

## Versatile 481

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#### Chapter 481: Fire Calamity Frui

Mo Fan arrived at a speculation from the conversation between the two. When he saw that Zhao Manyan had no idea how to continue the topic, he immediately switched the topic and said, "So the burns she suffered were from the fire here?"

Chen Yi slowly recovered from her anger and spoke as calmly as she could, "It's the Fire Calamity. Around twelve years ago, my parents came to this North Burning Valley to find a Fire Element Soul Seed, but found themselves in the middle of the Fire Calamity. They tried to run as far as they could, but the Fire Calamity was too fast for them, and they were soon devoured by the fire."

Chen Yi's gaze changed as she spoke. She had heard the truth from her mother, who kept on telling her about it over the past ten years. Every time her mother mentioned it, she could clearly sense the sorrow and anger in her mother's heart, the urge to simply peel the layer of burned skin off, the despair her mother was suffering from.

"That doesn't make sense; if your parents were caught in the Fire Calamity more than ten years ago, shouldn't they be dead now? However, Uncle Zhao Yulin is still well and alive, and is living an enjoyable life with his second wife," said Zhao Manyan.

"My mother's Secondary Element is Wind. In order to let one of them survive, she had given her Wind Equipment to my father and cast the last Wind Track on him, helping him to return to the family unharmed. The resources he brought back with him helped the family to overcome a difficult situation of the family during that time, which is why his status in the family rose all of a sudden," said Chen Yi.

The group fell silent when they heard the explanation. They had witnessed the scariness of the Fire Calamity. Humans were nothing compared to the punishment meted out by nature, and their hearts would be overwhelmed with fear knowing there was nothing they could do to stand against the disaster. Their only option was to flee.

It was rare to learn that someone was willing to sacrifice themselves just to get their companion to safety.

"My mother was consumed by the Fire Calamity, but because her Primary Element was Fire, and for some other reasons, she survived. She was saved by a creature whose figure was engulfed in flames. It fed her a unique fruit of the Burning Valley, which just barely prevented her organs from being destroyed by the fire. She lived in the Burning Valley for many years, as her body was in very bad shape. It took her a very long time to finally be able to move, and after stumbling into a group of Hunters who had come to find some treasure, she traded some rare loot to them and asked them to bring her back to Dunhuang."

"I believe you can all guess what happened after that. My father didn't want his peaceful life to be disturbed, so he never admitted her identity. He simply gave her a fake one, and arranged for her to live

in a house. Even though he tried asking a few famous Healers to treat her on the surface, he never tried his best to help her. It is like he has completely forgotten that he could only enjoy his current life because of my mother's sacrifice. My mother is living in suffering, and the only drive that keeps her going, is the promise I made that I would find a cure for her."

The confidence she wore normally was absent when she recalled the past with a hint of hatred. It was obvious that her mother's circumstances had greatly influenced her.

"So that's why you are here in the Burning Valley... but your mother used to live here for quite some time. Why didn't she come and look for the cure herself? I don't believe you're here purely to look for the cure too," said Mo Fan.

"It's because of the Fire Calamity. The cure to the burns is a kind of fruit that will only appear after the Fire Calamity, and the fruit only lasts for a short period of time. It will wilt in a matter of days. My mother never encountered another Fire Calamity despite staying here for a few years. She did ask my father to send someone over here after a Fire Calamity occurred, but my father never put much effort into it. For many years, he either miscalculated the time of the Fire Calamity, or missed out on the perfect time to retrieve the fruit. As a result, my mother continued to look ghastly, treated like an outsider under the family's roof.

"I learned how to predict the Fire Calamity from my mother, and I was just figuring out a way to cross the Drifting Sand River when I learned that you were planning this trip to find the Flame Belle, hence why I expressed my interest in tagging along."

Chen Yi revealed all her secrets. She was reluctant to share them, as it was her family's matter, something she was unwilling to share with outsiders, even Zhao Manyan, who was from the same family.

However, if Chen Yi did not spill the beans now, her teammates, who had begun to feel suspicious of her, would not be willing to help her when the time came. Without their assistance, she would have no chance at getting the Fire Calamity Fruit, and the chance of curing her mother would be slimmer.

"That explains why you asked us to slow down a bit before entering the Burning Valley, as you were aware that the Fire Calamity was happening?" recalled Lingling.

Previously, when the party decided to continue on with the journey after entering the North Burning Valley, Chen Yi had asked everyone to rest up at the boundaries of the North Burning Valley by saying that she was worn out and injured. She must have been worried that the team would be caught right in the middle of the Fire Calamity.

Chen Yi nodded and added, "I estimated the time correctly, but I never thought the Fire Calamity would be this terrifying. It's my mistake trying to hide the secret, I'm very sorry. I just hope that you're willing to help me to look for the Fire Calamity Fruits. Those fruits are extremely valuable, and if we managed to find them, I only need one for my mother. I won't be taking any of the loot we've found. Besides, I heard my mother mentioning the Flame Belle, who seemed to be the guardian of the Fire Calamity Fruit, which means..."

"If we can find the fruits, we should be able to find the Flame Belle too?" Mo Fan's eyes flickered.

"Mm, I don't want you to waste too much time on Soul Seeds, as I know the rough location of the Fire Calamity Fruits... I believe many factions will be sending their people here, and some of them knew about the Fire Calamity Fruits, too. They will come for them once they successfully cross the Drifting Sand River," said Chen Yi.

"We should act fast then, as we won't have any chance against experts who are one or two levels higher than us," blurted out Mo Fan.

In terms of money, no one needed it as much as Mo Fan! As a Magician with four Elements, his rate of expending resources was too high compared to other Magicians. Now that they were given such a great opportunity, they had to at least find the Fire Calamity Fruits. It would be even better if they managed to find both the fruits and the Flame Belle!

Xinxia giggled when she saw Mo Fan panicking. "As a matter of fact, the experts whom you mentioned won't necessarily be able to cross the Drifting Sand River. I can feel that the demon beasts there are extremely restless after the Fire Calamity. I don't think the Psychic Element alone or a group of powerful Magicians are enough to help them cross the river..."

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#### **Chapter 482: Fright in the Mountain Path, Part One**

Chen Yi's mother had stayed in the North Burning Valley for some years. Even though her movements were impaired, she had still learned secrets of the place that most Hunters would never have the chance to learn about.

As Chen Yi recalled her mother's description of the terrain, the party arrived in front of a flat-topped hill right in the middle of nowhere. Chen Yi told the party that her mother was active around this hill.

"This flat-topped hill feels really out of place. The entire North Burning Valley is flat without any sign of rising terrain or mountains, and then there's this hill right on the flat ground..." Zhang Xiaohou raised his head, staring at the steep wall of the hill.

It looked more like a volcano, yet unlike most volcanoes, which were wide at the bottom and narrow at the top, the hill was more like a pillar poking into the blue sky.

"Are you sure this place has the Fire Calamity Fruits? Even so, how do we get up there?" asked Mo Fan.

"The inside of this fire pillar is hollow. My mother told me that there's a gap around the bottom of the hill usable as an entrance. Let's try finding the gap, to start with," said Chen Yi.

