

Honoured 531

Chapter 531: A small bickering!

"Haha..."

"Yeah."

Li Jia stepped out of the bathroom and closed the door as she entered the room brushing her wet hair with the white towel in her hand.

Droplets of water trickled down her arms and shoulders, glistening on her skin as she rolled the towel around her chest.

'Is he talking to someone?' she wondered, catching the low murmur of voices.

Peeking into the room, she spotted Zhao Tian, reclined against the headboard, his posture relaxed and casual.

A holographic screen was projected from his wristwatch, casting a faint blue light across his face.

On the screen, the faces of two women filled the display, their eyes bright with excitement as they spoke animatedly with him.

"Of course, I will be joining the tournament; see how our star wins this time." Lyra Talon spoke proudly.

Sulking her lips, Ling Chao spoke "But I can't join, I am so weak.. but I will surely come there to cheer you up, Brother Tian."

Lyra Talon shook Ling Chao's shoulders "What do you mean, Chao'er? You are learning in our Academy and you are going to cheer him up?"

"Haha..."

Zhao Tian chuckled seeing their banter, and just then, his attention shifted as he noticed Li Jia stepping out of the bathroom, her damp hair clinging softly to her shoulders and a gentle flush on her cheeks from the warmth of the shower.

Li Jia snuggled into the bed and covered her body with the quilt as she showed her face in front of the holographic screen "What's... this?"

Ling Chao who is on the other side was surprised to see Li Jia "Woah, Brother Tian.. you already got a new wife?"

Hearing this, Lyra Talon also raised an eyebrow as an amused smile stretched across her lips "Heh, yeah... Zhao, I heard that you have a bunch of wives when you were back in Zhenluo." Experience new stories on [m v|l e'-NovelBin.net](http://m.vl-e-NovelBin.net)

Huh? Li Jia's eyes narrowed upon hearing this 'He had a bunch of wives?'

Zhao Tian brushed it off with a wry chuckle and Lyra teased him even more.

"See him getting all blushy-blushy now."

Ling Chao also giggled hearing her tease "Stop it, Sister."

Meanwhile, Li Jia had a troubled expression on her face and she slowly sank into the comfort of the bed as she closed herself with the quilt clearly uncomfortable with the direction of the conversation.

"Oh, she slept."

"Haha, maybe she is embarrassed."

They continued their talk and after a while, Zhao Tian disconnected the call.

Adjusting himself on the bed, he glanced at Li Jia who was sleeping beside him with her back towards him.

With a smile, he reached out to her and hugged her from behind, pulling her close to his chest.

Li Jia also didn't resist his moves and let herself sink in the warmth of his embrace.

Zhao Tian's hand slid up to her neck, where he traced small circles, and she shivered slightly under his touch, feeling her guard slip away as she let herself relax in his arms.

Zhao Tian's hand moved down to her shoulder, then to the loose towel that was wrapped around her.

With a gentle tug, the towel came loose and he lowered the cloth off her body revealing her plump bosom.

His fingers brushed along her collarbone, trailing down her chest as he opened his palm and squeezed her breast fondly, making her body shudder.

He placed a soft kiss on her ear from behind and gave a delicate nibble, making her ear even redder.

"Is that true?"

Hearing her voice, Zhao Tian blinked his eyes and she turned her head slightly, enough to catch his gaze out of the corner of her eye. "That you have... a bunch of wives?"

Zhao Tian moved his lips to her neck and placed another kiss "Yeah, that's true."

Li Jia's eyes trembled upon hearing this and she asked "How many?" she pressed, her voice trembling slightly. "Like... two or three?"

He chuckled lightly, moving his lips down to the curve of her neck, inhaling her fresh scent as he pressed a kiss there. "Hm... wait, let me count."

What?

Li Ji was startled and hurriedly turned her head "Y-You need to count? That much?"

Zhao Tian could only smile dryly and replied "Well, around 18."

Li Jia was taken aback, and her eyes darkened as she pushed him from her creating a distance. "Get off me, bastard."

She quickly threw the quilt off herself, climbing out of bed and grabbing her clothes in a flurry

She hastily got down from the bed and began to wear her robes "You never told me about that, you fucker."

"You are also like any other man, perverted scum."

Zhao Tian pulled himself to sit on the bed and looked at her "Jia, liste-"

"No, I don't want to hear any of your excuses." She cut him off and continued wearing her clothes.

