months earlier than the previous appearances of the blood red moon. The strange phenomenon made him surprised and fearful.

"Fire!" After a long while, the elder spoke. Immediately, the tribe members surrounding the giant wooden stage brought out torches and placed them underneath the stage,. The torches caused the stage to burn. The elder on the stage looked as if he was caught in a sea of fire but he was calm as he chanted in a strange language.

Dark Mountain Tribe was not the only one who did this. At the same time, in another direction from Dark Mountain Tribe, the same also happened in Dark Dragon Tribe. The

elder of Dark Dragon Tribe wore a loose robe. The elder's hair was also down. There was no telling whether the elder was a man or a woman. In the elder's hands was the skull of a strange, one-horned beast. The elder lifted it up high and a piercing cry escaped the elder's lips.

Among the tribe members of Dark Dragon Tribe, stood a girl of extreme beauty. Her face was pale as she looked at the blood red moon in the sky.

## **Chapter 27: The Legend of the Fire Berserker!**

The girl was Bai Ling. She was scared as she looked at the elder of the tribe on the altar and the other tribe members whose faces were also similarly pale with terror.

"The blood moon only appears once every three years and it appears only after all the snow has melted on Dark Mountain. There would then be enough wild beasts to be sacrificed so that we can prevent disasters... but now... it has appeared far too early... this..." Bai Ling bit her lip and looked around her, seemingly even more afraid

As for Su Ming, he was in the fire cave concentrating on creating and refining medication. He was covered in sweat as he watched the stone cauldron carefully and he adjusted the temperature of the fire as he saw fit.

Very soon, there was a muffled blast within the cauldron. Su Ming laughed bitterly and wiped the sweat off his forehead. He knew that he had failed once again.

'The Mountain Spirit is much harder to make compared to Scattering Dust...'

Su Ming shook his head and opened the cauldron. A puff of green smoke with a spicy scent emerged from within.

He sighed. Just as he was about to continue, he suddenly felt his Qi boiling in his body as though he had lost control of it. He frowned, surprised. He looked around him to see what could have possibly cause such a change but he found nothing.

'That's odd...'

Su Ming scratched his head. He only stopped for a while before he resuming his attempts to create Mountain Spirit.

At that moment on the other side of Dark Mountain, where Black Mountain Tribe was located, the tribe members were also looking at the moon. However their expressions

were different from that of Dark Mountain Tribe and Dark Dragon Tribe. Unlike the other two tribes, their eyes were filled with fear and blood lust.

Roars escaped their lips. It was not just the Berserkers who roared. Even the normal members of the tribe did so. Their cries gradually became one and turned into a giant, roaring wave.

Within the center of the crowd was a small hill made up of numerous red stones. Sitting on the small hill was a willowy old man wearing a black robe. The old man's eyes were cold as he stared at the blood red moon. There was a cruel smile on his lips.

"Since ancient times, the Fire Berserker Tribe roamed the earth. The tribe had powers that shook the earth. They controlled all the fire on heaven and earth. If they were angered, they could even burn the heavens to ashes and become gods themselves! Their names spread through the lands so widely that even those who did not belong to the Berserker Tribe feared them."

"They were known as one of the eight great Berserker Tribes!" the willowy old man spoke with a hoarse voice. It was as if he was talking to all the people in the world.

"But because the tribe wanted to steal an artifact from heaven, they were punished by the God of Berserkers. After nine days and nine nights, the entire Fire Berserker Tribe was destroyed except for the Berserkers. Those who did not have the Berserker Body were all burned alive and their souls shattered!"

"Even when such a disaster befell the Fire Berserker Tribe, the Berserkers within the tribe did not die. They wanted to rebel against the God of Berserkers and become gods themselves! The God of Berserkers laid down his punishment. Just as he was about to use his powers and bring annihilation to the entire tribe, the Elder of the Fire Berserker Tribe fought against the God of Berserkers!"

"The battle shook the heavens. The Elder of the Fire Berserker Tribe died in battle but before his death, he cast a forbidden spell that made the God of Berserkers afraid. It allowed him to grant immortality to all the Fire Berserker tribe members who had not died!" Awe appeared in the willowy old man's eyes. He raised his right hand and immediately, black mist surrounded his wrinkled hand and transformed into a terrifying shape of a spirit.

"But he made a mistake. He may have allowed all the Berserkers in the Fire Berserker tribe to obtain immortality, but the God of Berserkers used the powers of creation and made them all lose their physical bodies. They became the Wings of the Blood Moon!"

"From then on, they became beings that could no longer see light. They lost their conscience and became the Wings of the Moon which lusted after blood! Their resentment, hate, anger and sadness have turned into a monstrous grudge that turns

the moon red once every three years. When the moon is dyed in blood, they will return once more!"

"Tonight, I, Bi Tu Elder of Black Mountain Tribe will help you!" The willowy old man laughed darkly and bit his tongue. As he spat out a mouthful of fresh blood, the blood red stones underneath his feet exploded and floated in midair.

