

Walker 581

Chapter 581 - Breaking The Wall

Jing Luo didn't know Lin Mu had stopped when the method was working.

"I'll try something else... this is taking too long." Lin Mu said. 'And takes a lot of spirit Qi too.' He internally thought.

The amount of spirit Qi being used to vibrate was about half of what was needed to activate meld once. Lin Mu reckoned that he may as well use meld as it would be faster and he would be able to recover it quickly with the spirit Qi from the mine.

"You may wanna step back for this." Lin Mu stated.

Jing Luo didn't know what Lin Mu was about to do, but listened to him nevertheless. Once Jing Luo was a sufficient distance away, Lin Mu extended his right hand in front of him, before whispering something.

"Meld..."

No sound or movement could be felt, but Jing Luo felt a massive amount of spatial fluctuation appearing in the area. He wondered what was happening and got worried that the minor plane may be collapsing on its own perhaps.

Just when he was about to voice out his concerns, he stopped. He suddenly saw the wall made of Earthen Depths Obsidian move.

"H-how...?" Jing Luo muttered.

Lin Mu slightly flicked his hand and moved the 'chunks' around. Meld could separate the spatial fragment into multiple sections which Lin Mu called chunks. The more chunks there were the harder it was for Lin Mu to control.

Still, now that Lin Mu had reached the Nascent soul realm, the drain on his spirit Qi was less than before. It was much more tolerable such that he did not mind using it more often. Plus his recovery would also be much faster, increasing the number of times it could be used further.

~shua~

The wall was split into four large fragments that were now floating in the air. But the way they floated was quite eerie. It was not like they were some object floating in the water, bobbing up and down while being at the space place.

They were more like floating in a zero gravity environment. There were no extraneous movements and they were very still. Until Lin Mu controlled them to move, they were in the same position and it did not even seem like the wall had been split.

Only after it had been displaced did Jing Luo saw the true effect.

Lin Mu curled his index and middle fingers together, moving the Earthen Depths Obsidian to the front before splitting it to the opposite sides. Once they were where he wanted them to be, Lin Mu deactivated the skill.

~pew~

Lin Mu took a breath of relief. Even if the drain on his spirit Qi was manageable for him, the amount of mental concentration it needed was still quite a lot. Jing Luo on the other hand was left stunned at this.

"How in the name of heavens..." He muttered in shock.

"I have my ways." Lin Mu replied shortly.

~Whoosh~

Once the wall was opened up though, a breeze of spirit Qi came from it, refreshing Lin Mu and Jing Luo both.

"The Spirit stone mine, it's open!" Jing Luo exclaimed, forgetting about what he had just seen for the moment.

Both of them stepped inside and took a look around. The immediate area next to the wall was similar to the tunnels before and there were just rocky walls and soil here. Lin Mu spread his spirit sense and checked the entire area, coming to the conclusion that the Earthen Depths Obsidian was covering the entire places in a dome like structure.

"Hmm... seems like the Earthen Depths Obsidian was actually a bubble," Xukong spoke.

"A bubble? What do you mean senior?" Lin Mu questioned.

"When this mountain must have first formed, there would have been magma and lava everywhere. And of course, where there is lava there would be other materials and minerals there too. Certain such materials would release gases when they are heated.

And if some of these materials had sunken below the magma, they would get heated and release the gases. This gas would rise up in the form of a bubble and reach the surface of the Lava. But of course, unlike water, lava is much thicker.

Sometimes these bubbles would not pop and become stuck there. Eventually, time would pass and the lava would start to get cooled before getting solidified. When that happens, this bubble would get stuck like that too and would become dome shaped like this.

Of course, the bubbles are not as big as this, which leads me to think whatever kind of gas was trapped in it, it must have been different." Xukong explained.

Upon hearing this Lin Mu got an idea of what it must have been.

"Spirit Qi... the mine must have formed back when it all happened and the gas must have been nothing but spirit Qi itself." Lin Mu hypothesized.

"Probably yes," Xukong replied.

While Lin Mu and Xukong were talking about this in their minds, Jing Luo was watching the surroundings carefully. More particularity at the small glints on the walls of the tunnel.

"Three fall agate, Eight spot Metal, Shutter blight crystal... so many materials... so many treasures..." Jing Luo muttered one by one.

All of the things embedded in the walls were precious materials that could be used for countless things from the refinement of weapons, alchemical pills to the creation of formations. These materials were quite rare in the Great Zhou continent and one would find a great demand for them but no supply.

Lin Mu heard Jing Luo's words and looked at the walls too, finding everything to be exactly as he had just said.

"If this place is just a fragment of a minor plane carved from the Sacred land of the Ripple Mist sect, then how many more resources would be present in the entire sacred lands? And what of the other sacred lands of the top sects?" Lin Mu couldn't help but wonder.

Chapter 582 - High Grade Spirit Stone Mine!

"Seems like we'll get to take more than just the spirit stones now." Lin Mu spoke.

"Indeed... I don't even know if I'll be able to carry all this. Combined with the materials I already have in the workshop, I definitely don't have enough space in my spatial storage tools." Jing Luo replied.

"Ah, you don't need to worry about that. We got plenty," Lin Mu said before withdrawing a literal fistful of spatial storage rings.

"Uh... I guess we will not then!" Jing Luo said, feeling stunned at first and then excited.

What Jing Luo did not know was that this was barely the tip of the iceberg. Lin Mu's mysterious ring was large enough to probably store the entire mountain if he had the power to do so.

Still, the spatial storage rings and other spatial storage treasures he had obtained from the Tri Cauldron Peony sect were already enough to store quite a lot of things and it was unlikely that they would be needing any more.

"We'll get to them later. First, we should see the spirit stone mine." Lin Mu spoke.

"Of course, not like they are running away." Jing Luo agreed.

The two continued and realized that the area was getting wider as they went further. Even the ores and materials embedded in the wall were increasing in number. Eventually, they reached the end of the path and were greeted with a wall of translucent white crystals.

