

Time 71

Chapter 71 - 71 Parting ways

Yong Ru looked at him expectantly as he was certain that Shun Long would have heard of his senior sister's name, but when he looked at his face, Yong Ru felt like a deflated balloon that had just lost all of its air.

"Bro-brother Shun, you- don't tell me that you don't know who my senior sister is."

Shun Long looked at him and answered matter-of-factly as he nodded his head

"Mm. Never heard of her before."

Yong Ru felt like an arrow had just pierced his heart as he said

"Then brother Shun, let me explain. My senior sister, Jiao Mingxia is a very strong 'ice-element' cultivator and she is probably the strongest out of everyone else in this sect exam. I'm not looking down on you brother Shun, but you are probably not a match for my senior sister at all.

Aside from my senior sister though, there are 2 more people that you must be wary of brother.

One of them is the son of the sect master from the 'Iron-hardened sect', people call him the little giant, Da Chong . You probably saw him when sect master Da Chao was arguing with the Grand Elder of the 'Flying sword sect' when we were at the Demonic Mountain Region's entrance. It is rumored that Da Chong is a body-refining cultivator, as well as the person with the strongest physical strength in this sect exam.

The last of the 3 is the grandson of the Grand Elder from the 'Flying sword sect', Hui Ming. Aside from him being a sword cultivator like most of the disciples in the 'Flying sword sect', I don't have any other information about him."

As Yong Ru finished speaking, little Black's voice was heard inside Shun Long's head

"Master, sword cultivators are usually extremely proficient in attacking techniques as well as in swiftly killing their opponents. I guess that the reason why people don't know much about this Hui Ming is so he can keep his trump cards hidden."

Shun Long nodded his head as he was now interested in meeting these 3 people. One of them was the woman who Yong Ru called the strongest in this sect exam. Although Shun Long didn't take his words to heart, there must still be something special in this woman for Yong Ru to say something like that.

The other one was a strong body-refining cultivator just like Shun Long, while the last one was the strongest sword cultivator from the 'Flying sword sect' that was participating in this exam.

Yong Ru then continued

"Aside from brother Shun, your floating cloud sect must have some peak rank 3 earth grade cultivators as well, but none of them is a match for those 3 that I just mentioned. Brother Shun even though I know you are strong, you can not take those 3 lightly."

Shun Long walked towards Yong Ru and patted him on the shoulder as he said

"Thank you"

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Heading deeper towards the inner region, the 2 didn't meet with any more surprises on the way. Apart from the magic beasts that were at the early rank 2 and needed some effort from Shun Long to get killed, the rest of their journey was easy.

On the fifth day, Shun Long and Yong Ru arrived in front of a huge plains area.

There were almost 20 people, forming 3 different groups, all of them being disciples of the 4 sects.

As the 2 walked in, everyone had turned their heads to observe the newcomers.

The people who had already managed to arrive here, were all in the earth grade, with some of them having already reached the peak of rank 3.

Yong Ru looked at Shun Long as he said

"Brother Shun, we are now in the inner region. This is the safe area where most disciples in the earth grade will gather. As we came too early, it is relatively empty, that's why we don't see many people here.

But in the next 5 to 10 days, this place will surely get crowded as no one will want to miss the opportunity to absorb the qi from the central mountain."

Shun Long's eyes were focused ahead, deeper inside the Demonic Mountain region, as he could faintly make out the shadow of a few huge mountain peaks, when little Black's voice was heard in his head

"Master! I am certain that there is an extraordinary treasure in this Demonic Mountain Region!"

Shun Long nodded his head as he responded telepathically to little Black

"I had guessed so as well. The qi around us has more than doubled in density and purity, compared to when we were on the outskirts a few days ago. I assume that the deeper inside we head, the purer the qi we absorb will be, all the way until we reach the central mountain."

"You are right master. But this won't be an easy journey for us.

Master, you should probably leave that Yong Ru fellow here. He will only become a burden to us later on and there is a high chance that he may die as we head deeper inside."

At the same time, Yong Ru's voice was heard as he looked at Shun Long and asked

"Brother Shun, how about we stay here in this place, while we wait for the qi eruption to start?"

Shun Long however, shook his head as he replied

"Brother it's better if we part ways here for now. I'm going to enter deeper inside the inner region."

Yong Ru's eyes widened as he asked in a trembling voice

"Brother Sh-un.. are you serious? It is too dangerous to wander around the inner region."

Shun Long looked at Yong Ru as he nodded his head and said

"I have my reasons for heading deeper in the inner region. Although it is dangerous, this is something that I have to do."

Yong Ru gritted his teeth as he said

"I will follow you then brother."

Chapter 72 - 72 Red fanged flame bat

Yong Ru gritted his teeth as he said

"I will follow you then brother."

Shun Long shook his head after he heard Yong Ru's words and said

"It's better if I go alone. We should part ways for now and meet again after the qi eruption of the central mountain ends."

Yong Ru sighed in his heart as he understood that he would be a burden with his strength if he followed Shun Long in the inner region. He was barely of any help while they were traveling through the outer region.

He then took a deep breath as he said to Shun Long

"Brother Shun you have to be careful. The inner region is extremely dangerous and there are many rank3 beasts here."

Shun Long nodded his head as he responded

"I know. Let's meet again after the central mountain's eruption then."

After parting ways, Shun Long headed deeper inside the inner region. Everyone sitting in the safe area turned their heads to look at him as he was leaving and started discussing between themselves

"Who is this guy? He dares to enter the inner region by himself?"

"Seems like he came together with senior brother Yong."

"So what? Isn't he just a normal disciple from the 'floating cloud sect'?"

"That's right, the 'floating cloud sect' doesn't have anyone at the same level as our senior sister anyway. Even our senior sister didn't dare to walk alone inside the inner region."

"Exactly! Does this guy think that he is at the same level as the 3 geniuses? He will certainly die for overestimating himself!"

Discussions were taking place between the 3 groups that were stationed in the safe area but Shun Long completely ignored them as he walked forward.

If other people headed deeper inside the inner region, they would surely be suicidal no matter how big their group was, if they were just rank 3 earth grade cultivators. However, Shun Long was different. He had a trump card to rely on that could take care of the magic beasts in the inner region.

After traveling forward for a bit more than the time it takes to drink a cup of tea (this is approximately 10-15mins), Shun Long had already left the safe area far behind him when little Black's voice sounded in his head

"Master, I can sense two rank 3 magic beasts. One of them is 17 miles towards the west while the other one is 23 miles to our south."

"Let's go towards the west first since it is closer. Do you sense any humans anywhere near us?"

"No master, there are only magic beasts here. If there are any humans, then they must be more than 30 miles away from us for me to be unable to sense them."

"Good, then let's go!"

Shun Long said as he summoned little Black from the 'Stone of Time'.

Although Shun Long hadn't summoned him when he was in the outskirts, that was because there were far too many disciples there while there were barely any threats to Shun Long's life, aside from beasts like the 'Double-headed fish' or the 'Iron-winged eagle'.

But the inner region was different. The magic beasts here were all far stronger than what Shun Long could handle alone, while the human groups were practically non-existent, and with little Black's powerful soul, sensing their surroundings Shun Long didn't have many things to worry about.