Going around the huge fire pillar, the party did find a gap leading into it. In comparison to the size of the hill, it was only a small crack, but to humans, it was like a cave open in the stone, which grew more spacious the further their group ventured deeper into it.

The group could sense the path becoming steeper as they went in deeper. The walls in the cave were like half fire crystal and half rocks, with very smooth surfaces. The group managed to pick up some Soul

Seed Pieces along the way. The cave felt like a good place to explore, too. If they looked carefully, they would be able to find one or two Soul Seeds.

The sound of metal clanking suddenly echoed in the completely dark cave. As it was deadly silent a moment ago, the sudden noise felt rather spooky.

The clank did not have the usual crisp ring, but it sounded dull and unpleasant, similar to the sound of someone scratching their nails on the blackboard. The cave was already dark to begin with, thus when the group heard the eerie noise that appeared out of nowhere, they could not help but feel rather nervous.

"I guess I'm not the only one that heard that?" Zhang Xiaohou scanned his surroundings with chattering teeth.

"Any idea what that was?" agreed Zhao Manyan.

"Who cares what it is, let's continue forward. Worrying about it won't help. If it were hiding in the dark, we'll never know what it was," Mo Fan said indifferently.

Mo Fan had assumed that if the creature had the ability to kill them all, it would have done so straight away, instead of trying to scare them with the noise.

On alert now, everyone quickened their pace. The hill was extremely high, even climbing straight up alone would take a long time, let alone following the path in the cave.

The party did hear the same noise again for a few times, but the creature never appeared, thus everyone simply ignored it.

Moving forward in the dark for a long time was boring and it easy to be overwhelmed by fear. Fortunately, everyone in the group was fairly courageous, and did not lose their nerve from the strange noise.

After climbing to a certain height, the gaps along the walls had lava flowing out of them, flowing in the furrows along the path.

The lava served as a light source, allowing the party to get a better look at their surroundings. Zhao Manyan's Brilliant Light was no longer needed to light up the path. The lava on both sides was enough to light up the cave as bright as day.

"HAHA, the Burning Valley isn't as intimidating as we thought. Look at the lava flowing on both sides, it seems to be welcoming us with red carpet and lights!" Zhang Xiaohou walked in the front, enjoying a moment of pride and satisfaction.

The lava's temperature was extremely high. An ordinary human would easily burn into ashes in it, while a Magician could barely protect their flesh. That being said, they would still burn until bones were left if they stayed inside it for too long. Meanwhile, Fire Magicians were able to endure the temperature, but it was totally dependent on their cultivation. Those with high cultivation would not have any problem taking a shower in it...

Mo Fan was clearly not at that level yet. He tried to poke his finger into the lava on the side. It was hot, yet did not pose any threat to his life. Well, it was like putting a finger inside boiling water!

"By the way, did anyone notice that the lava is covering more area?" asked Chen Yi all of a sudden.

It did serve as a reminder to Mo Fan. The path inside the cave was both wide and narrow at different sections, but there was basically enough space for the group. Like the cave of an underground river, the lava was flowing out from the cracks on the walls. At the start, it was bursting out like spring water, and its red glow was directing the group as they moved forward. However, it turned out that the drains on both sides were full of lava, which were even pouring out from some of the sections, flowing toward the path everyone was taking.

"Maybe there's more lava the higher we go. Don't worry, the lava will flow down. There's more than enough space there, it won't block our path," said Zhao Manyan.

"That sounds convincing... but what if it's another reason?" asked Xinxia worriedly.

"What reason?" asked Zhang Xiaohou.

While they were chatting, Mo Fan stood beside the lava drains and observed its flow carefully. He clearly remembered that everyone had mentioned that the lava was flowing slowly before, yet it was already surging toward the lower sections of the cave. Some areas were already covered in the red lava, which began to spread toward the path they were taking.

It had only been less than a minute!

"I think we should leave here at once!" Mo Fan's expression was totally different than before, his voice determined now.

"Why?" asked both Zhang Xiaohou and Zhao Manyan, who were still thinking of the priceless Fire Calamity Fruits.

Chen Yi was not willing to give up either, as the Fire Calamity Fruits were right at the top of the hill.

"Just do what I say!" Mo Fan yelled at the group, as he had no time to explain.

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#### **Chapter 483: Fright in the Mountain Path, Part Two**

The party did not hesitate when they saw Mo Fan being so serious.

If even someone as greedy as Mo Fan had given up so decisively, it was obvious that something terrifying was about to happen.

"Quick, faster!" Mo Fan moved rapidly with his Shadow Spell, urging his crew to quicken their pace.

The group quickly backtracked and traveled down the hill at their fastest speed despite being utterly confused...

"Holy shit, when did the lava get so high?"

A bright red fire carpet rolled in front of the group all of a sudden, as if it were trying to stop the group from retreating.

"Are you dumb or stupid, the lava isn't flowing down like rivers in the first place; it's a huge amount of lava pouring down from right above us!" cursed Mo Fan while running.

The lava was only flowing out from the gaps of the walls and in the drains like sprinkles of spring water when they crossed the same section a moment ago, which posed no threat to the group, but it had now spread to the path...

It clearly implied that the lava was pouring down at them, and its speed and amount was increasing. Otherwise, the lava would not simply spill over from the drains.

It would be fine if only a small amount of the lava was leaking out, but if it were able to accumulate such an amount in a short period of time, once it blocked off the sections that were narrower, the lava would start rising up instead...

When the lava eventually filled the path, the group which was stuck halfway in the cave would be burned alive in the lava, with no chance of escaping!

"Holy crap, this place has become a pond!" screamed Zhang Xiaohou.

"A huge amount of lava is pouring down from above..."

"Did anyone hear that noise?"

"Who the hell has time to care about the noise now," cursed Zhao Manyan.

"No, it's a different kind of noise."

As the group was rushing down the hill, they suddenly felt some rumbling from above them. The sound was a certain distance away from them, so it sounded quite faint.

Chen Yi stopped and listened carefully by sticking her ear closer to the wall.

Her face turned pale white instantly. As she turned around, the others could see her eyes filled with terror!

Words were not needed for her to describe what was happening...

It was lava!

The lava was pouring down the path like a flood. The strong current of lava collided with the walls, producing the terrifying sound that Chen Yi heard when she placed her ear on the wall.

Everyone had experienced the structure of the cave themselves. If a wave of lava was indeed surging toward them from above, they would be dead for sure!

Everyone finally realized why Mo Fan had urged them to leave. If they were any slower, they would have died to the lava by now...

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However, the group had underestimated the rate of the lava, or maybe they had underestimated the height they had already climbed before it all happened. They had yet to arrive at the bottom after all the running, and many sections already had pools of lava accumulating as they passed by.

Most terrifyingly, the rumbling behind them was becoming clearer. They could feel the passage trembling slightly!

Meanwhile, the eerie metal clank was heard once again. Normally, the group would simply ignore it, but when they discovered the narrow section of the path ahead was blocked off by a creature wrapped in red armor, they immediately cursed in their hearts!

"F\*\*k, what the hell is this thing trying to block us off!" screamed Zhao Manyan.

It was their only way out, and the creature was lying right there. Not only was it blocking their way out, it was also stopping the lava from flowing away, and it was filling up the space!