"This... I didn't expect it to be this kind of a spirit stone mine..." Jing Luo muttered.

~gulp~

"Senior... I don't think I'll be able to finish this alone..." Lin Mu muttered.

"No, you should be able to... it will just take more time. Besides you can also store it for later use. Putting it in the ring will count as depleting the spirit Qi of the minor plane too. The only change is that the spirit stone mine is a high grade one." Xukong replied.

That's right, the entire wall of crystal in front of Lin Mu and Jing Luo was actually made of spirit stone. This was a rare occurrence as a crystal as big as this was immensely difficult to form even for high grade spirit stone mines.

"If this really is a fragment of the Sacred grounds as you said, then the part of the sacred grounds that was carved out was probably very important." Jing Luo spoke.

"Yeah," Lin Mu replied, still feeling stunned.

But then upon hearing Jing Luo's words he was reminded of something that he had heard while he was in the Ripple Mist sect. He had ignored it at that point as it wasn't really useful, but now it was linked to the current situation.

'Wasn't the reason why the elders of the Ripple mist sect were so concerned about the sacred trials because there had not been any significant gain in the past forty years? They were preparing the disciples such that they would reap the most benefits.' Lin Mu recalled.

"Seems like you may have unknowingly helped me Jing Luo." Lin Mu spoke.

"What, how?" He asked.

"You detonating the prototype spirit took carved out a major important part of the Sacred ground such that they have been suffering for the past forty years. When I was out there, I heard that the sect did not gain many resources from their sacred grounds when they sent in disciples.

They couldn't even go to check in, as the formation of the sacred grounds prevents those in the Nascent soul realm and above from entering. They just thought that their disciples were unlucky, but in reality one of the major sources of spirit Qi has been taken away from it." Lin Mu replied.

"NO WONDER! I always wondered why there was such a high concentration of spirit Qi in this world along with many resources. Not this just confirmed it." Jing Luo said out in joy.

To him, he had dealt the Ripple mist sect which had forced him into a hard situation along with other sects a bad hand. He couldn't help but feel happy about it and felt like he should take full advantage of it while he was here.

"How do we deal with this though? Mining spirit stones directly can be problematic." Jing Luo spoke.

"I think I can deal with this part." Lin Mu spoke.

Lin Mu was originally going to absorb all the spirit stones to further the plan, but instead of that he reckoned just storing it all in the ring would be much more efficient. Not only would he be done quicker but he would also have spirit stones for the future.

"Umm, are you going to use the same method as before?" Jing Luo asked, hinting at the use of Meld.

Lin Mu simply nodded his head and extended his hand. Jing Luo took the cue and took a few steps back. By now he had already understood that the skill Lin Mu was using was a spatial manipulation skill.

Jing Luo knew how precious and hard to learn skills such as those were. In his clan, there was actually a skill that allowed a certain level of spatial manipulation but no one had been able to learn it.

The source of the skill was also quite important as it was obtained by one of his uncles during the Great war with the Northern tribes in the past. It was rumored that it was one of the skills the northern tribes had obtained from the invaders by letting them into the world.

Many people from his clan, both old and young had tried to learn the skill but no one had succeeded. This had already affirmed the fact that no one in their clan had an affinity with one of the three primordial elements of the universe, the spatial element.

Even the few elders that were able to manipulate space due to their high cultivation base only did so with the assistance of spirit tools.

Lin Mu looked at the large mass of spirit stone and uttered. "MELD!"

Chapter 583 - Mine All Day, Mine All Night

~HENG~

This time actual sound be heard as the masses of spirit stones ground against each other. This was the first time Lin Mu was controlling such a large mass object thus it was quite difficult for him.

"Come on... Pull!" Lin Mu curled his fingers pulling out four large chunks from the entire wall.

~thud~

~thud~

~Thud~

~thud~

The four chunks fell to the ground, making it tremble.

~huu~

"That took way more spirit Qi than ever before," Lin Mu said upon seeing the amount that had been consumed from his Dantian.

"Well it is a good thing that what you are literally moving is spirit stones, haha~" Xukong chuckled.

"Oh yeah..." Lin Mu realized his silliness and figured out another solution.

He walked to the chunks of spirit stone he had pulled out and stored them into the ring one by one except for the smallest one. Even the smallest one was quite large in size, being twice as big as Lin Mu.

Lin Mu took this chunk and pulled it back before sitting on it.

~shua~

Streams of spirit Qi started to emanate from the chunk Lin Mu was sitting on, as he started to rapidly absorb it. Even if this chunk looked big, it was actually just a low grade spirit stone. The difference between the different grades of spirit stone was in the density of spirit Qi in them.

Even if this chunk was so large, in reality, it only had enough spirit Qi that would be provided by 10 mid grade spirit stones. But even then the amount was way more than enough to restore the spirit Qi that Lin Mu had used for meld.

Lin Mu didn't even take a minute, before his spirit Qi was restored.

"That was quick, let do it again." Lin Mu muttered before extending his hand again.

The chunk of spirit stone Lin Mu was sitting on was not even a quarter way used and thus Lin Mu had a few uses left in it. He did not even move from it and just sat cross legged while using meld.

"Meld," Lin Mu murmured as spatial fluctuations spread in the area.

~Heng~

The sound of crystals rubbing against each other was heard as they were pulled out. A few seconds later, four more chunks of spirit stone were stored into Lin Mu's ring. Looking at the wall, about sixty percent of it had been removed.

"A little more to go." Lin Mu said before continuing his task.

Jing Luo was stunned seeing it all. The way Lin Mu was mining the spirit stones could be said to be very unique. No one would be so opulent enough to use a spatial manipulation Qi skill to mine spirit stones.

Not only would it take too much of the user's spirit Qi, but there was also a chance that it may end up damaging the spirit stones. If the spirit stones were damaged too much, they would start leaking spirit Qi as well.