After wearing her clothes, she shot a glare at him and hastily stepped to the door.

Zhao Tian shook his head helplessly and saw her underwear that she threw on him in the bed earlier.

"Oi, idiot, you are forgetting this." he took it in his hand and tossed it to her.

Li Jia reflexively caught it in her hand and her cheeks blushed deep in embarrassment.

Zhao Tian's playful smile only fueled her frustration, and she gave an annoyed huff, tossing it back at him.

"Keep it, you jerk," she shot back, her voice laced with annoyance as she stormed out, leaving him sitting there

Zhao Tian took the underwear from his face "What can I do with this?"

For now, he stored it in his storage ring, he'd have to find a way to return it to her when she'd cooled off.

He can't blame her for getting angry.. Anyone at her footing would definitely get angry for that.

And it's not like he can casually say 'Hey, I have 18 wives.. care to join?'

Letting out a sigh, he got down from the bed and walked out of the room to make sure she reached her room safely.

"Well, I am sure her anger will melt with time..."

Chapter 532: A mature woman's charm!

"Ahh... That woman."

Xia Shenyi uttered with a thoughtful face as she continued patting Zhao Tian who was lying on her lap, her fingers dancing on his hair.

"I don't remember much... but yeah, she did ask me to be her disciple, but I refused her. My master is more powerful than her and will protect me, so I joined her wing."

Shi Yixian is sitting on the other end of the sofa with his legs on her lap as she slowly massaged his toes and feet.

Patting his hair, Xia Shenyi continued "Hm.. I remember, but her name is not actually Yao Jing and she is actually from a different star."

"Apparently, the current Sect master, during her visit to a star, saved Jao Ying from there, and since then she has been with the sect."

Zhao Tian was amused to hear this "I see... quite the backstory"

Xia Shenyi rolled her eyes "So she said the same story as Freya about the pendant."

She leaned back thoughtfully, her fingers resuming their gentle play through his hair "Someone from the Astral Realm.. do you think it is the Maverick family?"

Zhao Tian's expression grew serious as he considered it, giving a slight nod. "It would make sense. The artifact was originally created by the first Honored One, a Maverick... so yes, the Mavericks would certainly have records of it and know that the pendant has ties to them."

"But somehow they lost it. Wars, the fall of empires, trades... for generations, it must have gone through so many hands and finally reached you, Shenyi."

"As you tried to decipher the artifact, you got stuck into it... And when your Master attempted to publicize the pendant to find clues... it must have drawn the Mavericks' attention."

"They must have recognized it instantly and came back to reclaim what they consider theirs."

"That's likely," she replied, tilting her head thoughtfully.

As they were chatting, Fei Lingxi walked to them with a cup of steaming cup of coffee in her hand "Master."

Hearing her voice, Zhao Tian turned his head to look at Fei Lingxi and smiled faintly.

He pulled himself up to sit on the couch and she extended her hand giving him the coffee.

Her fingers brushed against his as he took the cup from her hand, her gaze softened and she slowly sat on his lap, though quite nervous that she was directly approaching him.

"Master."

Zhao Tian let out a soft chuckle, his expression tender as he reached up to brush a stray strand of her hair away, tucking it behind her ear.

He leaned in, placing a gentle kiss on her cheek, which made her blush deepen even further as she leaned against his shoulder, her cheek warm against him.

Oh? Xia Shenyi and Shi Yixian were amused that Fei Lingxi is acting like a little girl in love.

HUH?

HUHHHHHHHHH?

Meanwhile, Fei Ziyu who was standing on the kitchen doorstep was surprised to see her mom like this.

Her shy demeanor and the flush in her cheeks as she acts so embarrassed with a smile she couldn't hide 'What? Why? how? Why is she acting like a girl being with her crush? Huh?'

'D-Don't tell me Master accepted her love proposal or something.'

'HUHHHHHHH?'

Meanwhile, Zhao Tian took another slow sip from his coffee, savoring the warm taste.

Fei Lingxi's eyes followed his every movement, and after a moment, she leaned closer, her voice barely a whisper. "Master... how is it?" she asked, her voice laden with a shy curiosity.

Without a word, Zhao Tian placed the coffee cup aside and instead leaned in, capturing her lips in a soft kiss.

She also quickly reciprocated back and her lips parted slightly, inviting him deeper.