The Elder of Dark Mountain Tribe, Bi Tu also levitated in the air. He spread his arms out. His eyes were filled with madness and excitement.

The red stones began rotating quickly in midair and formed a gigantic picture. The picture was spherical in shape and there was a crescent moon within it. The entire thing was colored a bloody red.

"Wings of the Moon, wake up! Awaken from your long slumber and come forth!" Bi Tu spat out another mouthful of fresh blood which instantly turned into bloody mist and fused into the giant picture in the sky. A roaring sound came from the picture and it exploded suddenly. It turned into a big patch of red mist which spread across its surroundings like rolling waves.

At that moment, the entirety of Dark Mountain shook. The trembling could be clearly felt as if the land was moving and the mountains were shaking. The tremors caused an uproar within Dark Mountain Tribe and Dark Dragon Tribe.

Su Ming, who was in the cave within Black Flame Mountain also felt the tremors. His expression changed. He even heard a faint roar from within the deeper parts of the cave as the mountain shook. He froze and immediately stopped all activity. He retreated a few steps and climbed through the exit. When he climbed out of the cave, he almost gasped in surprise. Right before his eyes, was the blood moon hanging in the sky!

"The blood moon!" Su Ming's face immediately turned pale.

At that moment, a thick stench of blood came from within Black Flame Mountain. Su Ming did not even hesitate. He understood the connotations of the blood moon and had even calculated the days before it appeared.

However, he did not expect it to appear earlier!

He immediately turned around and crawled back into the cave. He knew that he could not find a place to hide once he was outside. There was no time for him to return to the tribe either. Once he returned to the cave, he immediately took out his horn and quickly cut through the wall beside him. It was as if he was struck by madness. The roaring sound within the cave was becoming clearer and there were even signs of other sounds amid the roar.

Su Ming's eyes were bloodshot. Fortunately, he was used to the place and the horn was extremely sharp. Soon enough, he cut open a small hole and he crawled in immediately. Su Ming then blocked the entrance of the hole with the stones that fell out when he was cutting through the wall. He did not even mind the heat the hole emitted.

The very moment he crawled into the hole, a gust of red mist rushed out from within the cave. Once it filled up the entire cave, it escaped through the tunnel with a rumble. Su Ming heard the sound clearly.

Under the light of the blood moon, the five summits of Dark Mountain seemingly erupted like volcanoes. The rumbles shook the skies and a huge amount of red mist poured out from the summits.

It seemed like the mist had been inside the five summits of Dark Mountain since the beginning of time. As it erupted from the mountains, the mist immediately covered the sky. The mist from Dark Dragon Mountain leaked out of the mountain from its cracks. Some even poured out from the place Su Ming obtained the Dark Dragon's Saliva. If Su Ming looked closely, he would have noticed that the places the dark dragons avoided like the plague as they chased him around all those years, were the places where the red mist was the thickest!

The other mountains were the same as Dark Dragon Mountain, especially Black Flame Mountain. The amount of mist that erupted from the mountain was shocking. As the mist spread around the place, a humming sound echoed. There were sounds of many wings flapping mixed in with the humming, creating a rhapsody of death, which terrified all who heard it!

He saw red shadows coming out of the five summits along with the mist. There were also piercing roars echoing through the sky. The red shadows were strange beasts that had a pair of wings and red eyes each. They were the size of a palm and had six limbs. They also had human faces which were filled with madness and lust for blood.

They were the Wings of the Moon!

The number of the Wings of the Moon mounted to at least tens of thousands. They covered the skies until it was completely red. As they cried out, they rushed towards Black Mountain Tribe, Dark Mountain Tribe, Dark Dragon Tribe and all the places where wild beasts dwelt in the forest.

They did not have a conscience. They were only fueled by resentment and a thirst for blood. They only knew how to kill and drink fresh blood, especially blood of the members of the Berserker Tribe. It only further spurred their insanity. In fact, they sometimes skipped feasting on wild beasts and went straight for the Berserker Tribes.

There was an uproar within Dark Mountain Tribe. There were screams filled with terror echoing in the air. Chen Xin's face was pale as she held on tightly onto Bei Ling, who was beside her. Bei Ling's face too was pale.

Lei Chen was standing further ahead overcome by irritation. He wanted to find Su Ming but he did not see him among the people within the settlement. As he was filled with worry for his friend, he was further taken aback by the scene in the sky.

The terrified normal tribe members were silenced by the Berserkers in the tribe. Gradually, all the people of tribe focused their gazes on the burning wooden stage and on the person who was looking at the sky.

The elder's face was pale but they could not see it due to the fire. His pupils were contracted. He saw the red mist and heard the mad cries coming from afar.

'How could this be...? Not only did the blood moon appear earlier, even the Wings of the Moon have increased... There were only about thousands of them the last time...'

He took a sharp breath and shouted without hesitation.