A 3m(10ft) tall black dragon had then appeared in front of him. Little Black stretched his head as Shun Long climbed on his neck, and sitting on his back he said

"Let's go!"

Little Black spread his majestic black wings as he soared from the ground heading directly towards the west.

A huge gust of air hit the ground as the black dragon flapped his wings soaring in the sky, causing every magic beast that sensed his aura to immediately prostrate themselves. Dragons were after all, kings among magic beasts.

Shun Long was enjoying the view, as well as the feeling of flying, while he was sitting on top of little Black's back, and in a very short time they had arrived outside a small cave.

The cave was about 2m(6.5ft) in height but it was wide enough for 3 people to walk inside it side by side.

screech

As soon as little Black and Shun Long arrived outside of the cave, a screeching sound was heard, as a swarm of black bats flew towards them.

Roar

Little Black opened his mouth as he roared towards the swarm of black bats that were attacking them from the cave.

As the sound of this roar hit the bats, all of them crashed into the ground with blood flowing from their ears. More than 20 rank 2 bats had directly died from a single roar.

A black shadow flew from the cave as it directly tried to escape through the air.

"It's actually a middle rank 3 'red-fanged flame bat'! Little Black quickly, don't let it escape!"

"Don't worry master, how could it ever escape from us?"

Little Black flapped his wings and the distance from the bat was immediately halved.

The 'red-fanged flame bat' was a magic beast at the middle stages of rank 3, but as soon as it had sensed little Black's aura outside its cave, it was instantly terrified as it fled without a second

thought. The aura of a dragon, a king of magic beasts was one of the most terrifying things to every living being.

Forget about a middle stage rank 3 magic beast like the 'red-fanged flame bat', little Black could probably fight against even a middle stage rank 4 magic beast right now, and he would only get stronger in the future as he recovers his strength.

In almost no time, Shun Long and little Black had arrived above the 'flame bat's' head as little Black used his talons to grab the bat's wings.

The bat screeched loudly as little Black brutally tore its wings from its body, making it crash on the ground.

A small pool of blood had formed beneath the bat's body while it was still struggling to move and escape from this monster that was chasing it.

Little Black's talons landed on the bat's neck that was now on the ground, as it brutally tore off its head. Finally, the bat stopped breathing as a pitch-black core rolled off from its now torn head into the ground.

Shun Long fiddled with the beast core in his hand for a while before putting it inside the 'Stone of Time's' space along with the bat's body. Although the 'red fanged flame bat's' body wasn't edible, parts of it could still be used as ingredients for alchemy, while its fangs could be used by formation masters to create silver grade weapons.

Aside from the 'red fanged flame bat' there was still that swarm of rank 2 bats that could be sold for a good price in the 'Treasure Pavilion'. Although rank 2 magic beasts rarely had a beast core in their bodies, the rest of their body parts would usually fetch a good price.

After Shun Long put everything inside the 'Stone of Time', he walked towards the cave that the bats were living in.

Little Black looked at his master, but his own body was too big to enter the small cave so he couldn't help asking

"Master, do you think that there will be anything good inside this cave?"

"Although the chance is minimal, the truth is that when the 'red fanged flame bat' inhabits a cave, the powerful yin qi that it oozes from its body will sometimes be absorbed into its surroundings to produce rare alchemy materials. One of those materials is the rank 3 'hell flower'."

Shun Long remembered that Yong Ru needed this flower for his grandfather.

However, after searching the cave, Shun Long was confused as well as a bit disappointed to not having found anything of use. Apparently, the 'red fanged flame bat's' qi hadn't produced anything inside the cave.

After Shun Long failed to find anything inside, he left the cave as he climbed atop little Black's back before he pondered for a while

"I don't understand. I could sense some yin qi inside the cave, but it was very faint both in quality and quantity. Unless the bats had started living in this cave today, the yin qi here shouldn't have been so faint. However, based on their sheer numbers, it's impossible for them to have migrated here today.

Little Black, can you sense anything?"

Shun Long was truly perplexed this time and his senses weren't strong enough to understand what was going on so his only option was asking little Black.

The black dragon closed his eyes as he sensed his surroundings for a long time. After that, he abruptly opened his eyes with an unfathomable glint inside them as he looked towards Shun Long and once again said telepathically

"Master... you were right. There should have been enough yin qi in the air to create some precious medicinal herbs but..."

After that little Black turned his head to look outside of the cave as he continued

"...it's all been sucked away!"

Shun Long's eyes widened as he looked at little Black incredulously before asking

"Can you sense who is sucking away the yin qi then?"

"Master... it's not just the yin qi here. Aside from the pure qi in the air, every other kind of qi in the surrounding 30 miles, is all being sucked deeper inside towards the central region!"

Chapter 73 - 73 Hunting rank 3 magic beasts

A chill run through Shun Long's spine as he heard little Black's words.

What kind of existence did it have to be, to be able to absorb every kind of energy, and from so many miles away?

"Something is wrong. No matter what kind of magic beast it is, as long as it hasn't reached an extremely high rank, it shouldn't be able to absorb every other kind of energy like the yin qi from the 'red fanged flame bat' while being so far away."

Shun Long surmised after thinking about it thoroughly.

"Master is right. Even if I wanted to absorb the yin qi here, I wouldn't be able to do this from more than 1 mile away and I am a black Dragon. I refuse to believe that there is a peak rank 5 magic beast inside this Demonic Mountain Region that would do this."

Shun Long nodded his head at Little Black's words as he said

"We will find out everything when we enter the central region so, there is no need to worry about it just yet. It's time to go towards the south."

The black dragon stretched his majestic pitch-black wings after hearing Shun Long's words, and flew towards the south where he had sensed another rank 3 magic beast earlier before.

His flying speed was extremely fast, bringing a sense of horror to the magic beasts that saw a black dragon flying in the sky as they hurriedly cowered away inside their nests and caves.

Little Black and Shun Long quickly arrived in front of a small forest.

Little Black's speed didn't decrease at all as he headed towards one of the tallest trees in the distance.

The tree was green and more than 8m(26ft) tall but its branches had a bright yellow color towards their ends that resembled flower petals.

Shun Long's eyes glinted while little Black opened his mouth and spat out a black ball of fire towards the tree.

The tree immediately turned to black ashes as a small green beast core could be found inside them.

Little Black snorted disdainfully after reducing the tree to ashes and said

"Just an early rank 3 'man-eating tree' and it thought that it would escape my senses?"

Shun Long grabbed the beast core of the 'man-eating tree' and after storing it inside the 'Stone of Time' he asked little Black if he could sense any other rank 3 magic beasts around them.

The pair of the young man riding his dragon flew non-stop as they relentlessly hunted every rank 3 magic beasts they found in their vicinity.

After almost one day of hunting, Shun Long's spatial space had been filled with all sorts of rank 3 beasts. Most of these magic beasts could easily kill Heaven grade experts as easily as killing chickens and yet, Shun Long's spatial space had nearly a dozen of them now.

