

Walker 1081

Chapter 1081 The Chilly Depths

Five days had passed since Lin Mu had stepped on to the World Fragment and he had finally gotten close to the location from where the strange energy waves were coming from.

"Now that's deep... does this go all the way to the center of this fragment?" Lin Mu couldn't help but say as he stared into the bottomless abyss that was located in the frozen caps.

"This might have been a trench in the oceanic world. Possibly the deepest one. Some trenches can go far deeper than the ocean bed and many even go directly into the mantle of the planet.

The depths of the trenches are filled with magma and fuming gases directly spewed from the heart of the planet." Xukong explained.

"I see... though it has certainly cooled down considerably." Lin Mu said.

"We have no idea how long this world has been like this. We already saw a smaller fragment of the oceanic world when you left the fragment of the sacred ground with Jing Luo.

And now there is this one that is third the size of the Xiaofan world. There are no signs of the other fragments in the lesser void and I don't think you will find one outside the Xiaofan world either." Xukong agreed.

"What do you think we can find here, Senior? So far, we have found nothing at all." Lin Mu spoke.

He had hoped to find some treasure or resources, but his luck didn't seem to favor him. Forget about resource, even the spirit Qi was rare here.

"Destroyed worlds are always a wild card. One can never know what they will find there. It can all be for naught, or you might find your life's greatest fortune." Xukong replied.

"Mmm... at least the spirit Qi concentration is increasing here. Perhaps we'll have a better chance here." Lin Mu spoke.

He looked around to see if there was anything of interest on the top first, but didn't find anything.

'Time to go down then, I guess.' Lin Mu thought and used phase.

But then...

~thud~

"HUH?!" Lin Mu ended up hitting the ground instead of entering it.

He used phase again and tried to enter the ground, but found it to be hard... like rock.

"How's this possible?" Lin Mu was confused.

This was not the first time he had failed to pass through something with the use of Phase, but that only happened because he was restrained by formation arrays.

Lin Mu furrowed his brows and activated his spatial perception. Then using phase again, he observed closely what was happening. And when he finally touched the ground again, he saw it.

"That strange energy... it can actually prevent the phase from working. It's like... it is locking down the space itself?" Lin Mu analyzed.

Xukong who had been observing everything from the ring, couldn't help but nod his head in approval.

'He caught on quickly, that energy isn't something he can go against on his current level.' Xukong thorough to himself.

Lin Mu thought of something before going back to the bottomless abyss. He raised his fist and punched down.

~BOOM~

~CRACK~ CRACK~

A three meter deep crater was formed in the ground, while cracks spread in the icy glacier around him from the impact.

"The ground is not that tough and can still be broken. It should be fine, then." Lin Mu made up his mind.

Taking a step into the bottomless abyss, he let his body fall.

With barely any air in the surroundings, Lin Mu's body silently fell into the darkness.

Lin Mu's spirit sense was observing everything around him as he continued to fall. His speed continued to increase until it reached a terminal velocity and wouldn't increase anymore.

In the darkness, Lin Mu found the time to become slow. Or rather, it was just his perceptive that had made it seem like that. He didn't know how much time passed, before he finally found something.

~HUMM~

A faint humming sound could be heard, which was rather striking in the silent darkness.

"What's that?" Lin Mu's spirit sense picked up on a harsh chill coming from a particular spot.

~SHUA~

Lin Mu stopped his fall and flew to the spot from where the chill seemed to be coming from. The closer he got, the lesser the temperature was. It actually reached a temperature even lower than what was on the surface.

When Lin Mu had entered the abyss, the temperature had actually increased a bit, but then fell when he reached this place.

~HUA~

Lin Mu ignited several orbs of fire again and observed what looked like a sheet of blue glass on the wall of the abyss. He placed his hand on it and felt the chill penetrating the armor of the mortal strengthening scripture.

"Oh? It can actually go through it?" Lin Mu was surprised.

Though he also found the chill to be a bit familiar at the same time.

"Let's see what we got here." Lin Mu said before punching out.

~BOOM~

~KACHA~

The blue glass like surface cracked instantly and a gaping cave was revealed.

~WHOOSH~

The shattering of the wall seemed to have caused the air inside the cave to rush out, as Lin Mu felt the chilly air frosting up the armor of the mortal strengthening scripture.

Taking a step into the cave, Lin Mu came across what looked like an icy abode. It certainly didn't look to be made naturally, as there were signs of manual erosion on it.

Lin Mu observed the frozen walls closely and saw the marks in the rocks behind it that seemed to be made by some kind of an appendage.

"This was certainly carved out by something... something large." Lin Mu guessed,

The carving marks were covered with a translucent layer of ice, thus made it hard to see, but after breaking some of the ice, Lin Mu could take a better look.

"It's certainly made by some creature. It is not man made either." Lin Mu concluded.

He continued onwards into the depths of the cave, until finally he came across a large blue object.

"Isn't this..."

Chapter 1082 A Glacial Shell Snail Queen

In front of Lin Mu laid a rather familiar object. It was pale white in color and had glowing blue lines that went along the spiral on its body.

"Isn't this the... Glacial Snail Shell?" Lin Mu recognized.

Lin Mu had found another snail shell such as this back in the Kong plane. But that was much smaller and was in the depths of an icy cold lake. Which now that he thought of it, had similar characteristics to this.

Just to be sure, Lin Mu pulled out the small glacial snail shell and took a look at it.

"Now I'm sure... they are the same." Lin Mu confirmed.

Though the large shell in front of him was many times bigger than the one in his hand. The shell was almost like a small hill and was about thirty meters tall. It was perhaps the biggest one he had ever seen.

Additionally, the chill that was emanating from this shell was many times colder than the shell in his hand. It was also constant, unlike the intermittent chill of the shell in his hand.

"So this place was really a glacier that has existed for a long time. Perhaps when this world was still intact because, if I recall correctly, Glacial Shell snails live underneath large glaciers. And this is certainly one." Lin Mu said after thinking for a bit.

"You are correct. It seems like this might be the reason why this place is still frozen, unlike the rest of the world fragment." Xukong spoke.

"Mmhm... though it makes me wonder just how did this snail get so big?" Lin Mu questioned. "Do they increase in size as their cultivation bases grow too?" he wondered.