Her heart raced as their kiss deepened, and she felt his tongue graze hers, tasting the subtle sweetness of the coffee that lingered in their mouths.

After a few seconds, Zhao Tian pulled back, a soft smile on his face as he looked at her, still holding her close. "So," he murmured with a playful glint in his eye, "how is it?"

Fei Lingxi's cheeks were now flushed a deep shade of pink, a shy smile spreading across her lips as she let out a small giggle.

"It's... it's wonderful," she replied, her eyes sparkling with joy and a touch of embarrassment.

Looking at her face, Zhao Tian's eyes softened... a mature woman has a special charm that young women can't compare.

Seeing their romance, Xia Shenyi was quite impressed and stood up "Then I am going to bathe. Be careful in the forest."

"Hm."

As she left, Zhao Tian glanced at Fei Ziyu who was walking towards him with a dead expression on her face.

"Ziyu, today I will be busy.. we can go on a date for some other day."

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Hearing this, Fei Ziyu's face changed, and she nodded excitedly "Yes, master!"

...

Stepping out of his room, Zhao Tian glanced around and saw that Li Jia was not there 'Seems like it will take some days.'

He made his way towards the alchemy chamber and quickly entered Yao Jing's room.

Inside, Yao Jing was lying on the floor with a paper in her hand "Hm.. dry rations, vegetables, frozen meat, medicines, pills, bedsheets, tent, clothes, all good."

Looking at Zhao Tian, she smiled excitedly "Tiaannn~ good morning"

Seeing her enthusiastic greeting, Zhao Tian chuckled "Good morning."

Hm? Yao Jing stood up and raised her chest like a queen "Ahem, that's not how you should greet your Master. Come here and greet your Master respectfully with a bow."

Zhao Tian glanced away "I refuse."

(☆ >_<) "Ehhhhhhhh? Whyyyyyyy?"

She walked to him and grabbed his shoulders "Give me respect! RESPECT!!!"

-_- Zhao Tian stared at her blankly and with a sigh, he hugged her "I feel like hugging you would be more appropriate, Master."

(•o•) Waaaaahhhh!!!

Yao Jing was surprised by his sudden hug and hurriedly hugged him back with an excited smile "That's good, my dear disciple."

Patting his head, she giggled "Muhehehe, Now let's go to the adventure that will change the destiny of the world."

'We are just going to collect a herb.'

Chapter 533: Alchemy Exploration [1]

woosh Zhao Tian and Yao Jing were dashing above the greenery and he turned to look at Yao Jing's tank skin glowing in the morning sunlight.

"We are going to the deeper parts of the forest?"

Looking at him, Yao Jing nodded her head with a smile "Yeah, the Misty Moon flower blooms on the snow-covered areas and we are going there now."

With a faint nod, Zhao Tian asked, "Have you gone there before?"

Yao Jing nodded her head and replied "Yeah, I have gone there two times to search for an herb. It was extremely cold; even powerful cultivators like me who are in the Transcendant Sovereign Stage will find it hard in some places around the snow covered regions."

"So make sure to stick to me, Tian."

"Hmm."

...

A few hours passed-

As they continued their flight, the thick, green forest slowly began to give way to an open space... a vast, snowy expanse that stretched out as far as the eye could see.

The Misty Moon flower was known to bloom only in the most remote, desolate parts of the mountain ranges, where the air was thin and bitter cold.

Zhao Tian's breath caught in surprise as he looked out over the landscape ahead.

The peaks of distant mountains loomed like jagged teeth in the horizon, their snow-covered tops gleaming under the sun.

The air, once fresh and warm, grew thin and crisp as they ventured closer to the snow-capped region.

The temperature dropped noticeably, and the wind began to bite at their exposed skin.

Yao Jing smiled faintly "It's been a long time since I came here and I was always alone.. but this time I have my own disciple."

As he muttered, she extended her hand to him "Come here, disciple... it is cold, isn't it?"

With a nod, Zhao Tian extended his hand, his fingers intertwining with hers and a soft sigh escaped his lips, feeling her body's warmth.

Pulling him closer, she muttered "Flow your flame energy constantly in your body, but don't use too much astral energy or else your astral energy reserves will be depleted quickly from your body."

Zhao Tian gave a nod and steam began to rise from his skin, pushing away the cold air from his body.