But for Lin Mu, none other these things were a concern. Even if spirit Qi was being leaked from the spirit stones, it didn't matter as he would be absorbing it all eventually anyway. Plus, spirit stone miners worried about losing spirit Qi as it reduced the value of the spirit stones. But for Lin Mu, it was all just entering the minor plane and it would not dissipate truly.

In about ten minutes, Lin Mu had fully 'mined' out the wall of spirit stone. Once this was done, the two men could see the next part of the mine.

"Ah, so this was just the outermost vein. No wonder it was so large, it was composed of the low grade spirit stones." Jing Luo spoke.

"Yup, we should find better quality inside." Lin Mu spoke as the two of them continued onward.

After amount a minute of walking, they reached an area that actually looked like a mine. The entire cave shimmered with crystals that were embedded into the walls. These were of course the spirit stones.

Unlike the large solid wall, this place was like a large cave with spirit stones embedded into the walls. Lin Mu spread his spirit sense around causally and discovered that about ten percent of all these spirit stones were of mid grade.

"Let's get to it; you take left I'll take right." Lin Mu spoke.

"Okay," Jing Luo said with a smile before withdrawing a pickax from his spatial storage ring.

The pickax was of course nothing normal and was a spirit weapon as well. It had formations on it that increased the sharpness of its point, reduced the recoil from hitting things and overall durability of the thing.

Lin Mu didn't need that though and could do most of the stuff on his own.

~cling~

~clang~

~DENG~

The sounds of metal hitting rock could be heard as Jing Luo mined the spirit stones from the walls of the cave. While he was doing this, Lin Mu was simply flicking his hand while using Meld to pull out entire blocks of the cave wall.

He didn't care that other rock and dirt was still attached to the spirit stones. He did not need to worry about space and could just store the entire thing in the ring. If needed he would sort it out later.

The two men continued digging non stop for about three days before they finished with the cave

~huu~

~huu~

~huu~

Even Jing Luo who was a Nascent Soul realm cultivator was tired from all the work. A large pile of spirit stones of different sizes could be seen lying on his side. The pile was of about five meters in height at its peak too.

On Lin Mu's end though, there were just bare walls left, with irregular chambers carved out into the wall.

"Looks like this part is done, time to move on ahead." Lin Mu stated, not feeling tired at all.

Jing Luo and he had already known where the next vein was and directly headed there.

Chapter 584 - Rich Cultivator Problems?

The next vein was hidden behind more solid rock and soil, which was quite easily removed by Lin Mu and Jing Luo. Since they did not need to be careful like with the spirit stones or other materials, they just used all their power.

"Boulder Collapsing Fist- First Form: Impact!"

~KABOOM~

The entire cave shook as Lin Mu's fist hit the rocky wall, shattering it in one hit.

~Crack~

~Crack~

The wall crumbled as more and more rock fell. The next vein was about twenty meters further from the previous one and thus they needed to remove all the rocks blocking them.

Of course, had it not been for Lin Mu being able to use Phase, they may have taken longer to find the vein. But since they already knew the location, they could easily make a straight path to it.

Reaching the next vein, Lin Mu and Jing Luo saw an even bigger cave than before. And just like before, there were spirit stones embedded in the walls along with the floor. Some parts were even large enough to form pillar of spirit stones.

This showed that they were getting closer to the core of the mine. The core of the spirit stone mine was the reason why the mine could keep on producing spirit stones, year after year. If the said source was removed, the mine would stop existing.

Even when the sects mined spirit stone mines, they ensure that they did so in a sustainable manner. As a rule of thumb, no more than ten percent of all spirit stones in a mine should be removed in a single year.

This ensured that they would be replenished year after year. Many times sects would not even reach the core of the spirit stone mines. Most of them would just mine the outer veins which would keep in regenerating.

The only time when the sects actually went deeper into the spirit stone mines was to get higher grade spirit stones. High grade spirit stones were found in the veins closest to the source of the spirit stone mine, while the peak grade spirit stones were exclusively found next to the source itself.

That was one of the reasons why even if someone had a low grade spirit stone that were equivalent in spirit Qi to a higher grade spirit stone, very few people would trade them for it.

Most people would rather use twice the amount of low grade spirit stones rather than half the amount of high grade spirit stones. This led to the high grade spirit stones becoming an extremely valuable commodity, while the peak grade spirit stones directly became a resource of strategic value.

Peak grade spirit stones were one of the basic requirements needed in the manufacture of pseudo immortal weapons and tools and without them making them was impossible. Peak grade weapons and spirit tools could be made with high grade spirit stones but not the pseudo immortal weapons.

Right now, what Lin Mu and Jing Luo were doing was certainly not sustainable at all. They had already gone past the recommended ten percent harvest limit and were quiet likely to be at about forty percent now.

No sect would mine spirit stones like this as it would literally mean damaging the foundation of the sect. Spirit stone mines not only provided the sect with a form of currency but they also provided the sect with a large amount of spirit Qi that was naturally concentration by the mines.

As a secondary effect of the increased concentration of spirit Qi, other treasured materials would also have a greater chance of forming around it. The same could be said for spirit herbs and other such natural materials.

That's why for a sect, it was much more beneficial to reduce the number of spirit stones they mined, and use its passive effects than to increase their direct wealth by accumulating them. By doing all this, Lin Mu was making himself filthy rich.

At the expense of another party, of course.

"Lot's of spirit stones here too... we'll do the same?" Jing Luo asked.

"Yup. You take the left, I take the right." Lin Mu replied.

The two men got to work and became engrossed in it. Five days passed like this and they had finished up clearing out this vein as well.

~pew~

"I'm tired, but excited at the same time. For the first time in my life, I feel like not stopping at all, despite the exhaustion!" Jing Luo spoke while wiping the sweat off his brow.

"Why don't you do what I'm doing?" Lin Mu said, pointing to the chunks of spirit stones he had stuffed in his robes.

"Uh... why didn't you say that earlier!" Jing Luo spoke, feeling flustered.

He had forgotten that he was literally surrounded by spirit Qi and was also mining it in a way. All this time he had been using his own spirit Qi, along with the natural regeneration that his body had.