As the lava could no longer flow down, it began to back up in the other direction. As a result, the area immediately turned into a pool of lava around ten meters across!

It seemed like the fire armor creature was not afraid of the lava. It was simply lying in the corner which was the only way out of the cave, as it slowly revealed two heads wrapped in the same armor...

It had two faces, their beastly features bearing some resemblance to humans. The lava was like a soothing bath for the creature, who was soaked in it while glancing at the group of Magicians with a hint of mockery and gloating!

One of its faces had disdain, and the other a dark expression. The creature was like the Black and White Guards of Impermanence to Mo Fan and his crew!

"This is the end!" screamed Zhang Xiaohou.

The rumbling behind them was getting closer, like the roars of the lava tide...

They initially thought Mo Fan's quick reaction had saved their lives, yet they did not expect the creature making the eerie noise would add to their misfortunes by blocking their escape.

The lava pool in front of them enlarged gradually, and judging by the armored creature with two faces, it was not something they could kill easily. No one knew what they could possibly do at that instant, they could feel the despair of being trapped inside the death's jaws!

"Screw it, I'll smash the shit out of this asshole!" cursed Zhang Xiaohou, about to fight the two-faced armored creature.

"We'll think about getting our revenge later, follow me!" Lingling said to the group.

"You have a better plan?" asked Mo Fan surprisingly.

"I'm not sure if it works still. I was observing our surroundings carefully when we were running down the cave, and I discovered a spacious hole there. If we hide inside the hole and seal the entrance with the Earth Element, we can temporarily escape from the lava. If the lava ends up filling the entire cave, either

we're going to suffocate in the hole, or the lava flowing into the hole will burn us to death," said Lingling.

"There's no better plan now, let's head to the hole first. Swift Star Wolf, clear the path!" ordered Mo Fan.

"We have to be quick, or else..." said Xinxia.

Xinxia did not finish the sentence, as everyone was clearly aware that if they did not make it to the hole before the lava tide came, they would really be in serious trouble!

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#### **Chapter 484: Racing against Time!**

"Damn it, if we managed to survive this, I swear I'll cut that son of a bitch into eight pieces!"

There was no point in preserving their strength any longer. The party quickly took out all their secret equipment that was useful.

It felt like the sound of death was right behind their ears, and most terrifyingly, they were running right in its direction. They were not sure if they were just going to crash into it and die in an instant.

This time, everyone felt like they were having a race with the God of Death, as the hole Lingling mentioned was still a distance away.

The entire place was blazing red like fire. The lava had filled up most of the drains, and was spilling over onto the path the group was running on. The liquid splattering into the air as they ran past instantly ignited in the air, which was fairly intimidating to look at.

The rocks on the sides could no longer support the heavy weight, and the lava burst out from the walls in an exploding wave. The lava instantly poured in the direction of the party. Its heat was enough to penetrate their bodies.

"Light Protection: Rampart!"

Zhao Manyan quickly reacted and summoned a light barrier before the lava jetting out from the walls could reach the group.

The lava was stopped by the sacred golden wall, allowing the group to pass the section safely.

The whole place was shaking wildly because of the lava tide. The stronger the vibration, the quicker the walls were collapsing. The lava continued to splatter in the air, burning the group's skin.

"Are we there yet!?" Mo Fan rushed in front of the party, trying to use his body to block the splattering lava.



He was the only person that was unharmed, as the Rose Flame had granted him some resistance to the lava's heat. However, he knew that he would also be cooked alive if he was soaked inside the lava.

Lingling, who was sitting on the Swift Star Wolf's back, had yet to say a word.

She was trying her best to keep her focus, as she had to locate the same hole she had only caught a glimpse of before somewhere in this passage that was being destroyed by the lava!

Finally, her eyes flickered as she yelled at the group, "Turn left over here, quick!"

As soon as Lingling spoke, a blinding red light burst out from the corner ahead, like an enraged beast trying to use its body to fill up the space as it charged in the party's direction!

The sight was utterly terrifying, as everyone could feel their scalp breaking apart. In just a few seconds, they would be dead with their corpses burned into ashes!

The cave was still some distance away. They would not have enough time to make it.

"You guys go ahead!" yelled Mo Fan, facing the group behind him.

"What are you trying to do?" blurted out Xinxia.

Mo Fan did not respond. His figure was engulfed in rose-colored flame, quickly turning him into a fiery demon.

He stood in place and drew a Star Pattern under his feet. Most people would have forgotten what they were supposed to be doing under the circumstances. The terrifying lava could make anyone's mind go blank, and all they could do was wait for their death.

Mo Fan forced himself to gather his focus. When he thought of the people whom he regarded as important behind him, he did not dare to let any hint of fear or hesitation enter his heart.

He opened his mouth and uttered a roar. A tremendous force contracted onto a ring of fire on his right wrist.

"Fiery Fist!"

Facing the astonishing lava tide, Mo Fan's determined face was fully red from the heat, yet he still threw the punch at the magnificent sight!

The lava was rolling in the group's direction, and according to its speed, it would have swept past the group by now. However, Mo Fan's fist blasted a hole right in the middle of the flow. The burning liquid flowed past them on the sides, as if the tide had devoured them.

A figure was standing firmly before the lava, his fist exerting a great force as it tried to hold back the lava and split the flow with brute force, allowing the rest to retreat to the hole that Lingling had mentioned.

The power of the fist was able to hold the tide, but as more lava came surging in their direction, the gap that Mo Fan was making was filled up quickly.

Xinxia, Lingling, the Swift Star Wolf, Zhang Xiaohou, Zhao Manyan and Chen Yi managed to jump into the cave at the last second, yet before they could feel relieved, they turned around and saw the figure outside the cave swept away by the red tide.

A loud crash took place. All they could see as they glanced at the entrance of the cave was lava sweeping past like a giant fire dragon!

Compared to the destructive fire dragon, Mo Fan was too small. He was gone too quickly, Xinxia did not even have the chance to see him for the last time. Her mind was still filled with the firm and fearless back who was facing the terrifying lava fire dragon with his fist...

"Mo...Mo Fan!"

The others immediately rushed to the entrance, ready to dash into the flame to save Mo Fan, yet they could not get any closer because of the lava.

The lava crashed into the entrance of the cave as if it had hit some part of the rock. The force knocked them all back into the cave...

The impact from the lava was stunning. It almost collapsed the entrance!

More lava began to pour into the cave. When Xinxia and Lingling saw Zhang Xiaohou trying to jump out of the cave to save Mo Fan, they quickly ordered the Swift Star Wolf to stop him.

The Swift Star Wolf quickly jumped forward and bit Zhang Xiaohou's shirt, dragging him back from the entrance.

Meanwhile, the glowing red lava began to flow into the cave, forcing the group to back off.

"Quick, seal the entrance!" ordered Lingling.

"Don't seal it!" yelled Zhang Xiaohou.

Zhao Manyan and Chen Yi were dumbfounded, not knowing who they should listen to.

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#### **Chapter 485: Fiery Sorceress**

"He was swept away by the lava, forget about him for now!" Lingling said cold-bloodedly.