Yao Jing couldn't help but giggle and spoke "See, now you look like a personal hot spring.. hahaha."

Hearing her silly joke, Zhao Tian laughed along with her as they dashed through the air.

...

As they landed softly on the icy ground, Zhao Tian felt his feet sink slightly into the snow, the biting cold immediately making its presence known.

The silence was almost eerie, broken only by the faint whistle of the wind and the crunch of their boots against the frozen earth.

Yao Jing released his hand, though her warmth lingered and she turned to look back at him, her eyes sparkling with confidence. "Stay close, disciple."

"Grrr!" Just as she spoke, a low growl echoed through the snowy silence.

Zhao Tian's turned his gaze to the left, where a pack of frost wolves, their white fur camouflaging them almost perfectly in the snow, prowled toward them.

Their icy blue eyes gleamed with a menacing hunger as they encircled the pair.

swoosh Without hesitation, Yao Jing stepped in front of Zhao Tian, her expression calm and focused.

She extended a hand, and with a subtle movement of her fingers, flames erupted from her palm, swirling and crackling with a fierce intensity.

The fire cast an amber glow on the surrounding snow, melting patches instantly under its scorching heat.

The wolves hesitated, their growls faltering as they sensed the heat radiating from Yao Jing.

Yet, their instincts drove them forward, teeth bared as they prepared to pounce.

Yao Jing's eyes narrowed, and with a flick of her wrist, a surge of flames shot out, spiraling toward the lead wolf.

WOOOSHHH The fire roared as it engulfed the beast, and within seconds, the wolf crumbled into ash, leaving only a faint smolder where it once stood.

The other wolves, undeterred by the loss of their leader, lunged at her from different directions.

With a graceful step to the side, she twisted her arm, sending another wave of flames arcing through the air.

The fire split mid-flight, each stream finding its target and igniting the wolves with unerring precision.

One by one, the beasts fell, their bodies disintegrating into embers as Yao Jing's fire consumed them.

As the last of the wolves fell, silence returned to the frozen landscape.

The snow around them was dotted with smoldering patches, the warmth from the fire dissipating quickly in the biting cold.

Yao Jing turned to him, brushing a stray lock of hair behind her ear and a faint, triumphant smile on her lips. "This place might be cold, but a little fire can still work wonders."

Zhao Tian raised an eyebrow "I am surprised... you got some moves."

Hearing this, Yao Jing's lips twitched, her gaze narrowing as she shot him a mock-offended look. "Oh? And just what did you take me for?"

With a playful smile, he replied "A blockhead master who knows nothing but alchemy."

"Oh? Is that right?" Without another word, Yao Jing crouched down and scooped a handful of snow into her palms, her gaze never leaving Zhao Tian.

With a mischevious grin, she grabbed Zhao Tian's cheeks pressing the snow on him.

"Shhh!" he hissed, feeling the cold sting his skin as she laughed. He grabbed her hand, trying to pull it away, but the cold left a pink flush on his face that only made Yao Jing laugh harder.

"Hahahaha!" Yao Jing burst into laughter looking at the red flush on his cheeks because of the cold and Zhao Tian's eyebrow twitched in frustration.

"I will surely get back at you for this."

Yao Jing let out her tongue with a mocking expression on her face which only fueled Zhao Tian's frustration.

However, he couldn't contain his amused laugh and wrapped his arm around her shoulder "Now, come on.. let's go Master."

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"Yeah, yeah... hahaha. Your face... HAHAHAHA."

"Stop laughing..."

"BAHAHAHAHA!!!"

"I will seriously punch you!"

Chapter 534: Alchemy Exploration [2]

"HAHAHA!" Yao Jing's laughter echoed through the snowy silence, filling the cold, empty expanse with a warmth that melted away the frosty tension between master and disciple.

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Zhao Tian could only shake his head in exasperation, his cheeks still tingling from the bitter cold of the snow she'd pressed onto his face.

Despite his mock frustration, he couldn't help but smile, feeling lighter than he had in a long time.

As they walked forward, Yao Jing's laughter gradually softened into chuckles.

She glanced at him out of the corner of her eye, a mischievous glint still lingering there. "I didn't know you were so sensitive to a little cold," she teased, playfully nudging his arm.

Zhao Tian shot her a look, feigning offense. "I'll remember that, Master. Next time you ask for my help with anything, I'll remind you of this day."