"That's right. Though this one is a little too large for a normal Glacial Shell Snail even for a high cultivation base." Xukong replied. "Hmm... I think we might have come across a Glacial Shell Snail Queen."

"Oh? So it's their leader?" Lin Mu said.

"Rather... their mother. Though it can also be termed as their leader I suppose. The Glacial Shell Snail's are born from a single queen as it lays millions of eggs at once. A single Glacial Snail Queen can potentially control an entire polar ice cap of a world." Xukong explained.

"Whoa... if it can do this then its cultivation base might also be high right?" Lin Mu asked.

"Indeed. A queen of this size should be... at the peak of Immortal Ascension realm perhaps." Xukong answered, shocking Lin Mu.

"This... this is a peak Immortal Ascension realm being?!" Lin Mu was stunned.

He had not expected to see that today. Even if it might just be the remains of one.

"It's strange to see a being that strong dead..." Lin Mu muttered.

He approached the shell and probed it with his spirit sense. Even his spirit sense felt cold upon getting closer to the shell and he could also feel a pressure from it. Lin Mu's spirit sense reached the shell and touched it before passing into it.

But when it did, Lin Mu was surprised.

"ITS NOT JUST A SHELL!" Lin Mu exclaimed.

Xukong was a bit surprised too and checked what Lin Mu saw.

"Oh? It actually has all its flesh intact... or rather, frozen." Xukong saw. "The unique characteristics of the Glacial Shell Snail have prevented the flesh from ever decomposing." He analyzed.

Lin Mu knew that a find like this was absolutely unique and coming to the world fragment was the right choice.

"It's a shame that I can't use it though." Lin Mu said, recalling that the Glacial Shell Snail was a beast of the Extreme Yin water attribute and wasn't good for his body.

"No... you can use it." Xukong said, surprising Lin Mu.

"What? How?" Lin Mu asked hurriedly. "Like... won't it harm me?"

"The Extreme Yin Water element is mostly in the Shell. I said that because you only had the shell back then. But in this case... there is the flesh too. You can consume the flesh. It doesn't have the same level of Dao Traces in it, so should be fine for you." Xukong replied. "Additionally, your body has gotten stronger than before too." He added.

Hearing this, Lin Mu's eyes lit up, and he knew exactly what he should use it for.

"Can I use it for further refinement of the body?" Lin Mu asked with great hope.

"Hmm... you can indeed use it. The shell would have been too volatile, but the flesh should be fine. If you're prudent with it, you might be able to use the energy in the flesh and refine your fourth treasured organ. You won't even need a technique for it since the energy in the flesh is already refined by the beast." Xukong said after analyzing all factors.

"GREAT!" Lin Mu said excitedly. "Just this alone is worth the entire trip!"

With how big the Glacial Shell Snail queen was, Lin Mu was sure that the energy within it would be enough to give him a good push. He was already at the Shell completion stage of the Dao Shell realm and was spending his time in expanding the shell since he had a while to from his Dao embryo.

Lin Mu's goal was to expand his shell till he comprehended enough to form a Dao Embryo that could be of any form. Lin Mu didn't aim for anything particular but was guessing that it would be either related to the Sword Dao or the Earth Dao.

As long as one was formed, he would be able to progress to the Dao Treading Realm. And that would allow him to grow stronger and kill all his enemies that he did not want to exist anymore.

But for a Dao Embryo to form, it would take a while and Lin Mu didn't know just how long that would be. Instead of just waiting for that, if he could further his Five Treasures Realm cultivation, Lin Mu would greatly like that.

After all, it would be a concrete increase in his strength.

Lin Mu walked forward and placed his hand on the Glacial Shell Snail queen.

~KACHA~

But as soon as he did, he found the armor of the mortal strengthening scripture shattering in a moment.

"What the!?" Lin Mu was stunned and pulled his hand back immediately.

"Dead or not, that is still the remains of a peak Immortal Ascension realm being. Even if its Nascent soul has dissipated by now, the powers hidden within its body are more than enough to harm you.

You will have to suffer a bit to store it." Xukong chimed in.

"Of course... but this much damage is fine. I've dealt with worse." Lin Mu said with a firm voice.

He placed his hand back on the shell and felt it losing heat. Even with the protection of his metallic skin and flesh, he still felt the chill permeating his body. Frost had already condensed on his hand and was climbing up his hand the longer he placed it on the Shell.

"Let's get this over with." Lin Mu said as he triggered the ring to store the shell.

This actually took him quite some effort, as there was some resistance from the remains. It was almost like it was alive, but Lin Mu knew it was the Dao Traces that were making it difficult

It was a bit similar to when he had held the Remnant Dao Crystal that he had given to Xiaobao. There was a similar resistance back then too. But this one was much stronger.

~huu~

Taking a deep breath, Lin Mu exerted more power and finally stored the entire Glacial Snail Shell Queen into the ring.

"HAA... Haaa... Haaa..." Lin Mu exhaled and let out big clouds of fog.

"That was far more exhausting than I ever expected..." Lin Mu said, finding that he had exhausted nearly thirty percent of his entire spirit Qi stores from his Dantian.

The ring had sucked it all up in less than a few seconds. Which only proved just how complex this task was.

"Normally you shouldn't even be able to touch a being of that level, so some price is to be expected. Even with the power of that ring." Xukong spoke.

"Yeah... at least we now have it." Lin Mu replied with a smile.

But a few seconds later, his smile turned still and his brows furrowed.

"Hang on... that strange energy.. The waves are still present." Lin Mu said, after sensing.

He closed his eyes and checked again, finding that the Energy waves were actually coming from deeper in the abyss.

"It was actually not from the Glacial Shell Snail?" Lin Mu was surprised.

He had fully expected that them to be coming from the snail as the energy waves were indeed stronger here. But after storing it away, he could tell more waves coming from deeper.

"The shell was probably concentrating the energy waves and passively absorbing them. Making it seem like they were coming from here." Xukong suggested.

Lin Mu nodded his head and left the cave, entering the abyss again.

"Looks like our journey has not ended yet." Lin Mu muttered before plunging into the darkness again.

He didn't know what waited for him in the depths, but was looking toward to it.

Minutes passed by and Lin Mu kept on falling.

Eventually, he felt like the surroundings had started to widen as he didn't feel any walls in the range of his spirit sense.

And about a minute later, Lin Mu finally felt solid ground underneath him!