Xinxia bit her red lips, as tears almost burst out from her eyes, yet she knew that Lingling was making the right call.

Zhao Manyan clenched his teeth and quickly cast the Light Protection: Rampart without hesitation, forming an arc-shaped barrier sealing off the entrance.

Chen Yi went up to lend a hand, too. She quickly cast the Rock Barrier to add another layer of defense, to brace the barrier further so the lava would not burst into the cave.

It took Zhang Xiaohou quite some time to collect his thoughts, wiping his face even though he was not in tears and casting another layer of Rock Barrier.

The group quickly headed inside the cave. The Magicians who were left in a miserable state by their burns dropped to the ground in low-spirits.

No one talked, the atmosphere felt incredibly heavy.

Finally, Zhang Xiaohou slowly raised his head and glanced at Xinxia.

Xinxia knew what Zhang Xiaohou wanted to ask. She pointed at the Swift Star Wolf and said, "He's not dead yet... the Swift Star Wolf is still here, so that means he's still alive."

The group rose to their feet upon hearing this.

That's right, the Swift Star Wolf was Mo Fan's Summoned beast! If Mo Fan was dead, the Swift Star Wolf would be sent back to his dimension. The fact that the Swift Star Wolf was still here meant that Mo Fan was still alive!

"Mo Fan's primary Element is Fire, the lava won't kill him in a short period of time. However, if we don't seal the entrance, everyone here would be dead, and what he did would be totally meaningless," said Lingling, who always managed to remain calm in an incomprehensible way.

"We need to survive this before we can go search for him. Let's hope the lava won't last for long. Otherwise, we'll simply suffocate to death here," said Chen Yi.

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The pain was unbearable, it felt like his whole body was burning.

He kept on slamming into sturdy rocks as he was swept away by the lava tide. Mo Fan could feel some of his bones breaking during each collision.

The heat of the lava was not enough to burn his body into ashes because of his Fire resistance, but the burning sensation, as if he had fallen into a pot of boiling water, felt like his flesh was getting well cooked.

Mo Fan thought he would soak in the lava until he ran out of air when the tide swept him towards the two-faced creature. However, he could still feel the tide continue flowing down in the midst of his dizziness, as if the creature had left.

Mo Fan had no idea where he was being swept to. He lost consciousness, and was unable to tell how long he had fainted. The continuous collisions had made him feel dizzier, and he fell totally unconscious after a strong hit!

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The sun was high up in the sky, right in the middle of the brazier-shaped North Burning Valley with the shape of a brazier. The only fire pillar mountain in the North Burning Valley happened to be the closest to the sun. Not many living things could be seen on its peak, yet the plants that required an irrigation of fire had blossomed vigorously, and almost covered the whole surface on top of the mountain.

The plants were blazing red, like an ocean of autumn leaves, densely covering the place.

As the red leaves were falling to the ground, they were like candlelights dropping slowly in the air. If a strong gust happened to blow across the place, the candlelights would drift to the wind in the air, a spectacular sight!

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A naked man was lying unconscious among the pile of red leaves. Many parts of his skin had festered from the burns, and his face was seriously scorched.

Beside the man, a fiery red, slightly elegant figure was quietly observing him. Her hand was holding a liquid produced from chewing the red leaves, which she fed the unconscious man by pouring it into his mouth.

The liquid seemed to be a great cure for the burns. As the liquid entered the man's throat, his festering wounds began to recover rapidly.

The energy from the lava was fairly pure, as it did not contain the poison or destructive power of some of the special flames. On the other hand, the unconscious man had a fairly strong Fire resistance. The heat was not the reason he had fainted, but the lack of oxygen.

The sun slanted, and slowly descended into the horizon. The man finally regained his consciousness during the evening.

Mo Fan opened his eyes and scanned his surroundings. He initially thought he was lying in the middle of a fire, but he was relieved when he discovered that it was only red leaves drifting in the wind. The leaves were soft, and as they had absorbed and stored energy from the sunlight, they were like a warm rug in this evening, which had gradually turned cold.

"Why am I here?" Mo Fan was confused. He clearly remembered he had drifted with the lava currents to the bottom of the hill.

As he looked around, he saw the sky around him. He was on the ground covered in red leaves, and occasionally, a cold wind similar to that at a high altitude would sweep past.

"I'm on the hill?" murmured Mo Fan.

He inspected himself, and discovered that there were no visible wounds on his skin, which was totally unbelievable.

As Mo Fan was totally confused, a bright-red human-figured creature slowly approached him. Its movement was strange, as the tip of its toes were slightly raised, and it was hovering above the ground. It was floating toward Mo Fan from a stand of few fiery trees around ten meters high.

It arrived beside Mo Fan, and even though its body was made of fire, to Mo Fan's surprise, he could not sense any heat coming from the creature.

Mo Fan watched it alertly. He tried to protect himself, yet it felt like all his bones had shattered. Just a slight movement caused great pain across his entire body. He could not even rise to his feet, let alone cast a Spell.

The fiery figure did not attack Mo Fan, but handed a delicious-looking fruit to him. It did not get any closer, as if it were worried that he would be afraid of it.

"For me?" asked Mo Fan in disbelief, as he glanced at the fruit which could both satisfy his hunger and treat his injury.

The fiery figure nodded.

"Are you the one that saved me and brought me here?" asked Mo Fan.

The figure nodded, as if it could totally understand his words.

Mo Fan immediately recalled that Chen Yi had mentioned how her mother was saved by a humanoid fiery creature the day she was swept away by the Fire Calamity.

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#### **Chapter 486: Ruler of the Burning Valley!**

The fiery figure's height and size were similar to a human's, or more precisely, its physique was similar to a woman, one that was quite elegant...

Her appearance was very different compared to Mo Fan's when his figure was engulfed in flames, such as when he cast the Fiery Fist. His flames were only burning on the outside of Mo Fan's body like a Super Saiyan mode, but the fiery figure was made of fire herself. Even her face was burning in flames. She did have faint facial features, but they were not as detailed as a human's.

"Can you understand our language?" exclaimed Mo Fan, staring at the Fiery Sorceress.

The Fiery Sorceress floated beside him with an expression that Mo Fan failed to understand.

"Either way, thanks for saving my life..." Mo Fan laughed.

It was true that one who survived a great disaster was destined to good fortune afterwards. Mo Fan never thought the Fiery Sorceress which saved Chen Yi's mother in the past would save him too, and brought him to the top of the hill.

The Fiery Sorceress looked at Mo Fan, her lips slightly open, as if she were smiling...

Mo Fan glanced at it, and somehow felt her to be a kind woman, even her smile felt so gentle.

"Right, my friends are still trapped in the cave," Mo Fan recalled something important.

The Fiery Sorceress shook her head, and communicated with Mo Fan using hand gestures, telling him that the lava would not last for long, thus they would have left long ago. He would not find anyone there now. Most importantly, Mo Fan had broken most of his bones, he would need to rest up with the Fire Cloud Fruit for some time.

Mo Fan knew he could not do anything in his current state. He let out a wry smile, and began to converse with the Fiery Sorceress who understood human language.

The Black Totem Snake understood human speech, too. Therefore, when he stumbled into the extraordinary Fiery Sorceress of the North Burning Valley, he was not unprepared at all.