She rolled her eyes, still grinning. "Oh, don't be such a baby! You could use a bit of toughening up, especially if you're going to help me gather rare herbs in places like this. Besides," she added, smirking, "you need me to guide you, remember?"

he gave her a sidelong glance. "So you keep saying. But I think I'm doing just fine on my own here. In fact..." His voice trailed off as he bent down, scooping up a handful of snow, a devious smirk playing on his lips.

Yao Jing's eyes widened as she took a step back, laughing nervously. "Tian... don't you dare."

But before she could react, he launched the snowball at her, hitting her square on the shoulder.

The powdery snow exploded across her black robe, the cold seeping through the thin fabric. She gasped, both in surprise and amusement, as the chill hit her skin.

"Oh, you're in for it now, Tian!" she exclaimed, her voice filled with playful vengeance as she scooped up her own handful of snow.

She launched it back at him, and it hit his chest with a satisfying splat, sending flecks of snow scattering across his shoulders.

splat They continued like this, hurling snow at each other, their laughter ringing out across the desolate landscape.

For a moment, they were just two people, lost in the fun and exhilaration of a friendly snow fight.

Yao Jing's cheeks flushed a rosy pink from the cold and exertion, and her hair fell loose, stray strands framing her face in soft waves.

She looked more carefree than Zhao Tian had ever seen her... less like the stoic master and more like someone who enjoyed every moment of life.

Breathless, they finally paused, both of them covered in snow, their breaths coming in visible puffs.

Yao Jing placed her hands on her hips, trying to catch her breath, a satisfied grin on her face.

"Not bad... for a so-called alchemist," Zhao Tian teased, chuckling as he brushed the snow from his shoulders.

Yao Jing feigned indignation, crossing her arms. "And not bad for a cheeky disciple who thinks he can outmatch his master."

"Hahaha.. let's go."

They resumed walking, side by side, the lightheartedness lingering in the air between them.

The earlier chill seemed to have dissipated entirely, replaced by a shared warmth that even the icy surroundings couldn't extinguish.

As they continued walking, the sun slowly began to dip to the horizon and Yao Jing spoke "We have been walking for a long time, let's place a tent and rest for the night."

"This is one of the drawbacks in searching for a rare herb, we can't just fly around and spot them.. we need to search everywhere."

"Guess it will take atleast 2 months to get that herb."

Hearing this, Zhao Tian's gaze condensed... 2 months is not much in a cultivator's eyes, as they live for thousands of years.

And he is not in a hurry except for Li Jia's state and that crazy woman Velnorah.

As they continued their walk, their footsteps left shallow trails in the snow, and soon, they came across two thick trees leaning against each other, their branches intertwining to create a natural archway.

It was an ideal spot, sheltered from the biting wind and perfect for setting up camp.

Yao Jing nodded her head "Hmm, this will be good."

As she waved her hand, a gust of astral energy swept, clearing a wide patch of snow and revealing the earthy soil beneath

She quickly took a already built tent and placed it on the floor "Take you tent too, Tian. We can rest here."

Zhao Tian blinked his eyes and seeing his clueless face, her brows arched, as she placed her hands on her hips. "Don't tell me... you didn't bring a tent?"

He gave her a dry smile, shrugging. "Well, you didn't exactly tell me to bring one."

Yao Jing shook her head in exasperation "It is a basic knowledge to bring stuff like that when going to pick up a herb in the forest, how can you forget that. Were you planning to sleep on the ground?"

Zhao Tian just shrugged and a sigh escaped her lips, "Well, you can use my tent, come with me..."

She pulled the zip open on the entrance and the two of them entered the tent.

The tent was surprisingly roomy, with enough space for them both to stretch out comfortably and the fabric was thick, insulating them from the cold.

Taking a lantern like device from her storage ring, she placed it on the side and turned it on.

Zhao Tian was amused by the device as the heat spread through the tent giving a perfect warmth for them.

"You are well prepared."

Yao Jing hit his shoulder playfully "Of course, I often come to the forest to get herbs."

After setting up the inside, Yao Jing headed back outside and knelt down, retrieving a bundle of wooden branches from her storage ring.

She arranged them into a small pile and ignited them with a flick of her fingers.

The fire blazed warmly, casting flickering shadows on the surrounding trees.

And in the next instant, she took a barbecue from her storage ring and placed it on the side "Muhehehe, we can eat good."