"Normal members of the tribe, hide! Berserkers, take out all of the meat we have in store. Cut them open and wait for my orders!" The elder's body trembled slightly. He lowered his head. He looked at the members of his tribe and closed his eyes.

The same also happened in Dark Dragon Tribe. Once Bai Ling and the other members of the tribe heard the elder's orders, the fear in their eyes increased.

She would never forget what happened nine years ago. When she was still a child, she saw her playmate being snatched away by numerous Wings of the Moon before her eyes. He disappeared into the mist as he cried and screamed. Once he was dragged into Dark Mountain, only a slow and painful death awaited him.

The blood red moon became a vague shadow in the sky as it was covered by the mist. However, the shadows that whistled through the mist were coming closer. The large number of Wings of the Moon split into three groups and sped towards the three tribes near them.

In Dark Mountain Tribe, the elder was staring at the sky. The moment the Wings of the Moon appeared, he swung the bone cane in his right hand. A lake of fire spread underneath him and covered the entire tribe but the lake of fire did not burn any of the houses. It looked like an illusion surrounded the tribe.

"Throw the meat!" The elder growled. Immediately the terrified Berserkers within the tribe's settlement threw a bleeding creature towards the sky.

## **Chapter 28: The Crying Sky**

The very moment the elder of Dark Mountain Tribe growled, the red mist spread out and covered the blood red moon in the sky. A large number of Wings of the Moon screeched as they came and sped through the mist, covering the sky above Dark Mountain Tribe. Piercing roars drowned out all the sounds in the land. It was the only sound that could be heard that night.

Dozens of beasts drenched in blood were thrown into the air by the tribe members. Before they fell back to the ground, they were immediately swarmed by the Wings of the Moon that gathered upon them like bloody clouds. Amid the cries, the beasts' bodies were entirely covered by the Wings of the Moon and their flesh pierced through by sharp teeth. They turned into dried up carcasses in an instant. Their blood and living bodies were devoured by the Wings of the Moon.

All that was left were only skin and bones. They crashed onto the ground and twitched helplessly before they all died.

Some of the numerous Wings of the Moon in the sky even ignored the beasts tossed into the air. They plunged straight towards the tribe members. Their eyes were filled with ruthlessness and a thirst for blood. Their targets were the Berserkers within the tribe.

Screams, cries and roars collided with each other. They resonated with the screeches made by the Wings of the Moon on that strange night.

The lake of fire that surrounded the entire tribe was like a solid barrier. It caused the Wings of the Moon that approached the tribe to retreat with a cry. It seemed that the fire, which could not even burn the houses could actually cause them mortal damage.

"Again!" The elder stood within the lake of fire and looked at the sky gravely.

Immediately more tribe members tossed even more beasts into the air in the midst of their fear. It did look like they were feeding and offering sacrifices to the crazed Wings of the Moon in the sky.

Time passed by. All of the creatures stored for winter had become food for the Wings of the Moon and fell back onto the ground like mummies. Driven by madness caused by their lust for blood, they started diving downwards. It seemed like an attempt to break through the lake of fire and descend upon the tribe to feast on the blood of the Berserkers.

The elder waved his right hand and the lake of fire turned into a giant vortex that spun rapidly in the sky. He was going up against the Wings of the Moon in the sky by himself.

At the same time, arrows upon arrows pierced through the lake of fire and into the sky from the tribe to fight against the Wings of the Moon.

To the Wings of the Moon that were pretty much immortal, this sort of injury was nothing to them. Their flapping wings and piercing cries made the people in Dark Mountain Tribe panic.

Before long, some Wings of the Moon broke through the lake of fire and flew into the tribe, causing chaos within Dark Mountain Tribe.

The same also happened in Dark Dragon Tribe.

However, a strange sight happened within Black Mountain Tribe. All of the members of the tribe prostrated on the ground and remained still. In the sky, the Elder of Black Mountain Tribe, Bi Tu stretched his arms wide open. His face looked crazy with fanaticism as he stared at the sky, chanting.

Numerous Wings of the Moon circled around him. There were also a large number of them on him. Their fangs sunk into his flesh and they drank his blood.

Yet Bi Tu appeared to have lost all sense of pain. He did not resist instead, the crazed fanaticism on his face grew even more. As his face became paler due to the loss of blood, the strange chant became louder.

"I sacrifice my blood to you, o ancient Fire Berserker Tribe! You have obtained immortality and have turned into Wings of the Moon. You feast upon the Berserker Blood and now I will take the Blood of the Fire Berserkers into my veins!"

"Di He, Hong La Dong!" Bi Tu bellowed facing the skies and immediately, a piercing black light erupted from his body. As the black light spread out from his body, the Wings of the Moon on his body screamed. Their bodies started shriveling and the light in their eyes started dimming. After a moment, they fell off Bi Tu's body as they lost all signs of life.

It drove more Wings of the Moon wild!

The process repeated itself. A large amount of blood from the Wings of the Moon was absorbed by Bi Tu. His body began to swell at an alarming speed and a thick presence of Qi erupted from his body.