"Can I ask, are you the Flame Belle?" Mo Fan asked firmly, as he took a closer look at the Fiery Sorceress.

The books had mentioned that the Flame Belle looked similar to a woman, and from afar, her appearance was like a glamorous lady standing in a fire, with a hint of sacred air and authority.

Even though the Fiery Sorceress was slightly different from how the books had described, Mo Fan had a strong feeling that she was the Flame Belle.

The people who had seen the Flame Belle had described her as a terrifying creature. Even though the creature would not chase after humans relentlessly, those who infuriated her and trespassed into her territory would suffer the consequences of her wrath.

If this Fiery Sorceress was actually the Flame Belle, she was in fact quite friendly. She had saved Chen Yi's mother over ten years ago, and also saved him too.

The Fiery Sorceress shook her head, implying that she was not the Flame Belle.

"Oh, you're asking me what I'm doing here?" Mo Fan understood the Fiery Sorceress' question from her gestures and replied honestly, "I'm looking for the Flame Belle. I'm a Summoner, I would like to sign a Flame Belle to be my Contract Beast."

The Fiery Sorceress shook her head, telling Mo Fan that was not a great idea.

"I'm just trying my luck, it's fine if I really can't find her," said Mo Fan.

The night came like dark curtains, while the stars embellished the night sky like shiny jewels. Lying on top of the hill, Mo Fan felt like he was surrounded by the night sky. Even when he was looking into the distance, he could still see the beautiful starry sky...

It was Mo Fan's first time having such a unique experience, lying on the top of a mountain while chatting with a fiery creature.

However, the Fiery Sorceress seemed to have some matters to attend to. She let Mo Fan have his rest, so she soon left the mountain...

Mo Fan felt it to be a pity, as he could tell that the Fiery Sorceress was no ordinary creature. He could only wait until her next appearance before he could ask her more questions.

Suddenly, a chilly gust swept past, followed by an intimidating groan.

Mo Fan had not recovered yet, thus he could barely walk. He quickly glanced at his surroundings, to see if there was anything hiding nearby.

The Fiery Sorceress was aware of the intruder earlier than Mo Fan. She scanned the top of the hill with a sharp gaze...

Suddenly, the red leaves were swept away, like something was crawling rapidly through them.

As the leaves drifted into the air, Mo Fan saw a serpentine creature with fiery lines on it crawling toward them rapidly. Although its size was tiny compared to the Black Totem Snake, it was still around fifteen meters long.

Most shockingly, the creature had three heads. The joint under the heads was fairly thick, branching off into three sections!

As the three heads rose into the air, they turned out to have different colors!

The head on the left was dark brown, with skin like thick armor; it was simply a head made of rock!

The head on the middle was fiery red. Its scales had obvious fiery marks, so detailed that one could simply see the lines on them. Its eyes were blazing red, the gaze from them enough to bring fear to its prey!

The head on the right was a mix of blue and green. The dull color was a clear sign of its poisonous nature, with its fangs exposed in the air, posing a great threat!

Mo Fan was shocked when he saw the three-headed snake.

Although the creature was not as huge as the Commander-level demon beasts he had seen before, its three heads with three different Elements clearly implied that it was no ordinary creature, either!

Mo Fan was not smart enough to identify the creature's level from its rock head and the poisonous head, but according to Huo Tuo's apprentice, Li Junnan, he did mention that snakes with higher lineage would have detailed lines on them. The fiery head in the middle had outstanding snake lines on it, which was a clear sign of its level!

The three-headed snake had captured the scent of a human. A creature like this posed the greatest threat to humans, and was also considered the most bloodthirsty.

Councilman Zhu Meng was well aware of the danger of snake-type creatures, hence the reason he had considered the Black Totem Snake at the highest potential threat level.

Mo Fan did not think that the fact that he was close with the Black Totem Snake was enough to scare the fairly strong three-headed creature away. He could sense a chill down his spine when the eyes on the three heads stared at him.

He was also unable to protect himself with Magic due to the severe injuries he was suffering from. Yet, even at his peak, he could easily tell that he was no match for the creature, judging by its overwhelming presence!

At that instant, a pleasant but furious cry was heard not far away.

### [Versatile Mage](#)

#### **Chapter 487: The Starry Tree**

Mo Fan could feel an extreme heat wave coming from the direction of the cry. He turned around and saw the Fiery Sorceress floating among the Fire Cloud Trees around a few hundred meters away.

She was roaring furiously at the three-headed snake that wanted to snap up and devour Mo Fan. The aura from her fiery figure swept the red leaves into the air!

She was floating in the air, the flames in the outer layer of her body were flapping in the wind too, like a blazing red, noble gown, setting her off like an empress who was born in burning lava. Her sanctity and unmatched dignified bearing were enough to force all creatures in the area to submit to her in fear!

Mo Fan stared at her in astonishment. Just a moment ago, he was assuming the Fiery Sorceress to be a gentle lady, yet the overwhelming aura she was unleashing had allowed Mo Fan to have a different view of her!

The three-headed snake was a dangerous creature, yet it did not dare to move any closer to Mo Fan when facing the Fiery Sorceress' wrath.

The three-headed snake was utterly terrified. It turned around, its heads seemed to have conflicting ideas on which direction to flee in as it crawled away in panic.

In less than a few seconds, the three-headed snake fled into the Fire Cloud Woods on the hill.

Mo Fan thought that was the end of it, but to his surprise, the packs of Fire Cloud Sparrows in the woods were frightened and flew away into the distance, while the creatures that resided in the woods ran in the opposite direction too!

Mo Fan was dumbfounded.

He initially thought the Fiery Sorceress was a special human-like creature, who could understand human's tongue after being around for many years, allowing her to develop her intelligence. Little did he know, her lineage was extremely noble, like the ruler of the North Burning Valley!

The three-headed snake, and the packs of Fire Cloud Sparrows that flew away... those were not just some petty Servant-class creatures!

The Fiery Sorceress' intimidating presence slowly withdrew after a long time. However, it was impossible to tell how long would it take for the Fire Cloud Woods to return to normal.

The Fiery Sorceress slowly floated toward Mo Fan from the distance. As she arrived before him, she had recovered her usual friendliness, which was something that Mo Fan could not understand.

It's obvious that the Fiery Sorceress was a very powerful creature, but why was she so friendly toward humans?

Mo Fan believed that she was furious at the three-headed snake for trying to eat him.

"Tha...thanks," blurted out Mo Fan some time later, still in a shock as he glanced at the Fiery Sorceress.

The blurry face of the Fiery Sorceress wore a seemingly apologetic smile, as if she were asking if Mo Fan was hurt.



Mo Fan was perfectly unharmed. It was just that he almost suffocated due to her overwhelming presence.

Mo Fan changed the topic when he saw her holding something cautiously in her hands, "What's that? Something for me to eat?"

The Fiery Sorceress pulled a long face when she heard the question.

Mo Fan felt awkward, feeling that he had picked the wrong words.

The Fiery Sorceress was holding a transparent fruit in her hands. Both its luster and the pleasant scent were a good indication that the fruit was of superior quality compared to the Fire Cloud Fruit.