Chapter 1083 A World Essence Crystal

Lin Mu could feel the uneven ground underneath him, but at the same time felt like something was different.

~step~

And when he took a step, he knew exactly what was different.

"Why is the gravity so weak here?" Lin Mu was confused as he found his body floating after his attest of taking a step.

He looked around and couldn't find anything within the range of his vision or his spirit sense. Picking a random direction, Lin Mu started to walk.

He ended up walking for about ten minutes before he realized that there was no obstacle in his path.

"Is this a cave? There are no walls that attached to the path up there." Lin Mu muttered in confusion.

His spirit sense could barely touch the ceiling of the underground are but not its borders. It made Lin Mu think that it might really be a large cave since even his spirit sense with a range of nearly hundred kilometer couldn't measure it.

Lin Mu walked for about an hour before he felt the energy waves getting stronger.

'They've gotten at least thrice as strong as before. Whatever they are coming from must be near.' Lin Mu guessed.

And surely, the very next minute, a structure appeared within the range of his sense. Getting closer to it, Lin Mu discovered that it was actually a spike of some kind.

"Is this a stalagmite?" Lin Mu observed it with his spirit sense and estimated the texture to be similar to that.

But at the very top of the spike, he found it to be a different material. It was far more smoother and could also repel his spirit sense. No matter how much he tried, it just wouldn't reach the top.

'Now that's interesting.' Lin Mu thought as he approached the structure.

And when the illumination of the Flame orbs spread to it, he finally witnessed what it was.

It was a beautiful crystal the size of a thumb. Under the light of the flame, it reflected a polychromatic light, making it seem as if there was a rainbow hidden within it. It was perhaps the most beautiful thing that Lin Mu had ever seen.

"Whoa..." Lin Mu couldn't help but exclaim.

He brought his hands forwards and carefully touched the crystal, finding it to be slightly warm to the touch. Though it was only warm compared to the surrounding temperature that was easily below freezing.

~HUMM~

And when Lin Mu touched it, he found the ring on his right middle finger trembling. It was the strongest reaction he had felt from it in a while, making him alert.

"Huh... just what is it?" Lin Mu wondered.

He could tell that the ring wasn't humming as a danger warning or as a desire. But rather as if to tell him that it was something powerful.

"Looks like you really found it." Xukong suddenly spoke.

Hearing this, Lin Mu knew that Senior Xukong had an idea of what it was.

"What is it senior? It doesn't match anything that I've read or heard of till now. And the energy coming from it is different too." Lin Mu asked.

"It is not something I've told you about before, since it was not the right time. And I didn't want you to think about it too much either, which I was sure you would do if you ever heard about it." Xukong replied, surprising Lin Mu even more.

"What you hold there... is a World Essence Crystal." Xukong finally revealed.

The name sounded rather grand to Lin Mu and also expressed some meaning, but still wasn't enough for Lin Mu's curiosity.

"What is its use senior? Can I use it to increase my cultivation?" Lin Mu questioned excitedly.

"A World Essence Crystal is something that is formed when a world with life dies or is destroyed. It takes many years for it to form after its destruction, and it can be said to be a priceless object.

No matter the cultivation base of a person in this universe, all of them will desire it if they know its uses.

But ironically, it is not something that can increase their cultivation base.

What it can do is... much more frightening..." Xukong said and took a pause, leaving Lin Mu itching to know more.

"On its own, a World Essence crystal can modify the restrictions of a world, empower a world, and allow one to move between realms.

Other than this, it can also be used in countless things, from refining spirit tools, spirit weapons, formation arrays, and a lot more." Xukong explained.

Hearing it all, Lin Mu could easily tell just how valuable such a thing was. He couldn't even imagine just what kind of weapons and spirit tools could be made from it, not to mention the formation arrays.

Lin Mu might have been told the uses of the World Essence crystal, but the intrinsic properties of it would need to be learned separately.

Though the immediate use of the World Essence Crystal was already enough for Lin Mu to think about a few options.

"Can this... be used for me to leave the Xiaofan world?" Lin Mu questioned.

"Easily. Just that alone will be enough to send you across the Grand Void and into a different realm." Xukong answered.

"Then... isn't this basically a direct way to ascend?" Lin Mu felt himself tremble.

"Indeed. One doesn't need to reach the Immortal Ascension realm to move to the Immortal Realm." Xukong confirmed.

Upon hearing it, Lin Mu almost felt like the small world essence rattly in his hand and turned into a heavy mountain. It wasn't its weight actually increasing, but the value within Lin Mu's mind increasing exponentially.

"Keep it for now. It shall be a great trump card for you." Xukong ordered.

"Y-yes, senior!" Lin Mu hurriedly stored it in the ring, afraid that it might just run away or disappear.

He wasn't fully sure it could do that either, with all the miraculous abilities it had!

With the World Essence crystal safely tucked away in the ring, Lin Mu took a breath of relief.

Chapter 1084 Leaving The Lesser Void

Gaining the World Essence Crystal was sufficient for Lin Mu and he felt like he needed to return to the Xiaofan world. He didn't know what would have happened in the time that had passed.

It had already been over two weeks since he had left it, after all.

'Those disciples should be fine though... I think.' Lin Mu thought to himself as he flew back up from the hole in the roof that he had come through.

His little search in the cave had told him that the entire place had no walls at all. Also it wasn't that wide either, being about two hundred meters in radius. That's right... the entire place was actually a sphere and floated within the cave.

If Lin Mu went down, he would hit the ceiling and if he continued on from there, he might come out from the jagged part of the world fragment rather than the icy caps.

It didn't take him that long to exit the abyss either, as he was only slow before because he was searching for things. But now that he was done, he could fly back at his maximum speed.

Soon he had left the abyss and was in the icy glacier again.

"Sure enough, the strange energy has nearly dissipated now." Lin Mu said after sensing the faintness of the World Essence Crystal's energy.

"You should remember that energy signature and brand it in your mind. Because... if you sense it anywhere else, you should run away at the earliest. It would most likely mean danger." Xukong stated.

"I shall senior." Lin Mu replied, knowing exactly what Xukong was implying.

The only way he would ever feel the energy signature like this again was if he went to a destroyed world, or... if there was someone else with it. The first option might have dangers, but it was still fine.

But the second option meant that Lin Mu was on a normal world and there was someone with a world essence crystal.