The moment they sensed the presence of the Qi, not only did those Wings of the Moon become even more frantic, even the ones that went to Dark Mountain Tribe as well as Dark Dragon Tribe changed their direction and flew towards Black Mountain Tribe.

Not far away from Black Mountain Tribe, stood the figure of a person wrapped entirely in a black robe. He stood out among all the people of Black Mountain Tribe who lay

prostrated on the ground. The black robe he wore was also not something that could be found in the small tribes around the area. As he stood there, he looked at the Elder of Black Mountain Tribe in the air, his lips curling up into a dark smile.

"I gave you the way to find the moon stones necessary to summon the Wings of the Moon made of the Fire Berserker. I also taught you the way to summon them. I told you the quickest way to arrive at the Transcendence Realm. Your success is up to you now..."

Compared to the chaos outside, Su Ming was relatively safe. He pushed away the stones that covered the hole in the cave and jumped out. There were several spots on his skin that had blistered due to the heat. His lips were dry and cracked as his heart pounded against his chest.

"This is... I can't believe this is one of the resting places of the Wings of the Moon!" Su Ming stared at the spot where the Wings of the Moon appeared in the cave. He heard many legends regarding the Wings of the Moon since he was young and knew just how terrifying they were. The legends about how they were almost immortal also made Su Ming narrow his eyes in fear.

After a moment of silence, he crawled out of the entrance of the cave slowly. As he was near the exit, he stuck out his head quickly and looked around. The sight made him gasp. The sky was covered by red mist and an uncountable amount of Wings of the Moon circled the sky, the sound of their roars echoing.

Su Ming immediately retreated into the cave.

'I wonder what happened to the tribe... I can't go back now. If I leave now, the Wings of the Moon will definitely find me.'

Su Ming frowned. He was feeling very agitated and worried about the tribe.

Even so, he knew that he had no way to solve the problem. He looked at the place within the cave, where the Wings of the Moon appeared. Slowly, a glint appeared in his eyes.

'The number of Wings of the Moon is obviously a lot of more than the previous times. By the looks of it, the deeper parts of the cave should be empty now...'

Su Ming hesitated for a moment before walking forward slowly. After he stepped over the place he used for quenching and observed the deeper parts of the cave, he decided.

'I might as well see what's in there that allowed the Wings of the Moon to stay here for so long. I might be able to find their secret and tell the elder. It might be of some help to him.'

Su Ming then ran towards the deeper parts of the cave that he had not explored before.

It was odd. The cave was usually hot. There were even times when Su Ming felt as if there were hot waves crashing onto him. However, as Su Ming went deeper into the cave, he no longer felt any heat. Instead, he felt a chill coming from within the cave.

As Su Ming continued walking deeper, there was another uproar amid the three tribes on Dark Mountain.

Several hundreds of the Wings of the Moon had already penetrated the lake of fire protecting Dark Mountain Tribe. They dived towards the tribe members and fought against the Berserkers. Bei Ling's eyes grew cold as he protected Chen Xin, who stood behind him. A cold wave spread out of his right hand, forming sharp icicles around them. There were a lot of wounds on his body and blood poured freely out of his body. Suddenly, he narrowed his eyes and focused on a point far away. He reached for the bow on his back with his right hand without any hesitation.

As Bei Ling took the bow, a strong killing intent came forth. He drew the bow with his left hand and the tip of the bow gleamed. Immediately, the snow around them gathered at the tip of the bow and he shot an ice arrow towards the direction he was looking at!

Some distance away, Lei Chen was overwhelmed by a lust for blood. There were numerous Wings of the Moon on his body but he did not care. Instead, he seemed to be taken over by madness as he grabbed one of them and tried to bite it.

"You want to suck my blood?! Fine, I'll suck yours too!"

Just as he was about to bite down on the Wings of the Moon in his grasp, he noticed there were dozens more flying towards him. With his current level, there was no way he could fight against so many of them.

At that moment though, a cold blast of air rushed towards him. As the cold wind appeared, an arrow made of snow and ice exploded on top of Lei Chen with a bang. It caused all the Wings of the Moon on top of Lei Chen to fall, saving him in the process.

Lei Chen was surprised. He turned and looked at Bei Ling, who was coolly putting aside his bow. An indescribable expression appeared across Lei Chen's eyes.

The Qi of Dark Mountain Tribe's leader was rolling off his body like waves. In his hands was a long silver spear. Every time he threw the spear, cries would echo throughout the sky as numerous Qi waves hit the air, causing the Wings of the Moon to spread out.

Even so, the number of Wings of the Moon that rushed down was too many. Some of the normal members of the tribe were even nearly captured by some of them.

That moment, the elder acted. He swung the bone cane in his hands and the entire tribe trembled. An illusion of a giant statue of the God of Berserkers formed in midair. The statue's eyes were filled with ruthlessness as if it was alive. The dragon in its hands even lifted its head and roared. Then it flew into the sky and swept through its surroundings.