"Could this be the Fire Calamity Fruit?" asked Mo Fan randomly.

The Fiery Sorceress hesitated for a while, before nodding to him.

Mo Fan almost dropped his jaw to the ground when he saw her nod!

Damn, he was simply asking thoughtlessly...

Is...is this really the priceless Fire Calamity Fruit that Chen Yi mentioned?

The group could not find it despite searching for it desperately, and here it was right in front of him. Mo Fan was left utterly speechless.

However, he could not tell if he should be happy or sad. He had found the Fire Calamity Fruit, but the thing was obviously precious to the Fiery Sorceress. She might be friendly toward humans, but there was no way she would give it to him.

Besides, the Fiery Sorceress had displayed her ruler-like strength just a moment ago. It was impossible to try and take the Fire Calamity Fruit from her.

"Since you've saved my life, I'll be honest with you. This Fire Calamity Fruit is extremely valuable to us humans, and I believe many of them are making their way here to the Burning Valley to look for it. If this thing is really important for you, you should keep it safe. I know you're friendly toward humans, but not every human is honest and has a good conscience like me," said Mo Fan to the Fiery Sorceress.

After all, the Fiery Sorceress had saved his life, thus he was not planning to do something ungrateful. He could tell that the Fiery Sorceress was protecting the Fire Calamity Fruit carefully.

The Fiery Sorceress nodded. She asked about Mo Fan's condition.

Mo Fan could move around normally, but he had no idea how long it would take to recover from the internal injuries.

The Fiery Sorceress told Mo Fan that the place was not safe, and asked Mo Fan to go with her.

Mo Fan had nowhere to go, and did not have the ability to protect himself either. He had no choice but to follow the Fiery Sorceress.

The Fiery Sorceress led Mo Fan past the dense woods. The woods seemed quite spacious, but since it was on top of a hill, it did not take a long time for them to cross it.

As they approached the edge of the Fire Cloud Woods, they arrived at a slightly uplifted area. The slope was rather gentle, and at the top stood a giant tree, different from the Fire Cloud Trees.

The tree did not have any leaves, the main branches were twisting and winding among one another, forking into lots of twigs. Even without leaves, it looked quite astonishing.

The giant tree stood alone under the starry sky. Its trunks were reaching towards the curtain of night, while the branches were spreading in all directions. From Mo Fan's angle as he looked upward at the tree, he could see the stars between the gaps of the branches and twigs, as if the tree was topped with brilliant stars. It felt like his heart was being cleansed by the stellar view.

The tree was standing alone on the top of a hill in the Burning Valley. Even though countless Hunters had visited the North Burning Valley, none of them would have thought that such a wonder would exist in this place. It could be described as a miracle in the desert!

Mo Fan followed the Fiery Sorceress to the tree. The Fiery Sorceress slowly placed the Fire Calamity Fruit back into the branches. The fruit was already dazzling to begin with, but it was more stunning surrounded by the stars.

"Is this place where the Fire Calamity Fruit was born?" Mo Fan asked thoughtlessly once again.

### [Versatile Mage](#)

#### **Chapter 488: Human In White Cloth**

Inside the cave within the hill, the boiling lava finally showed some sign of 'falling'. The five Magicians who were trapped in the cave uttered relieved sighs.

The cave was not huge, and the gas produced by the lava would find its way into the cave at times, thus the oxygen in the cave was running thin. If they continued to stay any longer, they might suffocate to death.

The only thing that comforted everyone was the fact that Mo Fan's Swift Star Wolf stayed with them throughout the entire process.

It was the sign that Mo Fan was still alive. Xinxia's gaze never left the Swift Star Wolf. Even when they were closed slightly due to fatigue, they quickly sprang open, as she was afraid that the Swift Star Wolf would simply vanish within the blink of an eye.

"The lava is gone, but we have to wait a little longer. It seems like there isn't any air coming in," said Zhao Manyan.

The group of five continued to wait for the cave to be cleared of the lava. Fresh air finally came into the cave from the gaps.

"Come, let's go and find Mo Fan."

Coming out from the cave, the group quickly headed for the bottom of the hill.

Since Mo Fan was swept away by the lava, he had surely followed the current to the bottom of the hill. They would be able to locate him by following the flow.

Although lava was liquid, it had an extremely high viscosity, thus its pace of flowing was rather slow. A substance like that would easily accumulate in some place, and once it cooled down, it would solidify into rocks instead.

If they could not locate Mo Fan before the lava cooled down, it would be fairly difficult to search for him.

...

The group rushed to the bottom of the cave, yet they could not see Mo Fan anywhere. The panicking group immediately stumbled into another trouble, which was the Two-faced Turtle Demon that was blocking their path!

As soon as Zhao Manyan saw the creature, he had a strong urge to get his revenge. To his surprise, the creature was the kind that stayed in packs too. When Zhao Manyan was about to slaughter the creature, the same type of creature but bigger suddenly appeared from nowhere. Forget about getting his revenge, the group ended up being chased by the Two-faced Turtle Demons!

The party ran away from the Fire Pillar Hill and returned to the valley filled with rocks and sand. To their surprise, the Two-faced Turtle Demons continued to chase after them relentlessly.

"What now? If we can't lose them, we won't have enough time to look for Mo Fan," said Zhang Xiaohou worriedly.

"It looks like a group of people is coming in our direction. Screw it, let's run toward them," said Zhao Manyan as he pointed in a direction.

The group of five ran in the direction of another group. When Zhao Manyan saw their leader was a middle-aged man whose hair was combed into braids, his face was filled with shock.

Chen Yi's expression became rather complicated when she saw the middle-aged man.

"Uncle, why are you here?" said Zhao Manyan, glancing at the man.

The man with braids frowned, before glancing at Chen Yi who stood beside Zhao Manyan with her head lowered. He harrumphed coldly and said, "Nonsense, this is no place for kids!"

"Uncle, save it for later. Please help us get rid of the creatures chasing behind us. One of our friends is still in danger," said Zhao Manyan.

Zhao Yulin was aware of the Two-faced Turtle Demons, whose bodies seemed to be covered in metal. He jumped down from his mount with a hint of disdain on his face.

A few Star Patterns appeared around his body. The Star Patterns were drawn simultaneously, and were completed at a shocking pace. The Star Patterns joined together, forming a three-dimensional drawing surrounding him!

The brown Star Constellation was fully constructed. A brown flicker was emitted from Zhao Yulin's eyes, and as the glow reached its strongest brilliance, a force spread in the direction of the Two-faced Turtle Demons in the shape of a fan.

A brown shadow extended into the distance like a claw, and both the loose sand and the cacti along the way were turned into grey-white rocks instantly!

Petrify, the Advanced Spell of the Earth Element!

It was obvious that the Two-faced Turtle Demon charging right at the front had never seen the unique force before. It tried to resist it with its sturdy armor, yet as the brown shadow swept past it, it was turned into a dead statue!

The other Two-faced Turtle Demons were slightly behind, and were utterly terrified when they witnessed the power of the Petrify. The frightened creatures left their petrified comrade behind and fled in the direction of the Fire Pillar Hill.

"Nice one, uncle!" Zhao Manyan went up to the petrified Two-faced Turtle Demon when the others fled into the distance.