Little Black looked at his smiling master that was now collecting the body of a rank 3 magic beast they had just killed, and he too smiled as he looked in the distance ahead of them, towards the central region before he sent a message to Shun Long

"Master, we are now very close to the central region. If there is a chance, we should also hunt an early rank 4 magic beast!"

As little Black finished speaking however he saw that Shun Long's eyes had turned serious as he said resolutely

"No"

Little Black looked at Shun Long puzzledly as he said

"Master, won't the body of a rank 4 magic beast be of great help? Although it may prove a bit hard to kill one, I am still more than 80 percent certain of being able to kill any early rank 4 beast with my current strength. We have nothing to worry about and even if the rumored peak rank 4 magic beast from the central mountain comes, we can still flee then. Even if it is some kind of aerial flying beast it will certainly be unable to match me in terms of speed."

Little Black's words were spoken with absolute confidence.

Shun Long however shook his head as he replied

"Although the body of a rank 4 beast would be of tremendous help to me, there is something even more important in this Demonic Mountain Region for us. Additionally, if you fight with a rank 4 magic beast, even if you swiftly kill it you will certainly attract the attention of even stronger magic beasts. The central region isn't the inner region after all and I assume that there are more than just 'a few' rank 4 magic beasts inside.

Before we find out about the treasure of the central mountain, we can't attract the attention of the strong magic beasts in the central region."

Little Black didn't speak anymore as Shun Long walked in front of him and patted his head as continued

"Don't worry, after we find out what the secret of the central mountain is, we may still have time to hunt a rank 4 magic beast."

After Shun Long finished speaking he noticed that it was almost night time by now.

After hunting magic beasts for the entire day, Shun Long had already arrived just a few dozen miles away from the central region. After finding a secluded cave in a mountain peak close by, he had little Black ensure that there were no magic beasts around them before he started cultivating.

Taking a deep breath inside the cave Shun Long felt the qi around him madly rushing towards him.

"The quality of the qi here is truly much better compared to the outer region. Perhaps I can even breakthrough to the middle stage of rank 8 tonight."

Sitting cross-legged in the middle of the cave, Shun Long circulated the 'Monarch's Hourglass' as he absorbed the pure qi in this place. Little Black was also cultivating, but he hadn't entered a state where he was unable to sense his surroundings like Shun Long and was instead keeping watch of their surroundings at all times.

3 hours soon passed and a small popping sound could be heard from Shun Long's body as he then opened his eyes and exclaimed joyously

"I managed to reach the middle stage of rank 8 in qi condensation in such a short amount of time. Just 3 hours of cultivating here is more efficient than 5 full days of cultivation in the outer region!"

Taking advantage of the opportunity to cultivate in this place, Shun Long quickly closed his eyes as he once again activated the 'Monarch's Hourglass', absorbing the qi around him.

Morning soon came and as the sun rose Shun Long finally stopped cultivating.

After stretching his hands and feet for a while he walked out of the cave and patted Little Black's head as he said

"Little Black, when we enter the central region, it's better for you to stay in the 'Stone of Time'."

The dragon's eyes widened as he heard this and anxiously he asked

"Master it is too dangerous for you. What if you-?"

Shun Long patted his head as he said

"I know. But it's also dangerous if you are exposed. We could do as we please in the inner region but if the magic beasts in the central region turn their attention towards us, then the best we can do will be to flee by then."

Shun Long saw the dejected dragon as he said

"Don't worry, if I really get in a dangerous situation, you can always come out and help me."

Little Black nodded his head as he went inside the 'Stone of Time' before he used his powerful soul to sense Shun Long's surroundings.

Shun Long had 3 major advantages that gave him enough confidence to walk by himself towards the central region that was now just a few dozen miles away from him.

The first was little Black's soul sensing which could warn him for most dangers beforehand.

The second was the 'Monarch's Eternal body' that had both increased his physical strength and his ability to tear space and escape a few dozen meters away.

Shun Long was also certain that after refining the 'Profound Earth Fruit' into a pill, his 'Monarch's Eternal body' would become a lot stronger.

"If I concoct and consume the pill before the 'sect examination' ends, by the time I finish absorbing the pill's medicinal effects, I would have probably already run out of time to gather enough survival points to first place."

However, the third and most important advantage that he had, was the 'Monarch's Hourglass' ability to completely conceal his aura. As long as he was careful enough, he could probably avoid most of the dangers as he explored the central region.

After more than 2 hours, Shun Long had arrived precisely 300 miles away from the tallest mountain in the Demonic Mountain Region, the central mountain.

The central mountain was nearly 10.000meters (32.800ft) tall while the 300 miles around it was what everyone categorized as 'the central region'.

Shun Long took a deep breath to calm his rising heartbeat as he looked at the central mountain, and taking a step forward, he finally entered the central region.

Chapter 74 - 74 The central region

Stepping inside, Shun Long felt the increasing quality of the qi in the air around him, as it was being absorbed by the magic beasts living in the central region.

"Master, you have to be careful inside. I can sense many magic beasts and none of them is below the rank 3"

Little Black warned Shun Long as he used his soul to sense everything in a 30 mile radius around him.

Shun Long nodded as he asked

"Little Black, won't we get discovered by the magic beasts here if you keep using your soul to sense the surroundings?"

"Don't worry master, unless a magic beast has already reached the rank 5, it is impossible for it to notice my soul sense."

Shun Long breathed out in relief but he was still extremely careful as he slowly headed deeper inside. The magic beasts in the central region were all at the rank 3 or even higher, and attracting their attention would be disastrous.

Beast roars could be heard everywhere around Shun Long as the central region seemed to be a constant battlefield for the magic beasts here. After all, this was the place with the purest qi in the entire Demonic Mountain Region, so how could the fighting here be avoided?

However, with little Black's directions, Shun Long had managed to avoid the lurking dangers around him as he headed deeper inside.

Anyone who had the guts to enter the central region would witness abundant scenes of rank 3 magic beasts fighting and killing each other.

However, these scenes had started to become less frequent as Shun Long entered deeper inside the region, while the strength of the magic beasts around him grew stronger and stronger, the closer he approached to the central mountain.

After 8 hours of careful walking and detouring, Shun Long had arrived in front of a huge lake that was 150 miles away from the central mountain. The lake was more than 10 miles wide and if Shun Long wanted to reach the central mountain, he either had to go through it or go around it.

On the left side of the lake, there was a big mountain, while on its right, one could see a large lush forest.

"Little Black can you sense anything?"

"Master, the lake is extremely dangerous. I can sense a magic beast lurking inside that is very close to the peak of rank 4 so we will have to take a detour. Inside the forest on our right, I can sense a middle rank 4 aerial magic beast, as well as quite a big number of rank 3 beasts, while in the mountain on our left, I can only sense the aura of an early rank 4 magic beast but I can't identify what kind of beast it is yet.

So I think it's best if master passes through the mountain."

Shun Long thought deeply for a while, before he shook his head and said

"We will go through the forest"

Little Black was confused after hearing that they will go through the path that had the most magic beasts. One could argue that this forest was even more deadly than the lake. Sensing the dragon's bewilderment, Shun Long laughed lightly as he explained

"The lake is obviously impossible to traverse if we don't fly over it, which leaves us with only the mountain and the lush forest as our options.