As time passed, the night of the blood red moon slowly went by but the battle in the tribe became even more intense. Some Wings of the Moon captured a few members of the Berserker Tribe alive instead of sucking their blood near the end of the battle. They intended to bring the members back to their lair and suck out their blood.

As light started to brighten up the sky, a piercing cry sliced through the air from Dark Dragon Tribe. Among the numerous Wings of the Moon was a white figure. Her beautiful face was pale and filled with despair as she was captured along with her other tribe members by the Wings of the Moon. They were flying back towards Dark Mountain.

Behind them, an old woman wearing sackcloth chased after them desperately.

As their cries of terror continued traveling away from Dark Dragon Tribe, the old woman's eyes became bloodshot and were filled with despair before long. She turned around and gave up on the chase. She chose instead to go back and defend her tribe.

When the person in white saw this, tears escaped her eyes...

As her tears fell, they disappeared without anyone noticing.

As daylight arrived and the blood red moon disappeared, the tens of thousands of Wings of the Moon let out a huge cry and flew back towards Dark Mountain from all directions. Some of them carried the girl in white and her other tribe members towards Black Flame Mountain. They entered through the cracks.

## **Chapter 29: The Ancient Tribe**

Su Ming walked forward into the deeper parts slowly and carefully. He remained alert on the way and regularly made sure the coast was clear before he moved further. As he moved, he also held onto the horn and activated the Qi in his body. He prepared himself to fight with the power of all 11 blood veins at all times.

He also searched for possible hiding places along the way so that he could hide himself when there was any danger or when the Wings of the Moon suddenly returned.

Su Ming was filled with curiosity towards the unknown but his cautiousness kept his curiosity in check. It was especially so in such a dangerous place.

As he moved forward, the cave colder. As the crossroads increased, Su Ming's speed also increased.

It was completely dark around him. There were also a lot of cracks on the walls. By the looks of it, they were caused by years of heating. However, Su Ming noticed that some cracks were just recently formed. The color on those walls were different from the others.

'That's odd, these cracks must have just been formed recently... Just what kind of energy could have caused the walls to form new cracks...?'

An answer began to form in Su Ming's head.

'Could it be because of the sudden cooling of the strong heat, causing an unimaginable force of energy to explode...?'

Su Ming scratched his head. He did not think too deeply into it but he remembered it.

He did not know how long he walked but it felt like a long time. Suddenly, he stopped. The cave before him had obviously become much bigger. In fact, the deeper he went, the wider it became.

'Have I arrived at the deeper parts of the cave?!'

Su Ming scrutinized his surroundings and walked forward slowly. Before long, the cave before him grew wider. When he arrived at the end, Su Ming took a deep breath and started thinking as he absorbed the sights before him.

Before him was a cave the size of his tribe. There were dozens of other small holes around the cave. The hole Su Ming exited from was one of them.

In his silence, Su Ming went forward, his eyes bright. He looked at the other small holes in the cave. Then he narrowed his eyes and leapt forward, stopping at the entrance of each hole in the cave to take a sniff.

Once he went through all the small holes, Su Ming stared at one of them. Without any hesitation, he crawled in. Among the small caves, only this one had a faint stench of blood.

It was obvious that the Wings of the Moon flew out from this hole.

As he ran, Su Ming stopped at times to think. As he did so, he would slice off a big chunk of rock from the walls around him using the horn. The rock was about as tall as the tunnel.

It was bothersome but Su Ming insisted on doing it. Su Ming cut out a few rocks of the same size as he moved forward.

Each time he sliced them out, he would place them aside once he positioned them properly.

Gradually, Su Ming's speed increased. He still kept his guard up. He could tell that he was going towards the bottom of the mountain. That was why the area was becoming bigger. Su Ming continued running downwards. It was not until he felt that he had run a long distance before he gradually saw a red light before him.

The red light was like fire but he could not determine what it was.

When he saw the fire-like red light, Su Ming slowed down. His heart pounded against his chest. Somewhere in his mind, he felt that he was near the end. As he drew near, he had a hunch that the blood in his body was going to boil. It was not a feeling he was unfamiliar with...

The rocks on the walls had numerous scratches. There were also some bite marks on the rocks. It created a strange atmosphere that made Su Ming nervous. Nonetheless, he did not stop. Alternatively, he walked towards the red light.

It was indeed the end of the tunnel. Instead of a road ahead, there was a giant fire cave in its place. Su Ming remained alert. He stood at the exit and looked downwards.

As he did, he stood there stunned as if he was struck by lightning. Then he instinctively took a few steps back, drawing a sharp breath.

There was a giant basin in the cave. Within the basin were numerous stalagmites as sharp as thorns. They were shaped like hills. The thorny structures were entirely gray but they constantly emitted a chilly wind which surrounded the area. The temperature in the cave dropped to freezing cold.

That did not really affect Su Ming. No, what astonished Su Ming was what he found covered by the cold thorns within the basin!