Lin Mu just shrugged in response and let the map copy him. Jing Luo strapped a few large chunks of spirit stones to his back and got ready again.

"Next vein?" Jing Luo asked.

"I'll go check." Lin Mu replied before entering the walls using phase. Due to the extensive amount of spirit Qi that was dispersed in the ground here, even if Lin Mu could use his spirit sense, it didn't really give him an accurate picture.

It was like swimming in a pool of muddy water. Thus he needed to be close to something to actually sense it, even with his spirit sense. Using the spirit sense was like trying to find a coin that was at the bottom of a pot, using only one's touch.

It would be easy if there was only one coin or even a couple of coins in the pot. But if the entire pot was filled with coins and you were supposed to find a coin of a specific type, it would start to get difficult. That was the kind of situation Lin Mu was currently in.

Chapter 585 - A Dazzling Sight

Another week had passed before Lin Mu and Jing Luo arrived in at the final vein of the spirit stone mine. Till now they had mined out four veins, each of which was bigger than the previous one.

Seeing that there were so many veins, both Lin Mu and Jing Luo were surprised. Even Xukong said that they had hit a jackpot as this spirit stone mine was probably close to becoming a peak grade spirit stone mine.

Xukong estimated that in the next couple of years this mine would have evolved to become a peak grade spirit stone mine. Though it could be said that it was both a fortune and misfortune. Fortune for Lin Mu, misfortune for the Ripple Mist sect.

In addition to the spirit stones, Lin Mu and Jing Luo both had some extra gains in their cultivation base too. For Jing Luo, he had reached the border of the Child stage of the Nascent Soul realm. If he accumulated more spirit Qi, he would break through to the Adolescent stage of the Nascent Soul realm.

As for Lin Mu, while his cultivation base had also progressed, it was not as much as Jing Luo. The main reason behind this being his higher capacity of spirit Qi due to a larger Dantian. Another thing was that little Shrubby had woken up a couple of days ago.

He was better than ever, and Lin Mu had paused to go meet him as well. Upon seeing him, Lin Mu realized that Little Shrubby was very close to the pseudo Nascent soul too, and to accelerate that process he had asked him to stay in the spirit stone mine with them, letting him absorb as much spirit Qi as he could.

If one looked at the scene in the spirit stone mine as of now, one would see a slightly chubby Liger lounging on a large bed made out of solid spirit stone. Lin Mu had been taking this opportunity to train his use of meld as well.

This spirit stone bed was made by him, by using meld skillfully to carve out the perfect shape. Little Shrubby quickly took it over and laid a few animal pelts that Lin Mu had in his ring on it before sleeping.

It could be said that the beast was enjoying a life of luxury that perhaps even the Emperor of the Great Zhou Empire did not have. Little Shrubby's fur had also grown further and he now looked chubby because of that.

Lin Mu wondered how long it would grow, because if it kept growing at the same rate for a few more days, the beast might turn into a large fur ball instead. Even Xukong commented on it and thought that it was quite unusual.

~huu~

"This should be the last one..." Lin Mu spoke.

"Yeah, we've come a long way." Jing Luo agreed as he took a look at their handiwork.

There were piles upon piles of spirit stones in the cave, the value of which was incalculable to both Lin Mu and Jing Luo at this point. After a certain period, they had given up on keeping count and just kept on digging, while Lin Mu stored them.

Jing Luo also kept an emergency store of spirit stones in his rings, if he needed them later. They knew that when they escaped, they would perhaps be getting into a conflict with the Ripple mist sect and wanted to be as prepared as possible.

~BOOM~

Lin Mu punched the wall of the cave, making another tunnel in it. Quickly removing the rocks in their path, the two men progressed before eventually appearing in front of another solid wall of spirit stone.

Lin Mu scanned it over with his spirit sense and realized that it was like a large oval egg.

"This should be the source vein of the spirit stone mine," Xukong spoke.

Lin Mu nodded his head and got ready to make a door.

"Meld," He muttered while extending his hand.

~shua~

An unequal rectangle was cut from the wall, and Lin Mu instantly stored it in the ring. Stepping in, the two men saw a stunning sight.

"This is the most beautiful thing I've seen in my life..." Jing Luo spoke.

"Indeed..." Lin Mu muttered in agreement.

In the two men's eyes, the entire area they were in was dazzling. Because the final vein was an enclosed solid crystal, even a single beam of light was enough to create countless refractions. This caused the light to turn into a multitude of colors, making it seem like they were in a rainbow sea.

Each breath they took was saturated with spirit Qi such that it was now sticking to their clothes, making them moist. This was an environment, rarely anyone would ever get to experience.

"The spirit Qi here... it's so... free?" Lin Mu said as he waved his hand.

He did not even need to do much and the spirit Qi would obey his commands. It was a bizarre feeling, but pleasant at the same time.

"It feels a shame that we need to break this," Jing Luo spoke, feeling uncomfortable.

"Indeed..." Lin Mu replied before an idea suddenly popped into his head.

"WAIT! We don't need to break this entire thing!" Lin Mu spoke.

"Huh? Really?" Jing Luo asked.

"Yeah, all we need to do is remove the surrounding rock and soil. Once that is done, I'll be able to entirely store it in my ring." Lin Mu replied.

"Perfect! We'll do that then. I've never heard of such a large spirit stone mine source being used before. I know they are broken down to make peak grade spirit stones sometimes, but they are never this large." Jing Luo spoke with excitement.

Lin Mu nodded his head and the two 'miners' got to work again. Diligently excavating the rock and soil, they made sure not even an extra dent was made on the surface of the source vein. This took them two days to complete, but the final result was worth it.

Chapter 586 - Qualified To Make A Sect

"This is perhaps one of the most beautiful things I've ever seen..." Jing Luo spoke as his eyes gleamed with joy.

At his side was standing Lin Mu and both of the men were looking at a large oval shaped crystal. This was nothing but the entire source vein of the Spirit stone mine and was composed entirely of high grade spirit stones in its outer layer, with some peak grade spirit stones in its inside.