However, although the forest looks to be more dangerous at first glance, in reality this is actually the best choice for us. Since the middle stage rank 4 beast inside it, is a flying type magic beast, it will most likely have a bad sense of smell."

Little Black's eyes inside the 'Stone of Time' glistened brightly as he heard Shun Long's words

"Meanwhile, we don't know what kind of magic beast that early rank 4 living on the mountain really is.

If it's not an aerial beast, then even with me hiding my aura there is still a chance that it will locate me through my smell.

But even if it is a flying magic beast, while I can use the environment of the trees to hide myself in the forest, there won't really be any place to take cover in a mountain"

Little Black was dazed for a good while. As a dragon, he would never consider the physical attributes of other magic beasts. He would simply use his strength to do everything he wanted.

But Shun Long seemed to have thought through everything and had already calculated the best route to take.

Entering the forest, Shun Long found nearly a dozen rank 2 medicinal herbs lying around. However, not a single rank 3 herb was anywhere in sight.

"I guess that the magic beasts here have already hoarded the good stuff" Shun Long sighed as he kept walking forward.

The forest had more than 10 magic beasts lying in wait inside, but Shun Long easily avoided them with little Black's soul sense.

Nearly 2 hours later, Shun Long arrived in front of a stream, as he saw a huge bird more than 5 meters (16ft) tall, sleeping atop a big tree at the other side of the bank.

"This is a '4 winged ice bird'." Shun Long mumbled as he looked at the sleeping bird atop the tall tree.

The bird had 4 icy-blue wings wrapped around it, that were in stark contrast with its brown body and red beak.

To pass through the forest Shun Long had to get to the other side of the bank. If he actually wanted to swim through the stream, or even jump all the way to the other side, he would definitely end up waking the magic beast.

However, Shun Long simply smiled and thanked his lucky stars that the bird was asleep, as he clenched his right hand and punched the air in front of him.

As his fist hit the air, a space tear big enough to fit a person was formed as Shun Long entered it and instantly arrived at the other side of the bank.

Almost as if sensing something, right after Shun Long entered the space tear, the '4 winged ice bird' snapped open its eyes as it looked around the stream.

Although it didn't find anyone, the magic beast was now keeping a vigilant watch over its surroundings. As a middle stage rank 4 beast, the '4 winged ice bird's' senses and intelligence were nothing to scoff at.

Thankfully Shun Long had instantly taken cover underneath a tree, before opening another space tear to flee deeper inside the forest.

At the same time that Shun Long entered the second space tear, the '4 winged ice bird' suddenly set its sights on the tree that he had taken cover at earlier. After flapping its wings the bird instantly arrived in front of that tree. All 4 of its wings then lit up with a snow-white light as shards of ice had suddenly formed on them.

Flapping its wings once again, the '4 winged ice bird' sent a barrage of ice flying at the tree, filling it with countless holes.

Only after seeing that there wasn't anyone there, did the bird finally leave.

Shun Long sighed in relief a few tens of meters away after seeing this scene

"This '4 winged ice bird' is really terrifying. I didn't make the slightest sound and yet it still seemed to have somehow felt my presence!"

"Master definitely didn't leave any traces behind after your spatial leap. It was probably the bird's intuition that alarmed it."

Little Black exclaimed with confidence.

Earlier, he was ready to jump out from the 'Stone of Time' and fight against the '4 winged ice bird', if its attack was about to threaten Shun Long.

After a few more hours, night had already fallen as Shun Long finally reached the end of the huge forest.

He could now clearly see the huge central mountain that was just a few miles away. The mountain had many caves in it and surprisingly, it was void of any vegetation. Forget about trees, not even a single plant existed on it.

"Master, I can sense two presences inside that mountain." Little Black said after he sent his soul to scan through it.

"Two?" Shun Long asked confused. Could it be that there are 2 magic beasts instead of 1 in the central mountain?

Little Black nodded his head at Shun Long's question as he continued

"Master, actually, I don't understand what is going on here. There seem to be 2 presences but... only one of them seems to actually be alive"

Even Little Black who had lived for so many years hadn't met with such a situation before.

Shun Long pondered over it for a bit, before he decided to rest for the night and continue towards the central mountain tomorrow after his strength had replenished, when a loud screech filled with hatred came from the central mountain, shaking the entire central region.

Chapter 75 - 75 Cancel the exam?

The screech was so powerful that it didn't just shake the entire central region but also traveled through every single place of the entire Demonic Mountain Region.

Even the big shots from the 4 sects were alarmed, as they looked at each other with fear in their eyes.

Grand Elder Hui Zhong of the 'Flying sword sect' looked at the other 3 people around him as he said

"That was definitely the cry of the overlord of the Demonic Mountain Region! Do you think that perhaps someone has managed to anger it?"

Everyone looked at Hui Zhong stupefied before Grand Elder Lan Hong was the first one to respond as he lashed out at him

"Nonsense! How could anyone even get close to that magic beast, let alone provoke it!? Hui Zhong, I say, have you gone senile due to your old age?"

Hui Zhong was immediately angered by Lan Hong's words as he responded

"You are the one who has gone senile Lan! Do you think that, that monster would cry out for no reason?"

Lan Hong snorted disdainfully before the vice pavilion master from the 'Roaring wind pavilion', Li Huian came forth to meditate as she said

"Seniors, please calm down. There is no mistaking it, as per to whom that beast cry belonged to. However, it's also unlikely that there is anyone strong enough in our 'Desolate east' that can fight that bird. Even the head priest of the 'Golden Buddha temple' doesn't have any confidence in fighting it."

However, at that moment Lan Hong's expression suddenly changed as he remembered something that the sect master Liu Jian had said, back in the central hall about 2 months ago.

Everyone instantly noticed his change in expression as sect master Da Chao was the first one to ask "Elder Lan, could it be that you know something about this?"

(author's note: the usage of the word elder here, refers to someone's age and it isn't the same as the word Elder which refers to someone's status)

Lan Hong however, shook his head as he said

"What vice pavilion master Li Huian said earlier, may not be necessarily true."

After taking a deep breath, Lan Hong continued

"About 2 months ago, a mysterious person appeared in my 'floating cloud city'. No one managed to communicate with him, aside from a small rank 3 bronze grade alchemist.

However, that mysterious person happened to release his aura once, and the entire 'floating cloud city' trembled. Liu Jian then ordered everyone to keep what had happened a secret as that person had most likely exceeded the Spirit realm. Even I wouldn't have mentioned it today if the circumstances weren't as such."

Everyone suddenly sucked in a cold breath as they considered the implications of this shocking revelation.

After hearing Lan Hong's words Hui Zhong asked gravely

"Old man Lan, are you certain that this person has reached 'that stage' then?"

Everyone stared intently at Lan Hong who in return shook his head as he said

"This is just the estimation of Liu Jian. However, even if this person hasn't reached that stage yet, he shouldn't be too far from it."

Silence suddenly permeated the place as this news was like a hammer that struck everyone's hearts.

The vice pavilion master Li Huian suddenly asked

"Then, what will happen to the sect examination?"

Da Chao and Hui Zhong's eyes flashed with panic as both their son and grandson were inside the Demonic Mountain Region.