It was a tribe!

There were numerous houses made of stone, a barricade and a watchtower made of stone. Su Ming even saw stone pots used to cook rice scattered everywhere in the tribe.

On the walls outside of each house, was a picture of what looked like a blazing fire!

All of the houses made of stone were huge and built in an orderly manner. They looked much more luxurious compared to the houses in Dark Mountain Tribe.

Su Ming even saw roads made of stone. There were a large number of protruding stones on some of the smaller paths as well. Su Ming took a long time observing them but he still had no clue what the small pavements were for.

It was not a normal tribe or a complete tribe.

Su Ming's gaze fell upon some of the houses at the edge of the tribe's settlement. Those houses seemed to be split apart by a mysterious force. Only half of them remained within the basin.

As for the other half, no one knew where they went...

It was especially so on the tribal grounds. Besides the stone pavements, the other parts looked like dirt, forming a clear difference between the stones in the mountain.

Su Ming's breathing quickened. As he marveled at the sight before him, he remembered what the elder once said - The legend of the Fire Berserker Tribe... Gradually, a picture began forming in his head. In this picture, he saw a gigantic tribe which seemed to span endlessly across the land.

All the houses in the tribe were made of stone and on their walls were the emblems of a blazing fire. The emblem represented the name of the tribe!

However one day, a change occurred within the tribe. It was split apart by an unknown force like it was shattered. The unknown force also scattered the tribe and its members along with the land it was built upon. They were all forced apart.

A small part of the tribe and the land shifted into Dark Mountain...

'That wasn't a legend...'

Su Ming looked at the bizarre and incredible sight before him.

He swept his gaze across the tribe and when he looked at the center of the tribe, he narrowed his eyes.

There was an even stranger thing in the middle!

It was a giant tree or more accurately, it looked like a giant tree! The entire thing was blazing red and it emitted a light which looked like fire. The light Su Ming saw from the tunnel was from this giant tree.

The tree was as thick as dozens of grown men. Its roots had penetrated the ground and looked as if they went deep into the ground. No one knew how deeply they went.

Only the tree trunk was visible. The top of the tree had already penetrated the top of the cave. Only part of the tree was visible.

‘A tree growing within Black Flame Mountain...’

Su Ming stared at the tree. Over there, he saw some familiar red flowers displaying their enchanting beauty.

As he looked at the red flowers, Su Ming remembered the strange sights he saw at the swamp in the forest.

Su Ming averted his gaze in his silence and looked at the ruins of the tribe that had been buried within the passages of time. A sudden sadness formed in his chest. He sighed and jumped down to stand amid the ruins of one of the eight great Berserker Tribes. The Fire Berserker Tribe had fought against the God of Berserkers.

‘Then, the Wings of the Moon must also be as depicted in the legends. They are the changed form of the Fire Berserker Tribe that had been granted immortality by the Fire Berserker Elder’s Berserker Art... But... This is unbelievable. How could such an Art truly exist...? Just how strong was the Fire Elder of the Fire Berserker Tribe...?’

‘It’s mentioned in the beast skin scroll that after the Blood Solidification Realm is the Transcendence Realm, and after the Transcendence Realm is the Bone Sacrifice Realm. There was no mention of what comes after the Bone Sacrifice Realm though, the practitioners are only known as Berserker Masters.’

As Su Ming looked at the ruins of the tribe before his eyes in silence, he began walking forward.

The tribe was empty. Besides the houses and some stuff scattered around, Su Ming did not even see any bones lying around. The silence was suffocating.

He stepped quietly onto the small pavement, filled with protruding stones. When he stepped on them, he felt them pricking his feet. He lowered his head and looked at the pavement but he still could not figure out their use. He walked forward slowly but stopped suddenly as he caught a glimpse of something from the corner of his eyes. He turned his head towards the direction and saw a corpse hanging on the wall. It was at the border where the tribe had been cut away!

The corpse was hidden by some of the houses, which was why Su Ming did not see it initially. However as he stood there, he could see it clearly then.

The moment he saw the skeleton, Su Ming narrowed his eyes. This was the only corpse he saw at the place. He walked towards the corpse quickly. When he looked at it closely, Su Ming shivered.

The corpse was very strange. Its top half was that of a person but it was shriveled up. The lower half of the corpse was even stranger. It looked as if it had melted away and mutated. It was different from the skeletal frame of a normal person. The frame of a pair of wings also seemed to materialize on its back. Looking at the corpse, it even looked similar to the Wings of the Moon!

It was as though the person experienced a change in his form before his death! He imagined the pain of a person changing into Wings of the Moon but there was no shred of pain in the corpse's face. Instead there was only mockery and pride on his face!

It was unknown who he was mocking...

The index finger on his right hand had pierced into the stone wall by his side. Su Ming lifted his head to look at the stone wall by the corpse's side and he saw a clear string of words on the wall!

They were the words of the Berserker Tribe!