The presence of peak grade spirit stones showed that the mine was already close to turning into a peak grade spirit stone mine. But now that Lin Mu and Jing Luo had stripped it out, that would not be so.

The oval crystal was lying on its broader side and was over ten meters long and seven meters wide. It had a height of about six meters and was quite tall. At its side, an entrance had been carved which could allow one to enter it.

Rarely would one be able to see a source vein of a spirit stone mine like this, as it would be mined out in smaller fragments or just never touched. Removing it from the ground meant stopping its work and growth.

While spirit Qi springs could be transplanted by moving the source crystal, doing the same with a spirit stone mine was immensely difficult. When it was still in the form of a spirit Qi spring, it was more malleable and would be able to adjust to different areas.

But once it turned into a spirit stone mine, it was rigid and could not be done. Only certain experts could transplant an entire spirit stone mine and still make it generate more spirit stones.

Still, if that was done, it would still take many years before the spirit stone mine would be able to reach its original state. That was the reason why a sect would rather move its headquarters to an area with more spirit stone mines, rather than transplant one.

In fact, many sects did not start with multiple spirit stone mines. Most only had one spirit stone mine and they either transplanted other source crystals of spirit Qi springs that eventually grew to become spirit stone mines, or over time their sects simply gave favorable conditions for the growth of new spirit Qi springs naturally.

What most sects did when they found spirit stone mines in the wild was quite different. They would instead establish a branch of their sect there and let them grow. This would be beneficial to them on many fronts. First, they would be able to expand their presence in the area. Second, they would gain more disciples and thus increase their overall man power. And third, they would be able to get the spirit stones mined from those mines as a tribute from that branch.

Of course, doing so was difficult in worlds that already had many cultivation sects. In worlds like those, the sect would instead take lower sects under their wing or create an alliance. This way the lower sect would get protection from the big players, get the opportunity to send their talented disciples to the higher sect while paying a tribute to the higher sect.

Lin Mu and Jing Luo had gained one of the very such things that would help one establish a sect.

"Now that I think of it... isn't one of the basic requirements of establishing a sect being in the Nascent Soul realm?" Lin Mu suddenly spoke.

"Yes, that's true. But it will be an unranked sect at that level." Jing Luo replied.

"And with this source crystal, we can probably increase that by quite a bit, if we just take over others."
Lin Mu joked.

"Probably... if we survive." Jing Luo chuckled.

~Purr~

"Oh? You woke up?" Lin Mu spoke upon seeing Little Shrubby, who had appeared.

The beast completely ignored Lin Mu and walked up to the large source vein and started rubbing against it, all the while making a face of pleasure.

"Seems like he likes it a lot," Jing Luo spoke.

"Oh, he does indeed." Lin Mu replied before checking Little Shrubby's cultivation base with his spirit sense.

"Hmm.... Is he close?" Jing Luo asked upon seeing Lin Mu's look.

Lin Mu squinted his eyes and activated his spatial perception. He could see the faint spatial distortions around Little Shrubby's body.

"Yes, he should be having his heavenly tribulation in a couple of days at the most." Lin Mu replied.

"We better get ready, then. I don't know what a heavenly tribulation will do here. You were able to break through to the Nascent Soul realm without needing it, and no other beast had reached that level here so as to need a heavenly tribulation.

The other beasts that were at the Nascent soul realm previously were all brought here directly from the Sacred grounds and I've killed all beasts that get close to that." Jing Luo said.

"Yeah, let's put this away for now." Lin Mu said before walking ahead and placing his hand on the large source vein.

As soon as he did, he could feel a thick stream of spirit Qi entering his hand. But he did not absorb this as it would only lead to the source crystal losing its power. He resisted the temptation and directly stored it into the ring.

He could feel a bit of pressure while doing so, which he attributed to the massive amount of spirit Qi that was contained in the source vein.

~Huala~

Once the source vein disappeared, the spirit Qi concentration of the cave visibly fell.

"Aw, it was better with it here." Little Shrubby complained.

"You'll see it later. For now, we have work to do." Lin Mu spoke.

"Okay..." Little Shrubby replied.

Jing Luo watched the conversation between the man and beast with interest. While Lin Mu had spoken in the common tongue, Little Shrubby had only growled in response. There were no actual words spoken by the beast.

"You two can really understand each other, huh?" Jing Luo asked.

"Yes, little Shrubby can talk properly now." Lin Mu spoke, feeling a bit proud.

Chapter 587 - Close To Breakthrough

Jing Luo had not seen anyone being able to communicate with beasts like this. While the sects did have some guardian beasts that were at a high cultivation base and had intelligence that was greater than that of man, they still could not speak in the common tongue.

The way sects communicated with them was due to the mutual understanding and writings. While the beasts could understand human languages after learning them, they were still mute in speaking them.

This was the first time Jing Luo was seeing a human speak with a beast like this. This was a direct conversation from what he could understand. No beast tamer in his clan had been able to reach such a level either.

It was simply amazing to him.

"We should leave now, it's been a long time." Lin Mu spoke.

"Yes, while we have finished mining the spirit stones, we still have the other materials left in the upper layers." Jing Luo replied.

"Hmm... we want to take those with us too, it will be a pity to waste them." Lin Mu spoke.

"Indeed, they are hard to find in the real world. We'll need to figure out a way to get everything done." Jing Luo stated.

Lin Mu nodded his head, and the two men started flying to the upper levels of the caves. Little Shrubby ran along with them, easily keeping up with his speed. In fact, he was faster than both of them if he used his full speed, so there was no way they could keep up with him anyway.

"Oh, I got an idea!" Lin Mu spoke while traveling.

"What is it?" Jing Luo asked.

"Since we're going to need to create a vacuum of spirit Qi in this world, I'll simply focus on that. While you, on the other hand, can gather all the materials in this world. Start from the most valuable to the things of least value.

Optimally we'll take everything. All resources, metals, ores, woods, spirit herbs, even the beasts themselves!" Lin Mu answered.