"I think that we should cancel this sect exam and summon all the disciples back here."

Da Chao nodded after hearing Hui Zhong's words and said

"I agree! Things have gotten out of our control. If every disciple inside dies then that would be a tragedy for our sects."

Lan Hong who heard their words immediately understood what they were worried about. He turned his head to look at Li Huian as he said

"Vice pavilion master, I think it's best if we first wait for the qi eruption to finish before we end the sect exam prematurely."

Since this was a joint sect examination, and 3 out of 4 people had already taken their stance, everything depended on what Li Huian's vote.

If she sided with Da Chao and Hui Zhong then the sect examination would end now, while if she agreed with Lan Hong, then the sect exam would continue normally as it would, until the central mountain erupted.

As everyone looked at the blue-robed vice pavilion master of the 'Roaring wind pavilion', she sighed as she turned her eyes at Lan Hong and said

"I think that we should end the sect examination ahead of time. The dangers for our disciples have already escalated beyond our control."

Da Chao and Hui Zhong sighed in relief while Lan Hong felt a slight sense of loss. Although the other 2 had a chance to lose their direct descendants in the chaos, the qi eruption that happened once every 30 years had always allowed the disciples that survived to become stronger than the other batches. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that it was an opportunity filled with endless danger, that allowed a carp to become a dragon.

The 4 of them took out their 'sect identifying jades' and as they activated them, countless strands of red light flew towards the Demonic Mountain Region.

"What is this? Did the sect exam end prematurely?"

"Haha! I'm sure it's the Grand Elder. He couldn't bear seeing so many talents of our 'Flying sword sect' die here so he must have persuaded everyone to end the sect exam ahead of time."

All the disciples who had been frightened silly previously by the terrifying screech that came from the central region, now felt a sense of relief as they saw their sect jades emit a red light that indicated the end of the exam.

At that moment, in the central region, every rank 4 magic beast was looking at the central mountain where that screech had originated from.

After Shun Long had heard that loud cry his brows shot up as he muttered

"It can't be. How can something like 'that' ever be a rank 4 magic beast? I must be mistaken."

"Master, did you find out anything?" Little Black asked after hearing Shun Long mumbling to himself

"It's nothing" Shun Long replied as he shook his head before he saw a faint strand of red light coming all the way from the outer region, as it headed towards the 'sect identifying jade' at his pocket.

The sect jade lit up with a red light, that was like an invisible string which Shun Long could follow to return back to the Demonic Mountain Region's entrance.

"They decided to end the sect exam already? There is no way that I will simply go back after having come so close to the central mountain"

Originally, Shun Long was planning to rest for the night before heading towards the mountain in the morning but now, he had to alter his plans.

Little Black who saw that Shun Long was ready to go to the central mountain now said

"Master the magic beast that cried out earlier, is no ordinary peak rank 4 magic beast. Based on the strength of its roar earlier, I'm afraid that its power could probably match up to even some early rank 5 beasts. I'm afraid that even with your 'Monarch's Eternal body' it will be hard for us to escape after entering its lair."

Shun Long nodded his head after he heard little Black's words and replied

"I know. Don't worry, I still have a trump card if things really turn bad for us."

Absorbing the pure qi in this Demonic Mountain Region, had incited Shun Long's greed. If the treasure inside the central mountain was really connected to the purity of the qi here, then it was worth taking the risk to obtain it.

Shun Long already knew that both his 'Monarch's Domain' as well as his 'Monarch's Eternal body' would probably be useless against a beast that was at the peak of rank 4 like the overlord of the Demonic Mountain Region. Although treasures were important, one still had to be alive to obtain them, hence without a certain degree of assurance, Shun Long wouldn't head at the central mountain since he already knew of the dangers beforehand.

Little Black didn't warn Shun Long again. He had absolute faith in his master, and if he really was about to die, then the black dragon would accompany him to the other world without a second thought. This was what it meant to share life and death.

Almost half an hour later, Shun Long arrived at the foot of this barren mountain.

Looking up from the base of the mountain, one couldn't even see its peak that was hidden inside the clouds.

Now that they were closer to it, little Black once again sent his soul to sense the surroundings. A couple of breaths later he said

"Master, I can sense the 2 presences from before. They are both inside a cave at the heart of the mountain."

Taking a step forward, Shun Long followed little Black's directions as he started climbing the central mountain,

Chapter 76 - 76 The secret at the heart of the central mountain

The central region had turned completely silent after the king of the beasts had let out that screech earlier.

In the dark night, the only sound that could be heard in the central mountain amidst the eerie silence, was Shun Long's footsteps as he slowly climbed up. His aura was completely concealed by the 'Monarch's hourglass' as he walked towards the heart of the mountain.

The closer he approached towards the mountain's center, the thicker qi in the air around him was becoming.

Shun Long even felt that if he sat down cross-legged to cultivate here, he could probably breakthrough from the middle of rank 8 all the way to the early rank 9 of qi condensation in less than a day.

However, as soon as this thought took form in his head, it was instantly extinguished. The central mountain was the territory of a peak rank 4 magic beast. If Shun Long cultivated here and failed to keep his aura suppressed, he would definitely expose himself and his plan would be ruined.

Meanwhile, as Shun Long was climbing up the central mountain, the outer region had turned into chaos as the disciples from the 4 sects were running around recklessly as they looked to leave the Demonic Mountain Region, causing countless fights with the magic beasts on their way.

Numerous disciples had fallen victims to the magic beasts in the process, as the outer region now completely resembled a battlefield. The dead bodies of the sect disciples were lying around everywhere and even more were piling up as time went by. After all the vast majority of the disciples participating in the sect exam were between the rank 7 in qi condensation to the early rank 1 in earth grade.

Even the disciples that were previously in the 'safe area' of the inner region like Yong Ru and the others had already left as they were heading back to the Demonic Mountain Region's entrance.

Yong Ru who was now resting along with 3 other men and 2 women at the outer region, turned his head to look towards the inner region as he sighed and said to himself in a low voice

"I hope that brother Shun will be alright."

One of the girls that were together with Yong Ru looked at him as she asked

"Senior brother Yong, are you talking about the person that you entered the safe area with?"

"Mhm" Yong Ru nodded his head

One of the 3 men that was wearing the robes of the 'Iron-hardened sect' heard their conversation and butted in as he said

"Tsk, entering the inner region alone is tantamount to suicide. Even my elder brother died in there as he followed senior brother Da Chong. I heard that senior brother Da Chong and a few others barely managed to survive by the skin of their teeth after they entered the inner region, so that person who was arrogant enough to enter in there alone has probably already turned into magic beast food by now."

Yong Ru's face was visibly angered but he knew that what this person said was the truth.

However, since Shun Long had saved his life back when they were at the outer region and even helped him get to the 'safe area', Yong Ru couldn't stay silent in front of this taunting.

Snorting, he looked at the young man in brown robes as he said

"Do you really think that your senior brother Da Chong is the strongest person in this sect exam? I heard that Hui Ming from the 'Flying sword sect' only lost 3 people from his group inside the inner region as he came out safely."