He threw a kick at the petrified beast and broke it into pieces. Zhao Manyan continued to stomp the pieces as if the kick alone was nowhere enough to vent his frustrations, "That's for trying to drop the lava on us when we were trapped in the well, that's for trying to block our path! I told you I'm going to cut you into pieces. Look how many pieces you've turned into!"

"Stop wasting time, let's go look for Mo Fan now!," reminded Zhang Xiaohou.

The group was about to leave when Zhao Yulin stopped them, "Where do you think you're going? Stay with my group. It's impossible to send you back to the safe zone. Who is it that you're trying to save? With your capabilities, you can't even retrieve your friend's corpse."

Lingling glanced at Xinxia and said with a nod, "It's easier for us to find Mo Fan with their help."

The five returned to Zhao Yulin's group. Chen Yi's head remained lowered, and as she walked to the middle of the group, she surprisingly discovered a person wrapped in white cloth on a red horse. The person's pair of black eyes were staring right at her.

Chen Yi said in disbelief, "Mother, why are you here?"

The person wrapped in white cloth nodded slightly. She summoned Chen Yi to her side, but she did not speak a single word.

Chen Yi glanced at her father leading the group in joy. She initially thought her heartless father had given up on searching for the Fire Calamity Fruit, and only knew to enjoy his life in the wealthy Zhao Family. She never thought his father would bring her mother here himself after the Fire Calamity.

However, the group of people that her father had brought were not too outstanding. It was most likely that her father was the only Advanced Magician.

The Fire Calamity Fruit was definitely protected by some powerful creature. These people definitely had no chance of fighting it.

The person wrapped in white cloth seemed to be aware of Chen Yi's worry. She explained softly, "The Drifting Sand River has suddenly become restless, which is most likely due to some unknown evil presence in the west... even the Psychic Magicians are unable to pacify them. Most of the factions have sent capable people whose cultivation is relatively lower to cross the Drifting Sand River safely. Your father is an exception. He's most likely the only Advanced Magician who has managed to cross the Drifting Sand River."

### Versatile Mage

#### **Chapter 489: Soul-Grade Material!**

As soon as Zhao Yulin's group stepped into the area of the Fire Pillar Hill, a group of soldiers with badges on their chests arrived, too...

Every Hunter knew that unless their strength could outmatch the entire demon beasts' territory, it was unwise to use any Wing Magical Equipment or fly on a mount.

The surroundings of the North Burning Valley was occupied by the Dunhuang Demon Tigers. Anyone who tried to reach the North Burning Valley using other methods would have to cross the Dunhuang Demon Tigers' territory. Even a Super Magician would not dare to do that.

Therefore, the only way to enter the North Burning Valley was via the Drifting Sand River. However, the Drifting Sand River was also a no-fly zone. If any creature tried to fly across the Drifting Sand River, a giant Undead Dragon Corpse would rise from the Drifting Sand River and devour any creature trying to fly across it.

First, the military in Dunhuang did not raise Heavenly Eagles, and second, both the Drifting Sand River and the northern boundaries of the North Burning Valley were strictly a no-fly zone!

"We'll climb it from the outside. The hill might be tall, but it's hard to tell how dangerous it is trying to go inside it..." said a female Commander with an aquiline nose.

The woman was clearly the person in charge of the expedition. Everyone was obeying her words, not daring to show any reluctance.

"The old Hunter mentioned that the Fire Pillar Hill might look steep, but its surface isn't as sturdy as it seems. We should be able to cut steps as we climb."

"Time is running short; we'll make the move tonight, we can't let anyone else get a head start on us."

"Commander Nanyu, what exactly is the Fire Calamity Fruit for? Why are we sent here to search for it?" said a soldier.

"It has many uses... I'll tell you this, the simplest way of using it, is simply treating it as a reagent when refining a Soul-grade Fire Seed, and the success rate is one hundred percent," said the female Commander, Nanyu.

"A Soul...Soul-grade material... which has a hundred percent success rate!"

The soldiers' eyes glittered.

A Soul-grade Fire Seed, something that would multiply the power of every Fire Spell by four times! In addition to that, a Soul-grade Seed would also grant its bearer a domain, and most of the time a Magician would be almost unbeatable within their domain. Its value greatly surpassed that of the resources needed for an Intermediate Magician to rank up to the Advanced Level!

A Soul-grade Seed was incredibly rare, and they were hardly ever found even after thoroughly searching the lands of the demon beasts. Even the famous marketplaces in the greatest cities would only auction a Soul-grade Seed once in a very long while... As such, most of the Soul-grade Seeds were refined using Spirit-grade Seeds, and it was said that the success rate was incredibly slim. Even after adding lots of supporting reagents, the chance of failing was significantly greater than the success rate.

If the Fire Calamity Fruit could indeed improve the success rate to a hundred percent, it was absolutely priceless!

One could still buy Spirit-grade Seeds with money, but Soul-grade Seeds were a completely different story!

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On the other side of the Fire Pillar Hill, a group of people wearing the blue-yellow explorer outfits of the Hunter Union arrived at the bottom of the hill. They were well prepared for the steep walls. A Magician with crossing scars on his forehead summoned a Mountain-Climbing Beast.

The Mountain-Climbing Beast had special claws that could not only penetrate the walls of the hill, but also provide a strong grip on the steep walls of the Fire Pillar Hill.

The Mountain-Climbing Beast was enormous, thus the group of Hunters simply hung onto the beast and climbed to the top of the Fire Pillar Hill easily.

...

At the waist of the hill around two kilometers away from the Hunters, a group of Magicians with special Earth Element Soul Seeds were walking on the steep walls as if they were on flat ground.

The Magicians continued to walk upward, and tied ropes around the rocks that stuck out from the surface...

They kept on heading up and tying ropes around the rocks, allowing the people of the Magic Association to climb up using the ropes.

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The world was filled with wonders. The restless Drifting Sand River had stopped many people who were planning to explore the North Burning Valley, but the Hunter Union, Magic Associations and the military managed to find people with outstanding capabilities to overcome the difficulties.

These people were not here just for the Soul Seed Pieces and Soul Seeds scattered across the ground. They were here for the Fire Calamity Fruit!

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The silent night sky had a hint of dark blue to it, and was veiled by a faint mist in the wee hours, hiding the brilliant Milky Way. The blurry light descended upon the quiet woods on the top of the hill, adding an outstanding beauty to it.

Mo Fan sat on the slope under the Starry Tree and the empty sky, the boundless Burning Valley, and the solitary fiery sorceress...

Looking at the fiery sorceress treating the Fire Calamity Fruit on the Starry Tree with extreme caution, seeing the back of the figure that had existed for an unknown number of years, Mo Fan was suddenly curious about her story.

"Why are you protecting the Fire Calamity Fruit?" asked Mo Fan, who was sitting on the ground having a rest.

The fiery sorceress was able to float freely, with a figure similar to a glamorous lady. She was patrolling around the Fire Calamity Fruit, as if she were afraid that someone would take the fruit away.

She slowly landed beside Mo Fan after hearing his question, and used her unique language to chat with Mo Fan.

"Are you trying to say, I'll know in a few days?" Mo Fan tried to interpret what she was trying to say.