"I'll do my best!" Jing Luo nodded his head.

They finally reached Jing Luo's residence at the top and got to their tasks. Jing Luo didn't go to get the ores and materials from the tunnels directly, as there were some more preparations he needed to do.

Since they didn't know how long it would take for Lin Mu to finish absorbing all the spirit Qi in the minor plane, Jing Luo would have to be ready at all times, prioritizing the critical tasks first and then the rest.

"Do you want me to set up a tribulation attenuation formation?" Jing Luo questioned.

"For little Shrubby?" Lin Mu asked as he took a look at Little Shrubby.

"Yes, it will help him in safely breaking through." Jing Luo replied.

"I don't want. I can do it on my own. It will take up your times," Little Shrubby suddenly spoke.

"Ah, he doesn't want that. Says he'll do it on his own." Lin Mu answered.

"I see... if that's what you want, then that's what we'll do. It should give us more time as well." Jing Luo said before getting to work.

Lin Mu also left the residence and went to the top of the mountain. The concentration of spirit Qi in the air was still the same as they had seen before, but the main difference was that if it was absorbed now, it will not regenerate.

The Mountain in the minor plane was where there was the highest concentration of spirit Qi as of now and it was also located roughly at the center of the minor plane. Thus it could be said to be the best place for Lin Mu to cultivate.

"This mountain really is way too tall. I don't think I've seen any other mountain as tall as this in the Shuang Qian kingdom." Lin Mu spoke.

"You'll see more of them. Mountains that are as big as these usually have unique phenomena associated with them. One of such appearing smaller than they actually are. In fact, this is one of the types of spatial distortions, but because it is natural, it becomes hard to spot for many people." Xukong explained.

"No wonder it was always the center of the illusion whenever I saw it in the Ripple mist sect." Lin Mu replied.

Just like this, the man and beast reached the very top of the mountain. There was snow falling here, but despite that, neither of them felt cold. Lin Mu had the body cultivation at the Second Stage of the Five Treasures realm and while also being at the Nascent Soul realm.

As for Little Shrubby, he had an innate control of fire element and also had a good bloodline. Thus he was not affected by this level of cold either. The two of them found a relatively comfortable place at the top and began cultivating.

Lin Mu knew that using Well of slumber would come with the risk that he might not wake up in time, but he was also betting on the fact that the ability was dependent on the presence of spirit Qi along with vital energy.

Plus little Shrubby was yet to break through and thus Lin Mu wanted to wait for him to do that, before using Well of Slumber.

"I should start eating. Better to be safe and have a surplus of vital energy..." Lin Mu said before taking out the beast meat he had ready.

'I'll eat till it's the time for Little Shrubby's tribulation, then I'll observe it just in case and start the next part of the plan.' Lin Mu thought.

Lin Mu chewed and gnawed on the meat while Little Shrubby cultivated diligently, preparing for the coming heavenly tribulation. Lin Mu could sense the faint increase in spatial distortions with every passing hour and reckoned that when they reached the peak, the tribulation will arrive.

And just as he thought, two days passed swiftly and it was finally time.

~RUMBLE~

Lin Mu looked up at the dark cloudy sky and then at little Shrubby.

"Time to Breakthrough!"

Chapter 588 - Little Shrubby's Tribulation

~Rumble~

The Dark Tribulation Clouds in the sky rumbled as the lightning swam within them. The flashes of lightning lit up the mountain and the forest at every few seconds. The beasts of the forest were scared and did not make even a single noise.

The pressure exerted by tribulation clouds was something most beasts below the Nascent Soul realm could not bear easily. Lin Mu though felt nothing from this, which felt strange to him.

According to what he had seen and learned till now, even other Nascent Soul realm cultivators should be afraid of it. Tribulation lightning was very strong and even a Adult Stage Nascent Soul realm cultivator would get injured if he was not careful.

The existence of tribulation platforms was entirely because of this and they helped reduce the impact and pressures of the heavenly tribulations. Jing Luo was thinking along the lines of this as well, and that's why he asked if Little Shrubby wanted one.

But Lin Mu knew Little Shrubby did not need it, and neither did the beast himself. There was a certain level of pride in its bloodline that would not allow him. They were still unsure of what bloodline he had, as there were far too many of them mixing together.

At first, the dominant one was the Flash Fire Liger, but now it was hard to tell which one was truly dominant. Not to mention the seven beast burst confirmed the existence of at least seven bloodlines that were merging together.

~Rumble~

The tribulation clouds gathered up together and the tribulation lightning within them arced across the surface. Little Shrubby looked up at the sky with determination as his aura flared up.

~ROAR~

He let out a defiant roar at the skies, taunting them to hurry up.

~BOOM~

The Skies were quick to answer too as the tribulation lightning descended from the clouds, striking Little Shrubby. The impact of the lightning bolt spread around him as the snow directly evaporated from the heat.

The trees nearby were shaken as well due to the force, but Lin Mu stood there unhindered. He had felt the full pressure of the bolt and even then found it to be quite bearable.

'This is truly astonishing... wonder what would happen if I get hit by one of them?' Lin Wu thought to himself.

It was a rather dangerous thought, and not many people would dare to think of something like that. Most would like to stay away from tribulation lightning as much as they could.

~GRRRR~

Little Shrubby bore the tribulation lightning with relatively less difficulty and stood his ground.

~ROAR~

He shook off the numbness and roared back up at the sky as his aura stabilizing again. His body had no traces of being hit by tribulation lightning and was fine. Usually one would see burn marks or such injuries, but for Little Shrubby who had resistance to heat and fire, there was no such thing.

~Rumble~

The clouds thundered once again as more tribulation lightning gathered up in the clouds. Lin Mu could tell that this tribulation was a bit different from the other two he had seen.

"Why is it so fast?" Lin Mu questioned.

"Look up at the sky with spatial perception," Xukong replied.

Lin Mu looked up and first saw the dark tribulation clouds, but then they faded away under his gaze and the spatial fabric hidden behind it was visible to him.