A world essence crystal that they could use in a myriad of ways that could easily kill him.

And Lin Mu certainly didn't want that. No matter how tempting a world essence crystal might be, it would only be so in his own hands. In others' hands, it would only be a potential weapon.

Putting away these thoughts for now, Lin Mu flew straight up from the glacier and directly exited the world fragment.

"Can I leave the Xiaofan world like this too?" Lin Mu asked.

"An Immortal Ascension realm cultivator might have been able to if there was no barrier. But with that barrier there, no one can." Xukong replied.

"Hmm... though since I'll most probably ascend, it shouldn't be needed." Lin Mu muttered.

An immortal Ascension realm cultivator might be able to leave their world, but doing that was far more dangerous than just waiting to ascend. There was no lack of such cultivators who had died from it.

There were countless dangers awaiting one once they left the embrace of their home world.

One of the most basic problems one would face is the lack of air and spirit Qi.

Even if an immortal ascension realm cultivator might hold their breath for a long time, perhaps even over a year and more, with the help of specialized spirit tools, they will still run out of spirit Qi after a certain point.

One must know that the worlds weren't exactly close to each other. While one might be able to spot one closely, it would still be such a distance away that reaching it would take years.

Then there was the fact that even if an Immortal Ascension realm cultivator left their home world... or planet, they would still be in the same realm of existence. The true goal behind ascension was to reach the Immortal realm within many immortal worlds existed.

It was only these worlds that would allow the existence of an immortal realm expert after all.

Lin Mu continued to get farther and farther from the World Fragment and could feel the hold of gravity on his body disappearing. After about an hour, it was completely gone and he was left to the expanse of the Lesser void.

Feeling the slightly familiar flow of the void, Lin Mu felt strangely calm.

Aiming toward the sacred land of the Ripple Mist sect, Lin Mu closed his eyes and shot forward!

He continued to sense and comprehend the spatial element and based in the void. Time passed without a notice and Lin Mu entered a state of deep comprehension.

Lin Mu didn't even realize when he had already reached the border of the Sacred Land.

"Huh?" Bumping into the barrier woke him up and made him aware that he had covered the long journey.

"That was fast..." Lin Mu muttered, not knowing it if was true or not.

For now, he just decided to leave it. He opened another rift into the barrier of the sacred land as he couldn't find the old one.

"It closed just like I had expected." Lin Mu said as he passed through the rift.

~HUU~

Breathing in fresh air, Lin Mu felt a bit surreal.

It was his first time leaving the Xiaofan world, thus it would be a memory he would never forget.

"Time to return." Lin Mu said as he directly opened up a portal.

With him being in the sacred land itself, Lin Mu could return to the Xiaofan world from any point, as he could simply utilize its formation array to reject him and send him to the teleportation gate directly.

~SHUA~

And sure enough, once the portal was opened, the sacred lands' formation array directly expelled him out to the gate.

~thud~

Lin Mu's body landed on the ground and made a little impact, but didn't break it entirely since the gate's floor was made out of a tougher material than normal rock.

"I'm back Xiaofan world..." Lin Mu lightly said and spread his spirit sense across the sect, wanting to know what had happened.

Chapter 1085 The Surviving Disciples Of The Ripple Mist Sect

The first thing that Lin Mu ended up noticing was that there were actually people near the teleportation gate.

"The disciples are awake, huh..." Lin Mu recognized.

He was a bit surprised that they had not left the sect though, as he was sure that after seeing all that had happened, they would want to leave the place as soon as possible.

"Let's see what they are up to then," Lin Mu said as he flew towards them.

The disciples had been sitting around what looked like a bonfire right now. It was nighttime and there was a chill in the air. Lin Mu's earlier actions had broken most of the formation arrays of the sect and thus they couldn't even use the basic illumination formations that usually kept the sect lit up and warm.

The disciples could only gather up and sit like this for now. Their faces were also filled with confusion and they were certainly looking lost.

~shua~

A breeze could be felt by the disciples, prompting them to look.

"Look! It's the senior!" The disciples quickly recognized.

Lin Mu landed and saw the disciples all standing up.

"Why are you all still here? This place is not safe." Lin Mu asked.

He had hoped that they were smart enough to at least tell this much.

"W-we know, senior. But... we have no place to go." One of the disciples spoke.

"After we woke up, we read up on some of the documents the elders had hidden away and learned what has been happening in detail. But that is also why we didn't dare to leave, as we were sure that there would be Gu Legion members ready to catch us if we went anywhere." The female Disciple who had lost her Dao Companion spoke.

"Yeah, and we didn't think that going to the Long Cloud alliance was an option either. We would be attacked there, too. And we will have no way to prove our innocence." Another disciple added.

Hearing their words, Lin Mu understood that he had mistaken some of their concerns earlier.

"I see..." Lin Mu thought over and wondered what would be the best course of action here.

He himself was busy and didn't have the time to babysit them. And he didn't think the disciples would be able to take a long journey on their own either, with how the situation of the continent was now.

"If you all want a safe space, you should head to the Fenlong Kingdom." Lin Mu said before taking out a metal plate from his ring.

The plate was plain and had nothing on it, looking like a common iron plate that would be used in making armor and forging other things. Lin Mu held the plate in one hand and used the finger of other to directly carve a character on it.

~SCREECH~

The metal let out a high pitched sound as it was scratched easily with Lin Mu's finger, surprising the disciples with the ease with which he was doing it. A few seconds later, he was done carving and the character was complete.

"Take this." Lin Mu gave the metal plate with the character carved into it to a disciple near him.

"Ordained?" The disciple read the character.

"Show this to the people at the border and tell them Lin Mu sent you." He instructed.

Some of the disciples were a bit hesitant and wondered if this would really work out or not.

"We shall do as you say, senior. You've already saved our lives and given us a chance to avenge ourselves. We shall be forever in your debt." The disciples said, trusting Lin Mu.

"Go on now. Getting to Fenlong kingdom from here shouldn't take more than a few days. And if you all fly, it should be even quick. Just try to avoid the Mountain Brush Sect. They are involved in the Zither wind alliance too and might trouble you if you come across them." Lin Mu directed.

"Alright, senior." The disciples said while cupping their hands.

Lin Mu nodded his head and decided to leave too, he had a lot of things to do and had to hurry.

He closed his eyes for a second and called for Little Shrubby.