"So what, do you think that your friend is at the same level as senior brother Da Chong or Hui Ming? If that's the case and you are so confident in him making it out alive, then why didn't you wait for him to return to the 'safe area' and instead left with us?"

Yong Ru felt extremely ashamed and angry as he heard these words. He felt ashamed because that person was right, and yet he felt angry because this man had also just exposed him.

Indeed, he too believed that Shun Long would die inside the inner region, and that was the reason why he didn't wait for him to return to the safe area.

Although he knew that Shun Long was strong, Yong Ru still felt that Shun Long was quite a bit weaker than the 3 geniuses. And since the 3 geniuses were having problems in the inner region and Da Chong's group from the 'Iron-hardened sect' had almost faced destruction in there, how could one Shun Long possibly survive?

As these people were arguing, Shun Long who was climbing up the central mountain at that time had almost reached the mid-way point already, as he had now completely retracted his aura, and even suppressed his own breathing.

A huge cave could be seen in front of him, with an entrance more than 9m(30ft) high.

Shun Long could feel a powerful dark aura, as well as wave after wave of pure qi coming from inside this cave.

This aura wasn't directly attacking him, and yet Shun Long now felt a heavy feeling in his chest as his steps halted right before the entrance.

A feeling as if he was getting suffocated overcame him, and just as little Black who had noticed this came out from the 'Stone of Time', the 'Monarch's Hourglass' had started circulating by itself inside his body, instantly getting rid of this suppressing feeling.

Shun Long breathed out in relief while he was shocked to find out that his body still wasn't emitting any of his aura. Presumably, as long as he didn't exert himself now, the 'Monarch's Hourglass' could stay active and keep suppressing this dark aura, without leaving behind the slightest trace.

After entering the cave Shun Long's surroundings completely darkened as he walked deeper inside. It felt as if he was walking inside a giant tunnel that was completely devoid of light.

Thankfully he had little Black's soul sense, and after about a dozen minutes had passed, he could finally see some light in the distance.

Heading towards the origin of this light, Shun Long who had finally reached the end of the cave, saw a stupefying scene unfold in front of his eyes.

Chapter 77 - 77 Heaven swallowing vine

As Shun Long reached the end of the cave, the scene in front of his eyes had left him tongue-tied.

A huge bird almost 10meters(33ft) tall had wrapped itself around a giant vine, that was no smaller than the bird itself. The bird's wings were a shiny silver color while its wingspan was more than 30m(100ft) long.

Shun Long who looked at the bird felt like an explosion had just set off inside his head.

Little Black was shocked as well, as he said in disbelief

"Master that green vine must be the treasure of this Demonic Mountain region. Also.. what is a roc doing in a place like this? How can a roc be at just the peak of rank 4? Rocs are very similar to us dragons, so its strength should have at least been at the peak of rank 7 as it was born."

Shun Long didn't even answer little Black's question as his eyes were glued at the huge vine at the heart of the mountain.

The silver winged roc had tried to completely encapsulate the green vine by wrapping its wings around it, looking almost like it was trying to absorb it inside its own body.

The green light that the vine emitted held a kind of fatal allure to magic beasts.

Even Shun Long's heartbeat had started speeding up at the thought of obtaining this treasure.

After taking a few breaths to calm himself down Shun Long answered little Black's question

"This isn't a pure roc, that's why it is only at the peak of rank 4. Its bloodline seems to belong to the silver winged rocs but it is extremely impure. I guess that one of its ancestors was a pure-blooded silver winged roc but as time passed, the 'pure blood' of the silver winged roc became thinner and thinner with every passing generation."

Taking another deep breath Shun Long continued

"However, the important thing here isn't this silver winged roc, but the green vine at the heart of the mountain"

Little Black's attention was also on the green vine, as he had too felt the attraction that the vine was emitting he curiously asked

"Master, do you know what this vine is? I don't seem to recall ever seeing a plant like this."

Shun Long nodded his head as he said

"If I'm not wrong.. this is a 'Heaven swallowing vine'."

"Impossible! How could such a treasure exist here?" Little Black asked but his voice seemed to be slightly trembling

To Shun Long, little Black's reaction wasn't exaggerated at all. Instead, he nodded his head as he answered

"I don't know how but it's definitely real. Originally, I didn't even think that a 'Heaven swallowing vine' could exist in this place, but now I understand why the qi in this Demonic Mountain Region is so pure compared to the 'floating cloud city's'. The 'Heaven swallowing vine' is absorbing the qi from its surroundings as it turns it into purer qi."

Seeing the silver winged roc wrapping itself around the 'Heaven swallowing vine' little Black felt fury as well as envy in his heart. How could an impure small rank 4 roc try to eat a heavenly treasure like the 'Heaven swallowing vine'.

Even little Black in the past, hadn't seen such a treasure as this vine, if you excluded the 'Stone of Time' of course.

This 'Heaven swallowing vine' was a treasure that could advance the rate of your cultivation, if your body cultivated close to it. However, the 'Heaven swallowing vine' was also rumored to have its

own spirit and it was known in the cultivation world that things that were alive couldn't enter spatial rings.

As Shun Long was staring at the vine with greed evident in his eyes, the roc's eyes suddenly snapped open.

Its bright red eyes were staring at Shun Long with extreme hostility as it let out a screech before it slowly unwrapped its wings from the vine.

"Master, it's going to attack!" As soon as little Black finished speaking, he instantly appeared in front of Shun Long. Now that the roc had noticed them, he knew that they couldn't avoid a fight.

Shun Long was standing behind little Black as he asked him through their mental connection

"Little Black, can you pin it down just for 3 breaths of time?"

Little Black didn't know what plan Shun Long had, but he agreed without hesitation as he said

"Leave it to me master!"

The roc flapped its wings once, as it instantly appeared in front of little Black and Shun Long who were still situated at the end of the cave.

Little Black flapped his wings as he took the roc head-on.

However, the disparity in cultivation was too big, and little Black was the one who suffered in the first exchange as he was sent flying, crashing into the inner walls of the mountain.

The silver winged roc didn't let up as it attacked the black dragon continuously using its talons to tear off the dragon's flesh from his body.

Little Black's body had turned bloodied as wounds appeared all over it, while even his scales were injured as they weren't enough to defend against the roc's onslaught.

However, the dragon didn't even let out a single sound as he kept enduring the roc's violent attack.

This was the pride of the king of magic beasts, who even in the face of death would never bow down.

Shun Long who had just retrieved a silver-white page from his spiritual space looked at this scene and his eyes had instantly turned red.

Little Black and Shun Long were sharing a spiritual bond and that's why he knew what the dragon was thinking in his mind as the roc was destroying his body.

"Buy time for master, I need to buy more time for master"

Shun Long raised his left hand as he slashed the space in front of him, creating a space tear big enough for him to walk inside.

After Shun Long stepped inside, he had directly appeared above the roc's neck that was still attacking the black dragon relentlessly.

Holding the silver-white page in his hand, he circulated his qi to activate it, and as a pair of white runes appeared on the page, Shun Long threw it straight at the roc's spine.

Chapter 78 - 78 Absorbing the vine

The silver page seemed as if it had automatically found its target, as it headed towards the roc's spine.