"The spatial tear... how is it so wide? And the borders of the Minor plane... they are thin too." Lin Mu said upon seeing it.

"Exactly. Since it's a minor plane, the restrictions that come with a true world don't come. And thus the tribulation will have an easier time traveling through the void. Breaking into the world is even easier for it." Xukong explained.

"I see... no wonder the minor plane appeared as an illusion during the tribulation of the two snakes and the border became weak enough for me to enter it easily." Lin Mu spoke.

And just as he spoke, another bolt of lightning fell from the sky.

~BOOM~

This time Little Shrubby was forced a little lower due to the force of the Tribulation lightning, but he still managed to hold on. A little fur could also be seen fallen around him. But it did not fall due to being burned off, rather it fell due to the impact of the lightning.

The ground around him, which was free from snow due to the last lightning bolt, was now cracked due to Little Shrubby's paws digging into it. Even if it was solid rock, it was unable to bear the force of the Tribulation lightning.

Once the glare of the lightning faded away, Lin Mu looked at little Shrubby who was still standing.

~GRRRR~

Little Shrubby felt numb due to the Lightning as it coursed inside his body. Lin Mu's spirit sense entered his Dantian and he saw the core being cracked by the tribulation lightning. About half of it had been cracked already.

~ROAR~

After little Shrubby managed to gain back the control on his body, he roared back at the clouds. His aura had increased by another level as spirit Qi swirled around him.

~BOOM~

The next tribulation lightning bolt was twice as thick as before and fell with great force.

~CRACK~

A loud cracking sound could be heard as the rock below little Shrubby was directly shattered and he sank into the ground. The shattered rocks were also scorched black, but Little Shrubby just threw them all away with a stomp.

This time he did not feel numb, as the loud throbbing of his heart could be heard.

~Badum~Badum~Badum~

The sound of his heart got louder and louder till it matched the tempo of the tribulation lightning. Soon his body started to glow in a red light as spirit Qi fluctuations radiated from it, along with heat.

The heat directly melted the snow in a radius of a hundred meters, drying it out completely.

"Is he gonna...?" Lin Mu muttered.

Chapter 589 - The Seven Bloodline Beasts

The sound of bellows came from the lungs of Little Shrubby as they took in vast amounts of spirit Qi in. His fur flared up as fire started burning on it.

~ROAR~

A roar was let out by little Shrubby but it was different this time. It seemed as if instead of just him, seven beasts were roaring at the same time. Lin Mu finally got to see the illusory beasts that had appeared before when little Shrubby used Seven beasts burst.

The illusory figures were different from each other and Lin Mu could recognize a few of them.

The first figure was that of none other than the Flash Fire Liger that Lin Wu had known about. It looked distinct from Little Shrubby and was a bit larger in size than him.

The next figure that appeared was that of a Lion beast. Lin Mu tried to recall what it was and recognized it to be the Brood Mane Lion. Its body was a wheatish brown color and it had a similar colored tail. The only difference was in its mane which had tens of lion head like patterns on it.

The third figure was that of a Tiger beast. Lin Mu identified it to be the Scorch Claw Tiger. It had claws that were much larger than of other large cat beasts and were not retractable. They looked to be made of sharp metal that had been heated to a red hot level. They looked more like long knives instead of claws.

The fourth figure was that of a slender leopard. This was the beast called as Hundred Mirror Leopard. The spots on its fur were like mirrors and reflected light when one looked at them. If one got closer they would even be able to see themselves.

The fifth figure that appeared was a panther. Lin Mu recalled seeing this beast in the records as well. It was the Fume Wood Panther. Its body looked like it was made from wood and had grass like fur growing on it. All in all, it was a strange beast that looked more like a plant than a beast.

The sixth figure was something Lin Mu recognized from the records of the Lost immortal. It was a cheetah beast with the name Thunder Bolt Cheetah. Its cry was like that of a thunderclap and it was one of the fastest beasts the Lost Immortal had ever encountered.

The seventh and the final beast was the strangest of them all. Lin Mu could not recognize it no matter what he did and wondered what it was.

"Do you know what beast that is senior?" Lin Mu questioned.

"I think that is a Midnight Lynx," Xukong replied.

"A Midnight Lynx?" Lin Mu repeated as he looked at the long eared cat like beast.

This beast was smaller than the other six but had two pairs of long hairs on each of its ears and also on the corners of its eye brows. But that was not the most iconic nature of the beast.

That place would be taken up by its sleek black fur that shimmered under the flashes of lightning. It looked incredibly smooth and if this beast even entered shadows, Lin Mu doubted anyone would be able to see it.

Each of the seven beasts seemed to be powerful in their own self, but if one looked at little shrubby they would find it hard to see their bloodlines in him. Only the Flash Fire Liger, and the Scorch Claw Tiger had some influence on his physique. While the rest of the beasts did not seem to have any influence on him.

Though Lin Mu did think that the Thunder Bolt Cheetah's speed might have been what made Little Shrubby so fast. But compared to the description the Lost Immortal had written in his memoirs, Little Shrubby was still like a snail.

The Thunder Bolt Cheetah the Lost Immortal had encountered could cross a thousand kilometers in a blink of an eye. The beast was one of the most terrible ones for the then weak Lost immortal and had relentlessly chased him for over three years.

In the end, the Lost immortal could not escape it and had to make a compromise with the beast. As for what the compromise was, the man did not mention it, but from the slightly embarrassed tone in the text that Lin Mu picked read, he reckoned it must not have been something honorable.

~pew~

"So many beasts, and all of them powerful... can Little Shrubby really handle so many bloodlines?" Lin Mu questioned.

"Most likely not. That is also the reason why not all bloodlines show up in his physique. The most probable result will be that during the merging of bloodlines, only the compatible features will be kept, while most of them will be discarded.

After all, a body can only handle so much before it would either explode, or would incite the wrath of the heavens bringing forth severe punishment Tribulation lightning. That is also the reason why most beasts with multiple bloodlines don't survive for long." Xukong explained.