The fiery sorceress nodded.

"It's already a fruit, it can't possibly blossom into a tree and bear fruits?" said Mo Fan.

Mo Fan remembered Chen Yi had mentioned that the Fire Calamity Fruit would disappear a short time after it was borne. Her father had sent someone to look for the Fire Calamity Fruit a few times, yet he always missed the time when it was still available.

Why would she try and protect something that would disappear in time?

Or perhaps the Fire Calamity Fruit was like a persimmon, which is more delicious after leaving it for a few more days after it had ripened?

"Oh, are you asking how is my body?" Mo Fan rose to his feet and stretched his body. Apart from some slight pain in his joints, his body was fine. He said to the fiery sorceress who was worried about him with a smile, "I think I'm good now. I should be leaving, my friends must be worried about me.

"Either way, thanks for saving me. If there's anything you need my help with, feel free to tell me," said Mo Fan to the fiery sorceress.

The fiery sorceress uttered a pleasant cry, and did not ask Mo Fan to do her any favor, nor did she tried to hold him back.

"I guess it's goodbye then. Sigh, no sign of the Flame Belle, and the Fire Calamity Fruit is in your hands. Maybe I should just try and search for the Soul Seeds and Soul Seed Pieces and sell them for some cash," sighed Mo Fan with an open mind.

### Versatile Mage

#### **Chapter 490: The Deadly Fores**

In the Fire Cloud Woods, Nanyu and her squad were the first to arrive at the top of the hill. They were roaming in the Fire Cloud Woods, as if they had lost their sense of direction.

The truth was, they were clueless about where to go after arriving at the top, thus they could only roam around aimlessly. The elder who once visited the place only told them that the Fire Calamity Fruit was very likely to be found in the woods near a higher temperature.

"Did anyone hear a noise, like something hissing?" asked a tanned soldier.

"Stop spooking everyone, why would any demon beast be here, the temperature is so high," said the woman walking at the front of the team.

Her forehead was covered in sweat from the heat of the rising sun. It was still night time. If it were midday or afternoon, the place would turn into a furnace, baking them to death.

"Yezi, do you still have some water, give me a sip...Yezi?"

The tanned soldier in front turned around, and realized that behind him was completely empty!

He lowered his head and immediately saw the marks of someone being dragged away through the leaves. He was shocked and panickingly reported to the group.

"Commander Nanyu, Yezi, who was guarding our rear, is missing!" shouted out the tanned soldier.

Nanyu raised her hand, signaling the group to hold their position. She quickly scanned the silent woods.

"Let's trace our steps and look for her. She might have lost her way in the woods."

Nanyu shook her head in disagreement. Those who were chosen to join the expedition were the elites from Dunhuang's headquarters. Not only were they extremely capable, they were absolutely obedient, too. It was impossible for anyone to leave the group without notifying their leader.

"Crap, Xudong is missing too. He was probing the path ahead," another soldier came back in a panic and reported.

Nanyu was taken by surprise, and immediately told everyone in the party, "We're outnumbered by the enemy, we have to leave this place at once!"

"Aren't we going to save Yuezi? How could we abandon our comrades?" asked the tanned soldier.

"If you want all of us to die here, go ahead and look for Yezi's corpse!" said Nanyu coldly.



The squad immediately decided to leave the woods after receiving her order.

However, as the soldiers were leaving in a hurry, a few others had vanished into thin air too.

Everyone finally realized how terrifying the woods were. Each of was only a few meters away from those who had disappeared, yet it all happened almost instantly without making any sound, nor there was any trace of blood. The only clue was the marks of someone being dragged away through the leaves!

Nanyu was an outstanding Magician. However, she could not sense any presence of demon beasts when her squad members were in danger. It clearly implied that the creature was significantly stronger than them.

Nanyu told the team her speculation. They were even more terrified, while the tanned soldier said in confusion, "If its strength is much stronger than ours, why is it killing us one by one instead of all of us at once?"

"Maybe it's enjoying the fun of hunting us, like a cat preying on a mouse. If we continue to stay here, it will keep on killing us," said Nanyu confidently.

"What the heck is this place? I think we'll be wiped out by the demon beasts hiding in the Fire Cloud Woods before we manage to find the Fire Calamity Fruit!"

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The leaves of the Fire Cloud Trees favored scorching sunlight. They would also absorb the heat in the air as nutrients for the trees. Each leaf could only absorb a limited amount of sunlight and heat, and seven days was their average lifespan. New leaves would replace them, which was the reason why the top of the hill was covered in the red leaves similar to maple leaves, forming a blazing red carpet. Those walking on it could feel a higher temperature and a different kind of softness compared to the ground.

Mo Fan was slightly regretful when he stepped into the Fire Clouds Woods. The place was like a maze, as each of the trees looked exactly the same, even their size. The ground covered in red fallen leaves prevented someone from recognizing which direction to go in. Mo Fan was unable to locate the cave that would lead him back to the bottom of the hill.

Feeling fatigued, Mo Fan sat on the ground for a quick rest. He was considering returning to the fiery sorceress, to ask her to show him the direction, instead of wasting his time walking in circles aimlessly in the woods.

He was about to rise to his feet, when he felt something sticky on his hands. He raised them up and shockingly discovered that his hands were stained with red liquid. He moved them closer to take a sniff, and his expression instantly changed.

It was blood, and it felt like a human's blood!

Mo Fan immediately lowered his head and checked the rug of leaves he was sitting on, and realized that the color of the leaves close to him was brighter. He could not tell the difference at a rough glance, but it turned out that the leaves were stained with blood!

Mo Fan quickly looked around and saw a bloody, amputated hand among a pile of leaves. The hand seemed to belong to a woman, judging by its structure.

Mo Fan was used to seeing dead bodies. He discovered that the woman had died not too long ago, and he tried to search for her other body parts, while wondering if some other Magicians had arrived at the Burning Valley.

It took him some effort to find something like a badge, allowing Mo Fan to confirm her identity as a Battlemage.

"Not only is the place like a maze, it also has lots of demon beasts that eat humans. Hopefully Xinxia and the others aren't here, otherwise, it would be very dangerous," Mo Fan quickly buried the corpse.

Burying corpses was some moral principle that every Hunter obeyed. As Hunters always found their lives at risk in the wild, they never knew if they would be killed by demon beasts during a hunt, and die in the wild. Therefore, when anyone saw someone's corpse in the wild, they would not mind doing the easy favor of burying the dead into the ground, making sure someone else would also do the same to them if they ended up with the same fate.

It might sound hilarious, but it was also a sign that every Magician who had decided to become a Hunter was prepared to die.

---

The others might have the urge to find the Fire Calamity Fruit, but Mo Fan had totally lost interest. First, the fiery sorceress guarding the Fire Calamity Fruit was very strong, so trying to take the fruit was the same as committing suicide. Second, she was the one who had saved his life, and he was not an ungrateful person who would fall out with her.

His main focus was to find Xinxia and the others, while looting some native products of the Burning Valley so he could sell them once he returned to Shanghai. He would get himself some equipment, and bully the assholes who were trying to mess with him at school, which was more than enough to make it a profitable adventure!