~ROAR~

A minute later, a low roar was heard coming from the distance.

"WHAT WAS THAT!?" The disciples who heard it were startled.

~WHOOSH~

Then a few seconds later, a red blur was seen approaching from the horizon. Under the stunned eyes of the disciples, a beast larger than anything they had ever seen appeared. Red flames illuminated the majestic beast as its deep eyes glanced over them.

"Where did you go, master? I couldn't feel you for a few days." Little Shrubby spoke through the link.

"I had to go to a place where our link might have gotten weak. It is fine now, though." Lin Mu replied.

"Was there a problem while I was gone?" he asked, wondering if it really was like that.

"Ah, I wanted to ask what to do with a few people that tried to enter the sect. I couldn't contact you so I just killed them like you asked." Little Shrubby answered.

"Killed them? Who exactly?" Lin Mu asked as his brows furrowed.

He knew that he had instructed Little Shrubby to prevent anyone coming close, but didn't know who might exactly try that.

"I kept all the corpses. Let me show you." Little Shrubby said.

Then, under the shocked eyes of all the disciples, a hill of corpses started pouring out of Little Shrubby's storage belt.

"Those are Mountain Brush Sect elders!" A few Ripple Mist sect disciples recognized.

"HEAVENS! THAT'S THE PATRIARCH!" Someone pointed at a head that was missing a body.

Lin Mu was surprised hearing that and looked at the bloodied head that had a scared expression frozen on it. Its eyes were still open, and if one looked in them, one could tell that the person had seen the greatest terror of their lives.

Chapter 1086 Little Shrubby Eradicated A Sect Too?

Lin Mu was not expecting to see what was basically the entirety of the Mountain Brush Sect's leadership piled into a dead hill here.

"What exactly did happen?" Lin Mu questioned.

Little Shrubby then went on to explain how soon after Lin Mu entered the sect, he saw a few suspicious people leaving the sect. Little Shrubby followed them and saw them meet up with a few Gu Legion people.

And as he was asked before, he killed them.

But upon killing them, a certain message was sent out and it called forth more Gu Legion members, one after the other. First came the weaker members, and a few hours after Little Shrubby killed them more of them came.

Little Shrubby killed them too and got some peace for a bit.

He was cooking when Gu Legion members with higher cultivation tried to sneak attack and ended up spilling the pot of stew that he was cooking.

Then in a fit of rage, Little Shrubby killed them all and followed their scent all the way to a certain location. He then broke through a barrier which let him inside a sect.

All the people of the sect were alerted and attacked him in response, and Little Shrubby reacted similarly.

But he also found the scent of those that were controlled by the Human Controlling Blood curse and those with the muddied Nascent souls here.

Following the orders that Lin Mu had given, little Shrubby killed all that came after him and only left those that didn't have the scent of the pills of grace and Human Controlling Blood curse on them.

Lin Mu was stunned hearing it all and was at a loss for words.

"So you eliminated the entire Mountain Brush sect on your own?" Lin Mu muttered.

"Yup. I also got some things from them. Oh, and I kept their storage treasures, you can open them, I was unable to." Little Shrubby replied causally.

Lin Mu didn't know what to say to it. He knew that what Little Shrubby was ultimately good, but the entire event was greatly unexpected for him.

The disciples of the Ripple Mist sect who watched it all but were unable to understand their conversation were sitting there confused.

To them, Lin Mu spoke some words, and Little Shrubby would respond with a growl.

It was very unusual for them and they could only keep their mouth shut. They felt that if they interfered, it might not end well. Not to mention that Little Shrubby along was quite intimidating to them.

And the pile of corpses didn't help either.

'That beast kill the patriarch of the Mountain Brush Sect? Damn... it must be at least at the Dao shell realm.' They thought.

Having heard it all, though, Lin Mu came upon another issue.

"When you left the Mountain brush sect, were there still people alive?" Lin Mu questioned.

"Yes, the ones that didn't have the scent were still alive. They were all too weak though." Little Shrubby answered.

"So the disciples are alone too..." Lin Mu muttered.

He knew that leaving them alone would not be good either.

'Since Little Shrubby found similar aura and scent like the Ripple Mist sect there, the elders were definitely doing the same to the disciples there. They are victims too and now alone.; Lin Mu thought to himself.

He then looked at the disciples of the Ripple Mist sect and got an idea.

"All of you shall have a change of path." Lin Mu suddenly spoke.

"What senior?" the disciples were confused.

"The disciples of the Mountain brush Sect are victims of the same thing as you. Their sect elders were doing the same to them and now they are alone in the sect. I want you all to go to them and take them to the Fenlong kingdom with you." Lin Mu instructed.

"What?! It happened there too?" The disciples were stunned.

"Not just there, I think it might be for all the sects that are in the Zither Wind Alliance." Lin Mu stated.

He had a hunch that it was exactly why Gu Yao was able to make ten Dao Treading Realm experts in a short amount of time. By upgrading from beasts to humans, he had sped up the process of making the pills of grace, as they were far more compatible than the beasts.

The disciples whispered amongst each other and agreed to Lin Mu's words.

"We shall do as you command, senior. If others have suffered like this, then they should learn the truth too." A disciple that was taking the role of a leader for the Ripple Mist sect disciples spoke.

"Very well. Go on now," Lin Mu said before tossing them a spatial storage treasure. "Also take this. It will help you with the journey." He added.

The disciple quickly caught it and checked what the spatial storage treasure held. Seeing many spirit stones and pills inside, he was stunned.

"THANK YOU SENIOR!" The disciples quickly bowed his head.

"THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP SENIOR!" The other disciples joined in ceremony.

Lin Mu nodded in response before taking his leave.

Flying up, he climbed onto Little Shrubby's back, and the two of them disappeared over the horizon.

~WHOOSH~

Only a gust of wind was left behind upon their departure.

The disciples stood there looking a bit dazed, thinking as if it was all a dream.

"Where do we go now, master?" Little Shrubby asked.

"Hmm... we need to cultivate more. I got a lot of resources." Lin Mu replied.

"Okay!~" Little Shrubby replied, feeling happy.

Little Shrubby changed his direction and went towards the south. Their intended destination the Zither Wind sect. Lin Mu wanted to collect some information before he entered the seclusion and also wanted to be near the Zither wind sect as it would be his next target.