"I see..." Lin Mu replied, feeling a bit concerned about Little Shrubby.

By now Little Shrubby had fully activated the Seven beasts burst and his body had increased by over four times in size. It was entirely covered in flames that raged like an inferno, scorching the earth and distorting the air.

~BOOM~

The final bolt of tribulation lightning finally fell and this was three times as thicker than the first one. But not only that, this lightning bolt even had traces of purple color in it, making it seem far deadly.

The Tribulation lightning bolt struck Little Shrubby's body and dissipated all of the flames on his body. They exploded like a firework and Little Shrubby was made to kneel on the ground. The power of the tribulation bolt was far stronger than all of the previous ones combined.

~Crack~

A crack was heard as Little Shrubby's Core finally shattered and a blinding light came from it. The bloodline pattern on the core glowed like the sun as it split apart, giving birth to the Nascent Soul.

Chapter 590 - Bloodline Strengthening?

Little Shrubby's Nascent Soul that had just been born was small, and looked like a kitten. It had its eyes closed and was curled up with its face hiding in its tail. It had the same patterns as that of Little Shrubby too.

~HONG~

The spirit Qi in the environment started to stir as a vortex of spirit Qi formed around little Shrubby. It was now time for the infusion of spirit Qi.

~shua~

The cyclone of spirit Qi swirled around Little Shrubby's body which also started to float in the air. The spirit Qi was soon turned into a dense mist as it started to pour into the Dantian.

The infusion of spirit Qi was not as shocking as that of Lin Mu, but it was still strong enough for most people to be shocked. It was already stronger than the combined spirit Qi infusion of the two snakes from before.

The seven illusory figures around little shrubby were also absorbing bits of spirit Qi along with it and were flickering. Lin Mu closely observed them and realized that among the seven beasts only two of them were the clearest.

The others were much more blurry compared to the Scorch Claw Tiger and the Flash Fire Liger.

"Hmm, I guess those are the two bloodlines that are currently dominant in Little Shrubby. His overall physique comes from the Flash Fire Liger while the heated claws come from the Scorch Claw Tiger.

Now that I think of it, out of the seven beasts, two of them are fire attribute beats, the Fume Wood Panther is a wood attribute beast, and the Thunder Bolt cheetah is a Lightning tribute beast.

The Brood Mane Lion and the Mirror Spot leopard don't particularly have any attributes that they specialize in. But what about the Midnight Lynx? Is it the same as the previous two having no attribute?" Lin Mu wondered.

"Actually the Midnight Lynx has an attribute too," Xukong spoke.

"It does? What is it? I don't think it is from any of the 12 elements." Lin Mu replied.

"You're correct on that front. The Midnight Lynx does not have any of the 12 main elements of the cosmos. Rather it has the Shadow element, which is a derivative element of the Darkness attribute. It is rather rare and is not seen in most beasts of Little Shrubby's kind." Xukong explained.

After hearing about the shadow element, Lin Mu furrowed his brows. He had learned about the Shadow element from the Lost Immortals memoirs. Most beings related to it were considered to be infamous across the many worlds.

"Senior the Taiji Celestial you talked about before, isn't he the one who eliminated the Shadow Calamity which also used the shadow element?" Lin Mu asked.

"Yes, he did in a way... but that's not the whole story. All you need to know is that the Shadow element itself is not bad, but rather the users. It's just that... most of them turn out to be bad." Xukong replied.

"I understand." Lin Mu said with a nod.

While Lin Mu was conversing with Senior Xukong, Little Shrubby was completing his breakthrough. The tribulation clouds had already started to disappear and the cyclone of spirit Qi was also slowing down now.

Little Shrubby's Dantian had already been replenished and it was now the illusory figures that were absorbing the remnant spirit Qi. Lin Mu reckoned this was the way by which they were going to negate the cost of using the Seven Beasts Burst.

But upon seeing the illusory beasts absorb the spirit Qi, Lin Mu got an idea.

'Can that work?' Lin Mu wondered.

Feeling curious about the idea that had just appeared in his mind, Lin Mu decided to go ahead with it. He closed his eyes and calmly chanted the Nurturing Heart Sutra. Soon a string of Beast Qi was refined in his Dantian.

He easily drew it out of his body and looked at it. The string of beast Qi was longer than before and was even a bit thicker. It was evident that his breakthrough into the Nascent Soul realm had boosted it.

As soon as the beast Qi appeared out of Lin Mu's body though, the seven illusory figures of the beasts instantly looked at it. Little Shrubby himself was busy absorbing the spirit Qi and could not be bothered with anything else.

Seeing this strange response of the illusory beasts, surprised Lin Mu.

"Do they have a consciousness of their own?" Lin Mu asked.

"They don't exactly have that. More like its instincts built into the very bloodline. Since the beast Qi has the effect of improving and evolving a bloodline, the illusory figures that are the representative of the bloodline will obviously respond." Xukong replied.

Lin Mu looked at the string of beast Qi that swirled above his palm for a moment, before sending it flying towards the Illusory figures.

~ROAR~

The seven illusory figures all pounced on it at once, but the one that managed to get it was the Flash Fire Liger as it was at the front and also fast. While the Thunder Bolt Cheetah was faster than the Flash Fire Liger, it was much weaker than it as the Flash Fire Liger was the dominant bloodline as of now.

The Flash Fire Liger immediately devoured the Beast Qi as its body glowed. The glow spread evenly around its body before it finally settled. But once it was settled, a difference in its transparency could be seen.

The illusory figure of the Flash Fire Liger had become slightly more opaque than before.

"Just as I thought... the beast Qi can directly affect them." Lin Mu muttered to himself.

His eyes wandered between the different illusory figures as a plan formed in his mind. Xukong also took a few peeks at Lin Mu's ideas and reckoned that they might really work.

"If you are really going to use the Beast Qi to strengthen the bloodlines, you will need to be careful. Strengthen any particular bloodline too much and they will wreak havoc." Xukong warned.