The moment Su Ming looked at them, the sound of wings flapping traveled through the entrance of the tunnel. There were bone-chilling roars mixed in between. Su Ming could even vaguely hear cries of despair among the sounds of flapping and roaring!

The Wings of the Moon have returned!

Su Ming's expression immediately changed.

### **Chapter 30: Cries of Sadness**

The sound of the wings flapping seemed about ready to cause a storm in the otherwise silent cave, housing the ruins of the tribe. Su Ming's eyes were bright with trepidation but he did not move.

Sounds of flapping wings and piercing shrieks echoed in his ears but Su Ming knew just how long the tunnels were. Even if the sounds arrived first, there was supposedly some time left before the Wings of the Moon actually returned.

There might not have been a lot of time left, but it was still enough for him to make his escape.

Su Ming did not hesitate. He cast his gaze on the words carved into the wall that the strange corpse was leaning against.

"Wherefore doth thou wail, o blue sky?"

These were the very first words carved into the wall. The handwriting was filled with strength and masculinity, revealing a shred of insolence and truculence. Su Ming narrowed his eyes the moment he saw those words.

Su Ming did not truly understand their meaning and could only grasp the basic gist of it. Despite that, he could still feel the sadness and aloofness in the words.

"Wherefore doth thou cry, o blue sky..." Su Ming mumbled. Then he looked at the other lines on the wall.

"The desire to obtain Berserk spreads to all corners of the earth. Let fire burn in mine blood, let mine thoughts burn the skies, let fire burn heaven into ashes... If 't be true the moon of fire appears from the clouds on the endless earth ... I wilt sink into deep bethought as the fire in mine blood burns, the nine is the utmost of all, and the one is the law. Light up the Berserker Fires and worship the nine, did let us all becometh the authorities of Fire!

"Thou who control the heavens, only thou art capable of persecuting me!" The words underneath were obviously carved by the same person but, it was no longer a lament. They were words that were difficult to understand.

"Light up the Berserker Fires and worship the nine... did let us all becometh the authorities of Fire..." Su Ming frowned. These particular lines were hard to fathom. Su Ming read them again but even so, he still only got the basic gist of it.

As he was thinking, the piercing roars and sound of flapping wings became louder in his ears as they echoed through the tunnel not far away. Su Ming did not linger any longer but ran towards the tunnel quickly.

He was already in the tunnel, in the blink of an eye. As he stood there, the piercing roars became even clearer. Su Ming turned back and looked at the desolate tribe once more, then ran into the tunnel swiftly.

As he ran, he paid attention to the volume of the roars. When he was dozens of feet into the tunnel, Su Ming stopped and crawled into the crack on the wall next to him.

The crack was not big but Su Ming was tiny to begin with so, he had no problems getting in there. Once he crawled in, he immediately squatted down and stilled his breathing. Using the wall as a hiding spot, Su Ming peeked out of the crack and waited silently as his heart pounded against his chest.

Su Ming counted the time by his breaths. After 10 breaths, he felt goosebumps covering his entire body. He saw thick red mist rolling into the tunnel like an explosion. Within the mist were red shadows flying past as it let out thunderous roars.

The red shadows were Wings of the Moon!

Looking at the Wings of the Moon at such a close distance made Su Ming's heart beat even faster, but he did not move an inch. He even narrowed his eyes to a slit to avoid any light reflecting off his eyes.

A huge number of Wings of the Moon kept swarming into the tunnel. One of them even crashed into the edges of the crack and it was just about half a foot away from where Su Ming squatted down.

Su Ming held onto the horn so tightly with his right hand that his knuckles turned white. At that moment, he could not even feel his own heartbeat. It was as if he had calmed down completely despite the extremely stressful situation he was in.

He stared at the Wings of the Moon that crashed into the wall. As he looked at its horrifying face and flapping wings, it flew out of the crack. Su Ming did not let his guard down. If anything, it made him even more wary.

At that moment, he heard cries filled with despair. Su Ming peeked out of the crack and saw the silhouette of a few people captured by the Wings of the Moon in the mist, being brought back to the tribe.

There were nine of them...

Su Ming could not see all nine of them clearly but, as he swept his gaze across them, he saw a person in white; her beautiful face filled with despair and desolation.

'It's her!'

Su Ming narrowed his eyes. The person in white was the girl from Dark Dragon Tribe he and Lei Chen met at the square - Bai Ling!

Su Ming fell silent.

Time trickled by slowly. Before long, the sounds in the tunnel gradually dispersed. Even the mist had largely dissipated. It was as though all the Wings of the Moon had returned to their nests as the blood red moon left the sky, as though they were all about to return to slumber.

A hot wave of heat immediately spread throughout the tunnel, replacing the cold. Even the crack in the wall was beginning to heat up swiftly. Su Ming heard crackling sounds and right before his eyes he saw new cracks forming on the walls of the mountain cave.

‘So this is how the cracks are formed...’