As soon as it touched the roc though, it didn't pierce a hole in its body like Shun Long had expected. Instead, it looked as if this silver-white page had turned into something intangible after leaving Shun Long's hand, as it buried itself deep within the silver winged roc's body.

SCREECH

The roc cried out in agony after that silver-white page had entered its body. Letting out cries of indescribable pain it didn't have any strength to keep attacking little Black as it immediately collapsed to the ground.

The black dragon, whose body had suffered terribly after the roc's onslaught, was still lying on the ground as well, when he saw Shun Long approaching him. Little Black tried to stand up but the wounds he had suffered were just too heavy.

Shun Long patted the dragon's head while his eyes had started to redden seeing the condition he was in after fighting the roc.

Cuts were present all over his body, while blood was flowing from his mouth. Shun Long was also certain that even some of his internal organs were damaged, before he sent little Black inside the 'Stone of Time'.

After handing a purple fruit with red lines on it to little Black, along with 2 pieces of 'blood lotus', Shun Long said

"Directly eat this rank 2 'purple fire fruit' as well as these 2 pieces of 'blood lotus'. They will stop your injuries, while I will make sure to refine a pill for you in a bit."

Shun Long had picked this rank 2 'purple fire fruit' from the lush forest earlier along with a dozen more rank 2 medicinal herbs.

He had also gathered the seeds from every fruit that he had obtained so far including the rank 3 'Profound earth fruit', and had planted them all inside the 'Stone of Time'. Although they hadn't matured yet as Shun Long hadn't found the time to enhance their growth speed, it was only a matter of time until they did.

Little Black seemed to be smiling as he instantly swallowed the 'purple fire fruit' as well as the pieces of the rank 2 'blood lotus'.

Although his strength was enough to match a middle rank 4 magic beast and rank 2 medicinal herbs shouldn't be of much use to him, the 'purple fire fruit's effects when combined with the 'blood lotus' were enough to stop his injuries until Shun Long refined a medicinal pill for him.

After handing the rank 2 herbs to little Black, Shun Long turned his eyes to look at the silver winged roc on that was still wreathing in pain on the ground.

Half an hour later, the roc's cries had started to weaken as its struggle started to lessen.

At the same time, Shun Long could feel that his connection with the silver-white page was becoming thinner by the second, and after an hour, at the same time as the roc stopped moving the silver-white page had completely disintegrated inside its body.

From the first time that this silver page had appeared inside his spiritual space, back in the 'Alchemist's Guild', Shun Long had instantly understood its use. It was a killing weapon that was meant to save his life once.

The 9m(30ft) roc's body was now sprawled on the ground. Its red eyes that were still open had now completely lost their luster as its body didn't have the slightest trace of life in it anymore.

Seeing the dead silver winged roc in front of him, Shun Long touched its body without hesitation as he put it inside the 'Stone of Time'. Then he completely turned his attention to the 'Heaven swallowing vine' that was buried at the heart of the mountain.

The biggest challenge was about to start now.

The moment that Shun Long removed the 'Heaven swallowing vine' from the central mountain, he expected pandemonium to take place in the central region.

As soon as the magic beasts here noticed the absence of the 'silver winged roc' as well as the disappearance of the 'Heaven swallowing vine', all of them would definitely rush to the central mountain.

And now that little Black was hurt and couldn't fly, if even a middle rank 2 magic beast noticed Shun Long, he would be in danger.

"Since it's only a matter of time before the rank 4 beasts notice that the 'silver winged roc' has disappeared, there is no reason to hesitate. After all I can't leave such a treasure here in the first place."

Hearing Shun Long mumbling to himself, little Black nodded his head as he agreed with him

"That's right master, the magic beasts here have taken enough advantage of this 'Heaven swallowing vine'. I'm actually curious as to how no high-level expert has noticed this place yet."

Shun Long nodded his head at little Black's words as he moved his hand towards the huge vine.

As his hand came in contact with the green body of the vine, Shun Long felt an immense repelling force the moment he tried to put the vine inside the 'Stone of Time'. After all, although the 'Heaven swallowing vine' wasn't alive, it had its own spirit and understood that Shun Long was trying to store it inside a spiritual space.

The 'Heaven swallowing vine' burst forth with a blindingly bright green light that forced Shun Long to close his eyes.

However, just as the vine's spirit started to resist, the 'Stone of Time' also reacted, as it emitted an even stronger blue light that completely suppressed the 'Heaven swallowing vine'.

The 10m(33ft) vine was instantly absorbed inside the 'Stone of Time', but before Shun Long had any time to rejoice and check his spoils, little Black's voice sounded inside his head as he said

"Master, I can sense a lot of magic beasts moving from the forest on our east, and they are all coming towards our direction"

Chapter 79 - 79 A way out

Shun Long hadn't expected for the magic beasts to immediately react as soon as he took the 'Heaven swallowing vine' from the central mountain.

"How many magic beasts are there? What about that '4 winged ice bird'?"

"Master, it's coming as well. The middle rank 4 magic beast inside that lake, as well as the early rank 4 beast from the mountain next to the lake is also coming"

Shun Long was stuck in an impossible position. Without little Black, there was no way that he could escape before the rank 4 magic beasts arrived here. Every escape path was blocked as well.

Stuck in this desperate situation, Shun Long tried his hardest to think for a way out when he suddenly remembered the layout of the central mountain.

Looking around him he asked little Black

"Little Black, are you certain that the magic beasts below rank 5 can't use their soul to sense?"

"Master I am certain but... we don't have any more time to leave! The '4 winged ice bird' has almost arrived at the foot of the mountain. Even if we leave now it's too late."

Shun Long then said

"I won't be able to see anything so you have to guide me through this if we want to avoid all the magic beasts here"

Little Black didn't understand what Shun Long was saying.

His words made no sense, until he saw Shun Long looking around, before he entered in one of the caves that were inside the mountain's heart.

"This central mountain is full of caves, big and small. If I can navigate my way through them, with little Black's help we can certainly leave."

At the same time as Shun Long entered the cave, the middle rank 4 magic beast, the '4 winged ice bird' had already reached the foot of the mountain as it was flying towards the huge entrance in the middle at breakneck speed. To these magic beasts living inside the Demonic Mountain region, nothing mattered as much as the 'Heaven swallowing vine'.

In the distance, more than a dozen rank 3 magic beasts could be seen leaving the forest as they all headed towards the central mountain. At the same time, a ferocious beast that resembled a crocodile could be seen running on all fours, as it emerged from the big lake while it too headed towards the mountain.

From the smaller mountain on the left side of the lake, a 3m(10ft) tall spider was madly rushing towards them as well... but that was just the start.

Hundreds of beasts from all over the central region were now also rushing towards the central mountain.

Screechhh

The '4 winged ice bird' issued a loud cry as soon as it reached the heart of the mountain. Not only was the 'silver winged roc' missing, but their most important 'Heaven swallowing vine' had disappeared along with it.

As Shun Long had expected, the beasts that had just arrived at the foot of the mountain didn't head towards the mountain's heart, but instead entered from the many empty caves at the base, madly searching for the 'Heaven swallowing vine'.