He hoped to be strong enough to oppose the fourth strongest sect of the Great Zhou Continent on his own.

It was a tall order, and he needed to be prepared.

Chapter 1087 Pleasant News

Lin Mu and Little Shrubby traveled for a while and using his spirit sense Lin Mu got all the information he got, which made him feel surprised and content.

"The Gu Legion actually retreated?" Lin Mu was surprised.

From all the information he had picked up, apparently the Long Cloud alliance was on the forward and the Zither Wind Alliance had been dealt a great blow. Not only that, but the top three sects were no longer being ignorant either.

They too, had declared that the actions of the Zither Wind alliance were far from righteous and needed to be stopped. The fall of the West Ocean sect was viewed as an event of warning.

To the three sects, the one who had done this was possibly an expert who had taken things into his own hands after having witnessed the atrocities.

In addition to this, Lin Mu also learned that the fall of the Ripple Mist sect was not discovered yet. Though it would soon be known as the Top three sects were going to send their representatives to the Zither Wind alliance and all of its sects soon.

Several sanctions were also going to be put down against them.

"Huh... The Gu Legion ended up messing up on their own with their restriction of information. No wonder the rest of the world doesn't know that the Ripple Mist sect is gone too, despite the fact it has been over two weeks now." Lin Mu chuckled.

But while this came as a slight relief to Lin Mu, he was not going to stop his work. He no longer wanted to take any chances and was not going to leave it to fate. He would fully do what he had set out to.

Lin Mu looked at the jade slip for a few seconds before putting it away.

~Sigh~

He didn't know if he could face his friends right now. What he had done was not entirely correct, but he knew it was necessary.

'I'll finish my mission and then face them... if I talk to them right now, I will only waver,' Lin Mu thought to himself.

Lin Mu and Little Shrubby continued to fly and soon reached a certain mountain about three hundred kilometers from the Zither Wind Sect.

"Here we are..." Lin Mu muttered as he gazed into the distance.

The Zither Wind sect was not visible from here, but Lin Mu could sense the faint spirit Qi fluctuations coming from a large formation array.

The mountain that Lin Mu was currently standing above was actually an old outpost that the Hei Corps used to stay in. It had been abandoned for a long time, but Lin Mu still knew about it since Wu Hei had given him a list of them in the past.

And now it was finally coming in handy.

~shua~

Lin Mu's spirit sense spread all over the mountain and revealed all that was hidden in it. The entrance of the outpost was long since blocked and could not be accessed normally. It was located midway to the top of the mountain and was now covered with a meter thick layer of soil.

Lin Mu could see signs of a mudslide as there were fallen trees and rocks half buried in the ground. It was certain that this land slide had occurred a long time ago as the soil that had shifted was already covered with plants and trees.

"There should be a rocky cliff here..." Lin Mu flew to the side of the mountain.

"There it is." Lin Mu spotted the cliff that he was looking for.

It was high up on the mountain and from it several tree roots hung, making it hard to spot. Walking up to it, Lin Mu waved his hand and sent the short sword flying.

~SHING~

A large entrance was carved out on the cliff, revealing the outpost that was hidden inside.

This was the backside of the outpost, and since the old entrance was no longer accessible, Lin Mu decided to make a new one. Additionally, it faced the direction where the Zither Wind sect was and would allow him to spot anything that happened there.

The roots of the trees hanging from the cliff hit the entrance that had been made and still looked natural.

"Come on Little Shrubby, we got a lot to do." Lin Mu said as he flew in.

Little Shrubby shrunk in size and returned to his kitten form as his entire body couldn't fit through the entrance, even if it was large.

Lin Mu glanced at the dusty interiors of the outpost and saw the haphazardly scattered furniture and other objects. Many of which were rather damaged.

Furrowing his brows, Lin Mu clapped his hands.

~CLAP~

~WHOOSH~

His clap generated a strong wind, that swept away all the dust and broken objects directly out of the entrance.

"There, that's a lot better." Lin Mu said before he took out all the things he had gotten.

It took him a year to sort through all the spoils before he reckoned he knew what to do now.

Lin Mu threw out a few formation flags and set up an isolating formation array, preventing any spirit Qi waves from spreading out of this mountain.

'Jing Luo's notes are really coming in handy.' Lin Mu thought as he finished setting up the formation array.

"What do we do now?" Little Shrubby asked.

He had already returned to his full size, as there was plenty of space inside.

"Now we cultivate." Lin Mu said. "Preferably till we have another breakthrough..." he added.

"YES! We'll be the strongest ever!" Little Shrubby said excitedly.

He too liked getting stronger, and it was an instinctive feeling he got. The desire to get stronger was directly born from his bloodline and the stronger he got, the better he felt.

"Indeed..." Lin Mu nodded his head and took out massive amounts of spirit stones and filled the entire outpost with them.

In just a few minutes, the outpost was filled with dense spirit Qi that had turned into mist.

Chapter 1088 Cooking And Refining The Glacial Shell Snail Queen

The misty Spirit Qi swirled in the outpost hidden in the mountain.

The Dao Shell's of Little Shrubby floated in the air and continued to absorb the spirit Qi, expanding its size little by little. Despite the rapid absorption, the quantity of spirit Qi showed no signs of reducing.

There were after all, peak grade, and high grade spirit stones filling this place. It would take a while before they would even show any signs of depletion.

While Little Shrubby was cultivating, Lin Mu was doing something else.

~DENG~

~pew~

"That was far more tiring than I expected." Lin Mu said as he finished separating out all the flesh from the Glacial Shell Snail queen.

Since the flesh was entirely frozen and solid, it took a while for Lin Mu to extract it. Not to mention that since it was something that belonged to a peak immortal ascension realm beast, the toughness was on an entirely different level.

Lin Mu even needed to set up another formation array to prevent the chill from the shell spreading all over and freezing the mountain. The outpost alone would be unable to contain it.

Then there was also the fact that he needed to keep the shell intact, as he wanted to use it in the future. There were many uses for it and it would be a waste to break it here in order to get the flesh.

Lin Mu had also tried using Meld to get out the flesh but found it to be many times harder. The Dao Traces naturally present in the flesh and shell of the Glacial Shell Snail could prevent meld from working on it.

It was like Lin Mu was trying to cut through a steel block with a butter knife. Meld simply stopped working when it touched the shell. This ended up with him needing to cut it out manually.