Su Ming stood up quickly and approached the cracks. As he stood in the tunnel, he could feel the mist becoming thinner. Waves of heat crashed into him from where the tribe was, causing him to be covered in sweat.

The stones on the ground also grew hotter. Su Ming could even feel the ground burning the soles of his feet as he stood there. He clearly knew that very soon, he was not going to be able to withstand the heat in the place!

He contemplated on leaving or staying.

There was a hint of hesitation on Su Ming’s face. Wretched moans traveled through the tunnel. Anyone who heard them would have trembled in their shoes.

‘I already lied to her at the square with Lei Chen. My consciousness won’t allow me to leave just like that...’

Su Ming was still an honest child deep down. He took a deep breath of hot air and ran towards the end of the tunnel.

‘If I can save her, I will! If I can’t, then at least I won’t regret it.’

Su Ming’s eyes were resolute as he held onto his horn. The closer he got to the end of the tunnel, the more he felt the heat in the place increasing at maddening speed.

Fortunately, the distance was close. Before long, Su Ming arrived at the end of the tunnel. Without bothering about the heat on the walls of the cave, he pressed his body against it and peeped into the cave.

His eyes immediately shone with a dim light. Su Ming saw seven people who were still alive, struggling on the sharp stalagmites situated on top the ruins of the tribe in the gigantic basin. Their stomachs were pierced through by seven sharp stalagmites, and their blood flowed down the stakes. They were still not dead and were letting out cries of agony as they felt the life seeping out of their bodies. All seven people were men.

Su Ming looked at them closely and let out a sigh of relief. He knew none of the seven so, it was clear that they were not people from Dark Mountain Tribe.

The other sharp stalagmites around them were melting. As they melted, a huge amount of red magma covered the land like a river...

As he saw that, Su Ming inhaled deeply. He finally understood the purpose of the sharp stalagmites!

'This place is really strange. Perhaps the Wings of the Moon's awakening and departure are related to the sharp stalagmites!' Su Ming thought.

The sharp stalagmites were probably formed from the magma for some unknown reason occasionally but not for long. After the Wings of the Moon returned, they would melt and return to magma.

'With the amount of stalagmites I saw just now, when they melt completely the basin will be completely filled. The tribe will be hidden once more underneath the magma...'

Su Ming lifted his head and looked at small red trunk which looked like a big tree located at the center of the tribe.

The tree also showed signs of melting under the extreme heat in the basin. It was moving around oddly. If Su Ming had looked closely, he would have seen that there were red lines surrounding the tree. Sometimes, a part of it would fall off. It was clear that it was a Wings of the Moon!

However, the Wings of the Moon that returned to the tree no longer had ferocious looks on their faces. As a replacement, were looks of pain, desolation and sadness. They did not continue screaming but they looked as if they were crying silently. Some Wings of the Moon were even gesticulating weirdly. They kept lifting their claws and biting them to draw blood in the midst of their sorrow. They wiped their claws on their eyes but there was no blood in the bitten claws.

'Those Wings of the Moon crawled into the tree! What... are they doing...?'

Su Ming stared at the tree. As he was thinking, he felt the heat climbing up even more. He could not stay there any longer.

'I can't find her... too bad...'

Su Ming shook his head. He tried his best. Just as he was about to leave, he stopped.

His gaze fell upon the red tree branch situated at the center of the basin. Two faces appeared on the tree. One of them, he did not know but the other was Bai Ling.

Bai Ling's eyes were empty and void of life as if she had already given up. At that moment, she looked like a mournful beauty.

Su Ming looked at her face, then at the magma gathering slowly downwards. Most of the stalagmites had already melted into magma and had risen about half the height of the houses in the tribe.

The only things visible within the basin were the roofs of the houses. Even the roofs were turning into a hot shade of red.

'The Wings of the Moon appear when the blood red moon is in the sky. But judging by the situation here, they should also be connected with the heat in this place. They're really afraid of heat... that's why they will only go out and hunt when this place becomes cold...

'When they come back, they will all crawl into the tree. None of them will be outside. All of this is proof of my theory.'

Su Ming did not act recklessly but he stood there as his eyes flashed brilliantly.

'I should be able to save her... but I still need to wait a bit longer...'

Su Ming stared at the tree and occasionally looked at the height of the magma down in the basin.

After a while, the heat in the place increased once more. It caused Su Ming to sweat continuously. His skin also showed signs of crying and cracking. The Qi in his entire body boiled as he manifested all 11 blood veins. Su Ming jumped down.

In the blink of an eye, Su Ming landed on one of the roofs in the basin. The moment he landed, he heard a sizzling sound. White smoke immediately came out underneath his feet. Su Ming did not stop. He jumped again and landed on another rood. After a few leaps, he was near the strange red tree.

Just as he was about to reach the tree, Su Ming saw the unknown girl beside Bai Ling shriveling as she let out an agonizing scream. Instantly, she became a pile of bones!

It was like she became one with the tree. Her life and all her flesh were absorbed by some mysterious force.