Little Black who was relaying the situation to Shun Long, was also calculating the routes to avoid the magic beasts inside

"Master, there are many beasts coming from our left side. Enter the second entrance from our right, and then directly the first entrance from the left."

Although little Black had his soul sense and could still guide Shun Long, there were just too many beasts inside the mountain at this point. Although the central mountain was huge, there was almost one beast in every entrance by now.

"Master, we are in trouble! There is a middle rank 3 magic beast coming straight ahead of us and there is no way to avoid it from the other caves"

Shun Long was now very close to the foot of the mountain, but in the end, it seemed that they couldn't avoid every magic beast inside.

Facing this situation, Shun Long's heart had turned cold. Could it be that there was no other choice than for them to fight here?

Little Black's voice was then heard inside Shun Long's head

"Master, I can leave the 'Stone of Time' and kill it with my 'Darkness fire' but..."

Shun Long shook his head as he replied

"We will definitely be discovered then... I know. I also know the burden that it would place on you if you fought in your current condition."

Stuck under this situation of extreme pressure, Shun Long tried his best to stay as calm as possible before he said

"There is no other choice. We will either pull this off or we are doomed this time.

Little Black, you have to tell me the exact moment when this magic beast enters a 40m distance from us, and then again when it enters within a 20m distance from us."

Little Black wasn't sure what Shun Long was trying to do but he agreed to his request regardless as he said

"Master, right now it is 600 meters away from us. 500m.. 400.. 200.. 100"

The magic beast was closing the distance between them extremely quickly.

As this beast was approaching closer and closer, Shun Long tightly clenched his fists as he emptied his mind from all other thoughts.

"80 meters.. 60... Master! It is 40m away from us!"

As soon as little Black's voice sounded in his head, Shun Long punched the air in front of him and a spatial tear was forcibly opened.

As soon as he created the space tear, Shun Long heard little Black's voice in his head again saying

"Master, it's within 20 meters!"

Shun Long instantly entered the space tear, while at the same time, the magic beast had just arrived in front of where he was just standing.

His body had appeared 20 meters behind the beast, as he heard it while it was running deeper inside the mountain.

The absolute darkness inside the cave had saved him from being noticed by this magic beast, and approximately an incense stick of time's later, he had finally arrived back at the foot of the mountain.

Chapter 80 - 80 Healing Little Black

Leaving the cave, Shun Long had finally arrived back at the foot of the mountain. As the starry sky shed some light to his surroundings, Shun Long heard little Black's voice saying

"Master, there are many magic beasts coming from both the forest on our left, as well as the mountain on our right. The rank 4 beasts are all inside the central mountain so this is probably the best time for us to leave!"

Nodding his head, Shun Long headed directly towards the big lake in the middle. Since all of the beasts had now entered the central mountain this was the best chance to leave this place.

Running at full speed, Shun Long had quickly arrived in front of the lake as he directly dove inside.

Since this lake was the territory of a magic beast that was infinitely close to the peak of rank 4, no other beast was living here, making it the best path for Shun Long to take to return back.

While Shun Long was swimming through the lake, the magic beasts in the central region were swarming the lush forest in droves, as they were all heading towards the central mountain.

Meanwhile, neither the magic beasts in the inner region, nor the bigshots from the 4 sects at the Demonic Mountain region's entrance had noticed anything yet. After all, the fact that a 'Heaven swallowing vine' existed in the depths of the central mountain was a closely guarded secret that the magic beasts had never allowed the humans to find.

Although the 4 sects had their suspicions about a mysterious treasure existing at the heart of the central mountain, which increased the qi in the air of this region, they were unable to find out anything thanks to the silver winged roc and the other powerful rank 4 magic beasts inside, that were guarding the vine with their lives,

More and more disciples were gathering back at the entrance of the Demonic Mountain region, while the disciples that were deeper inside like Yong Ru and his group, or the 3 geniuses and their own groups, would take at least a few days to return.

Nearly 2 hours later Shun Long had already swam to the other side of the huge lake. Completely ignoring his clothes that were drenched in water, he rushed towards the inner region.

The sun soon rose and a bit more than 6 hours had passed by since Shun Long had left the central mountain.

After many hours of non-stop running and many detours to avoid the waves of magic beasts, he had managed to return back to the inner region. And yet, Shun Long was now exhausted both physically and mentally.

Not having slept for so long, along with the stress from barely escaping the pandemonium in the central region had really tired Shun Long out.

After finding an isolated cave, he sealed the entrance with a big rock as he then immediately fell asleep.

It was only after 10 hours that Shun Long had woken up.

After waking up, the first thing he checked was little Black's condition to make sure that his wounds hadn't reopened. After making sure that he was alright, Shun Long heaved a sigh of relief before he took out his cauldron from the 'Stone of Time'.

Taking out the beast core of the rank 3 'man-eating tree', as well as a few other medicinal herbs, Shun Long threw them all inside the cauldron as he mumbled to himself

"The 'man-eating tree' is a magic beast of the wood element. Its beast core has plenty of wood energy inside, and it's brimming with vitality which will help you fully heal your injuries. Adding a stalk of a rank 2 'ice grass' along with the 'purple fire fruit' will also enhance the pill's effectiveness. Since I don't have any better ingredients at hand, I have to at least create a high-grade rank 2 pill or its effect won't be enough to fully heal you."

As Shun Long was mumbling to himself, his hands were also moving non-stop as he was adding the ingredients inside the cauldron.

The rank 2 'ice grass' required Shun Long to be very careful with the cauldron's temperature or it could easily be destroyed, losing all its medicinal properties, while the 'purple fire fruit' instead, needed a very high temperature to be properly refined into medicinal essence.

Shun Long who was aiming to create a high-grade rank 2 pill for little Black had to completely split his attention into 3 parts as he placed the ingredients inside the cauldron.

The beast core of the 'man-eating tree', the 'ice grass', and the 'purple fire fruit' had to all be refined at the same time as Shun Long merged their essence into one. If he failed to do so, part of their medicinal essence would be lost during the refinement process and he would at most create a middle rank 2 pill.

Beads of sweat rolled off his forehead, as 30 minutes later, Shun Long had reached the most crucial part of the refining process.

The cauldron had started to tremble as Shun Long was mixing the medicinal essence inside it.

With the 'Monarch's Domain' though, he had managed to successfully finish the refinement.

Opening the lid of the cauldron, Shun Long saw a bright green pill inside it. The pill had red and white lines on it and it was emitting a very refreshing smell.

Shun Long smiled as he saw the high-grade rank 2 pill in his hands, before he handed it to little Black.

As little Black consumed the pill, his internal injuries had already started to heal. His external injuries followed right after them and in just a few of hours, his body had already been restored back in perfect condition.

Laughing, the black Dragon flew around the 'Heaven swallowing vine' as he said

"Master I feel really good! Even better than before actually. Now that we have this 'Heaven swallowing vine' our cultivation will surely advance greatly"

Shun Long smiled as he watched little Black eyeing the 'Heaven swallowing vine' greedily, like a kid that had just discovered a treasure.

Little Black however, seemed as if he had just remembered something as he suddenly asked

"Master, do you really have to return to this 'floating cloud sect'?"