The area in the outpost was a bit too small to accommodate the shell and thus he had to expand that too.

Over all, it had taken him an entire day to do it all.

But now that he had done it, he was feeling rather contented.

The milk white chunks of Glacial Shell Snail were laid on one side while the large shell was lying on the other side.

Despite being removed from the shell, the flesh was still frozen solid and not really fit for eating. It was not that Lin Mu couldn't break or bite it, but rather the fact that if he ate it directly, even he would be affected by the Extreme Yin water Dao traces.

Thus, he needed to first process the flesh.

"Guess it's time to cook again... haven't done it for a while." Lin Mu said to himself as he took out a certain cauldron from his ring.

~DENG~

The large cauldron cracked the floor upon landing, and its legs dug a few inches into the stone floor.

This was none other than the Thousand Ding Glitter cauldron that Lin Mu had used to refine gold before.

"Hmm... I think I'll need to cook the flesh in three batches." Lin Mu estimated the size of the cauldron and the amount of Glacial Shell Snail queen flesh he had.

"Wait!" Suddenly Little Shrubby's voice was heard.

"Mm?" Lin Mu looked at Little Shrubby, who had woken up.

"I got some things! It will taste better that way." Little Shrubby took out a few spirit herbs and spices he had collected over the time.

Lin Mu looked at them and saw that they were all items that were either fire elemental or inclined towards the Yang attribute.

"This will certainly help balance the Extreme yin, you should use them." Even Xukong was in agreement.

"Alright, thank you Little Shrubby." Lin Mu said as he took them all.

"I'll use my fire too." Little Shrubby added.

"Can you do that while cultivating?" Lin Mu asked.

"Yup, no problem. I don't need to control the fire. It will work on its own after I set it." Little Shrubby replied, intriguing Lin Mu.

'That's new... I didn't know he could do that too...' Lin Mu thought, but then guessed that it might be due to the boost he had given to the bloodlines of Little Shrubby before.

Regardless it was all good, and he was happy with it all.

Soon, Lin Mu filled up the cauldron, added the spices and spirit herbs before topping it off with water taken from a pond that was located on the Earth fire vein. It was from the Kong plane and Lin Mu had stored quite a bit of it in the ring.

The combination of it all, helped counteract the extreme Yin attribute of the Glacial Shell Snail queen and made it easier to digest and assimilate for Lin Mu.

"Do it, little shrubby!" Lin Mu spoke.

~SHUA~

A stream of scorching fire shot from Little Shrubby's mouth and stuck to the base of the cauldron. At first it was small, being only a few centimeters wide. But then it started to absorb the spirit Qi from the air and increased in size.

In less than ten seconds, it was covering the entire base of the cauldron and even spread to the lower parts of it.

"Oh? So this is what he meant by it being able to burn by itself." Lin Mu said after seeing the self burning fire.

"Little Shrubby has reached the next stage in controlling the fire element. His flames can now absorb spirit Qi and will burn until he wills it to stop. This is a great sign that his comprehension of the fire Dao is increasing steadily." Xukong explained.

"That is good." Lin Mu felt proud.

He turned his attention to the Thousand Ding Glitter Cauldron and controlled it to evenly spread the heat, making sure the flesh was processed properly. After all, he wasn't just cooking the flesh, he was also refining it.

With his past experience in refining, the process went smoothly and in two hours, the first batch of the Glacial Shell Snail Queen flesh was ready to eat!

Chapter 1089 A New Kind Of Meat

Lin Mu carefully picked out a piece of succulent Glacial Shell Snail Queen meat and looked at it carefully. The natural fat of the beast had melted and turned into oil that gracefully melded with the spices and herbs that were added to it.

It originally floated at the top of the cauldron, above the water that had turned into fragrant soup. And when Lin Mu picked up a piece of the meat, the oil floating on top would gently coat it in just the right amount, giving it the perfect color and aroma.

"This certainly looks good..." Lin Mu said before putting into his mouth.

As soon as he did, he could feel the warmth from the hot soup and oil spreading. A taste of the aromatic herbs, matched with the fire spirit Qi rich water, made him feel like his taste buds were being given a nice massage at a spa.

But soon, the feeling turned 180 degrees.

~shua~

A mouthful of frost escaped Lin Mu's nostrils as the warmth was swept away and a cool wave spread instead.

Lin Mu bit down on the succulent meat and felt like it was soft yet firm. The meat was cool on the inside and felt a bit creamy as well.

'I've certainly never had something like this before...' Lin Mu found it to be very different from any kind of meat that he had eaten.

And Lin Mu had easily eaten over a thousand types of meat over the years from various beasts. He could tell that his meat from the Glacial Shell Snail Queen was indeed the best he had ever tasted.

'Of course, it should be at least this good. If it was not so, it would be a shame to be a peak immortal Ascension realm beast.' Lin Mu thought to himself.

~gulp~

Having chewed it a few times, Lin Mu finally swallowed it down.

Upon reaching his stomach, the cool feeling spread once more. But it was a bit milder this time.

His stomach started to work and the nameless technique of the Lost Immortal also activated on its own, helping him in absorbing all the energy from the meat.

Lin Mu didn't eat the next piece of meat right away, instead choosing to wait and see how it would affect his body first. He had not forgotten Senior Xukong's warning and knew that extreme yin could harm his body.

It was even more of an issue since they came from the Dao Traces themselves. Even after refinement, there would still be fragments of it left behind. While Xukong had told Lin Mu that at his current stage, he should be able to digest it.

But he still wanted to be careful and cautious.

A minute passed by as his stomach continued to absorb all the energy from the flesh. And when it was finally done, Lin Mu could feel a cool energy passing through his meridians. It was different than normal spirit Qi and was a bit more vibrant.

'This should be the pure water elemental spirit Qi...' Lin Mu guessed.

There were also traces of vital essence mixed into it, and turned it into a slightly different form of energy. Lin Mu reckoned that this was the reason why the flesh was something he could consume and easily use for refining treasured organ and not the shell which was just pure extreme yin water elemental.

The energy swam through his meridians and quickly went to the Dantian. But it didn't stop there like usual, instead it changed its route and continued before splitting apart into two.

A few seconds later, Lin Mu could feel a deep chill spreading from his abdomen and going all the way up to his neck through his spine.

Peering into his body using his spirit sense, he could tell that the energy from the meat had already started affecting his kidneys. The effect was passive rather than active since he didn't actually have a technique for this.

Lin Mu assessed that from all the energy that he absorbed from the meat, only 5% could actually affect his kidneys and refine it. The rest of the energy simply passed through his kidneys and recirculated through the meridians before being assimilated into his body.

"Hmm... passive increase is indeed rather low. It would have been almost impossible to do, if not for the sheer quantity of meat I have." Lin Mu reckoned.

Having seen the effects of the Glacial Shell Snail Queen meat, Lin Mu no longer had any hesitation. He first emptied out the cauldron into another large container and then filled it back up with the second pile of meat and condiments.

While the second batch cooked, Lin Mu started to eat the cooked meat by mouthfuls. It took him about an hour to actually finish it all, as he discovered a new effect after a while.

A few bites of meat were nothing to him, and the cool effect was rather mild. But once he had eaten a certain amount, Lin Mu could feel his entire body cooling down as well. Even his spirit Qi circulation had become slowed, which was a bit alarming to him.

If not for that fact that the effect faded away after he took a pause, he might have had to stop it.

After all, Lin Mu had a tough body and even many poisons would not be able to affect him easily. This meat that could cause such a strong effect was a bit concerning.

Regardless, the effect that Lin Mu wanted was easily shown.

After finishing the first batch of cooked Glacial Shell Snail meat, Lin Mu discovered another factor.

"My body actually can't keep up with the absorption?" Lin Mu was surprised.

The Nameless technique of the Lost Immortal easily extracted and absorbed all the energy, but the speed of assimilation was slower than that by several times. Thus, the energy would stay stored in his stomach, waiting for its turn to come.

'This is gonna take a while...'

Chapter 1090 The Refinement Of Kidneys

About a day had passed since Lin Mu had started to cook and eat the Glacial Shell Snail Queen meat.

"Huu... huu... huu..." breath after breath came out of Lin Mu's mouth as a cloud of cold air surrounded him.

His hair had turned white from the frost settling on it, and his robes were covered in a layer of thin frost as well. His eyebrows and eyelashes looked rather elegant with the snowflakes dotting it and made him look like an ice immortal.

"Just one more bite left... I can do it..." Lin Mu tried to motivate himself.

For the first time ever since he started cultivating, Lin Mu was actually feeling a bit averse to eating. It was the same feeling one would get when one ate too much food and more was presented to them.

It was rather conflicting to Lin Mu, as he could tell that the Nameless technique of the Lost immortal had not reached its limit at all and he had more than enough space for more food.

Rather, his aversion was stemming from his mind.

No matter how good something was, one would get bored and tired of eating the same thing over and over again. And for Lin Mu, it was rather true right now. After all, he had quite literally eaten a small hillock's worth of meat.

Another thing that he had discovered was that Little Shrubby could not eat the meat at all. It was in direct conflict with his body and affinities, making him spit it out the moment Lin Mu tried to give some to him.

Little Shrubby was rather sad because of it too, as he wanted to taste it seeing Lin Mu cook it.

It could be said that Little Shrubby was quite literally the opposite of the Glacial Shell Snail queen. He had a high affinity to the fire element, which was of the Yang side and even had a partial affinity to the Lightning element, which was even more Yang than fire.

Thus, Little Shrubby's body was repelling the meat with all its might.

Lin Mu didn't mind it though, as he had only given Little Shrubby some since the beast was giving him a pitiful look.

He had almost eaten all of the meat now, but it had made him feel very cold and frost had formed on his body directly. He could feel his body temperature fall greatly, and because his skin was gold, it made it easier for the frost to condense.

~gulp~

Finally, Lin Mu mustered his courage and swallowed down the last morsel.

~pew~

"It is finally done..." Lin Mu muttered as more chilly air escaped his lips.

"You should just focus on assimilating it all now. You are already at the twenty percent point, too." Xukong spoke up.

Lin Mu checked his kidneys and confirmed that both of them were at the same refinement level that Senior Xukong had said.

"Seems like it." Lin Mu replied. "Though the refinement is different than usual. Its strange having two organs of the same type being refined." He added.

While it could be said that when Lin Mu refined his lungs, they were in a pair of two and could be considered two organs; the close proximity and connection made them seem like the same thing when being refined.

But the kidneys were different than that, being further away from each other and could also function independently.

They were unlike lungs, which expanded and contracted simultaneously. Despite being in a pair, they worked as one.

Lin Mu continued to focus on his kidneys and noticed the difference between the two.

'The right kidney is a bit slower in refinement than the left...' Lin Mu noted.

"Is it fine to let it proceed as it is senior? I mean... do I need to balance the refinement speed or something like that?" Lin Mu wondered.

"It's not an issue. Even if one of your kidneys finishes its refinement completely and the other has not even started, it will be fine." Xukong allayed Lin Mu's concerns.

~pew~

"That's good," Lin Mu felt better.

It was the best option that Lin Mu could have hoped for, as the opposite would have left him helpless either way.

Even if the kidney's being refined at a different rate was a bad thing for Lin Mu, he would have been unable to address or control it since he wasn't doing the refinement actively using a technique.

He was merely letting his body refine it passively.

Lin Mu quite literally had no control over it other than simply sensing where the energy went.

He couldn't even control it with his spirit sense or cultivation base as he had no affinity with the water element. And this lack of control was only exaggerated with there being Extreme yin being added to it.

Lin Mu pushed the thoughts aside for now and focused on simply maintaining the balance in his body for now. As long as he did that, there would be no obstacles in the assimilation of the energy and refinement of the kidneys.

Little Shrubby was also cultivating on the side, and the two were now progressing steadily.

Just like this, time continued to pass and the pair of man and beast cultivated.

While this was ongoing, another set of events was happening in the Sky Precepts sect.

In the grand palace of the Sky Precepts sect, the patriarch and the head elder Han were in a meeting with several others.

The atmosphere was rather solemn, and silence was abundant.

"How is this possible?" The patriarch spoke after a while.

"We do not know patriarch... the Ripple Mist Sect's patriarch has cut off all contact with everyone. If not for the fact that a few disciples were spotted wandering the border of the Kingdom of Shu, we would have never gone to check the Ripple Mist sect." One of the elders spoke.

"Still... another one of the top ten sects being eradicated without us even getting a clue after days on end... how have we become so ignorant?"