Zhao Tian laughed, watching her pull a tray of frozen meat from her storage ring and place it on the grill with practiced ease.

She was more prepared than he could have imagined—it felt like she'd turned their search for rare herbs into a full-blown camping trip.

As she placed the cuts of meat one by one on the barbecue, the sound of sizzling filled the air, and the aroma of cooking meat wafted around them, mingling with the scent of pine and snow.

"Come here, Tian."

Chapter 535: Alchemy Exploration [3]

Yao Jing pulled two wooden chairs from her storage ring and placed them on the ground near the barbecue and turned to Zhao Tian.

"Come here, Tian," Yao Jing called, pointing the chair beside her.

He joined her, taking a seat by the fire.

They sat in companionable silence for a while, watching the meat cook.

The firelight illuminated her face, casting a warm glow across her features and highlighting the hint of a smile tugging at her lips.

There was a softness in her eyes, as this is the first time someone is beside her in times like this.

The crispy sound of the burning wood and the spicy noises of the steak on the barbecue filled the air as they sat there silently watching the sun disappear.

After a while, Yao Jing stood up to check on the barbecue and noticed the meat was in the perfect stage.

Yao Jing turned to him, handing over a skewer with a slice of perfectly cooked meat. "Here, you can have this."

With a smile, Zhao Tian accepted the plate and began to eat the steak.

The warmth of the fire slowly died down as they finished their meal, leaving only glowing embers and the faint scent of charred wood in the crisp evening air.

Yao Jing leaned back in her chair, stretching her arms and sighing with a look of contentment.

"That was... perfect," she murmured, gazing up at the stars scattered across the sky.

Hearing her words, Zhao Tian nodded his head "Yeah..."

After another comfortable silence, Yao Jing finally stood, brushing off her hands and glancing at the tent.

"Then, I guess, it's time to sleep.. Do you have a blanket?"

With a nod, Zhao Tian took a thick, comfortable blanket from his storage ring and Yao Jing smiled seeing it "Great."

However, Zhao Tian's eyes darkened as he remembered it was the same blanket he slept with Li Xueyan when he went with her for that bandit mission.

'Tch...'

he clicked his tongue in disgust, and before he could think twice, a spark of flame flared in his hand, and with a flicker of astral energy, the blanket was engulfed in fire.

Within seconds, the soft fabric was reduced to nothing but a wisp of smoke and a few gray embers.

(;° ㄨ°) Wha-

Yao Jing was dumbfounded to see Zhao Tian burning the blanket right in front of her eyes.

"W-What why? Why did you burn it..."

A guess surfaced in her mind and she was flabbergasted "Don't tell me.. you love your Master so much that you want to sleep in the same blanket as hers..."

"So you burned down your blankets?"

"Isn't that crazy?"

Hearing her exaggerated remark, Zhao Tian let out a deep sigh and turned to look at her.

Feeling his gaze, Yao Jing shrank in her seat, her cheeks flushed in embarrassment. "D-Don't look at me like that.. were you trying to create a plan so that you can assault your Master at night?"

-_- Zhao Tian gave her a blank stare "You've got quite the imagination, Master. As if I could even try something like that. How can I attack you... you are levels stronger than me."

Yao Jing raised her chin, mock-pouting. "Oh? So you don't think your Master is attractive enough to warrant that level of trouble?"

Seeing that Zhao Tian was not flustered by her teasing, Yao Jing giggled "Well, I was only playing around..., I have a good evaluation of you and know you are not that kind of man."

"But what made you burn the blanket?"

Hearing her serious tone, Zhao Tian sighed back on the chair "It's a woman in the past.. I slept with her in that blanket, well, she betrayed me afterwards."

"So, when I took the blanket, it reminded me of her and..."

Yao Jing continued his words "And in a fit of rage, you burned it. I see..."

Letting out a deep sigh, she stood up "Well, come on... we can sleep together in my blanket. It is big enough for two people."

Zhao Tian nodded and stood up following her into the tent.

They strolled over to the tent, and she unzipped the entrance, ducking inside first, the gentle night air brushing past them as they settled inside.

Yao Jing brought out another small heat lantern, placing it on another side. Its soft, warm light filled the space, casting comforting shadows that seemed to wrap around them.

Yao Jing took a large blanket and laid it on the ground. She sat down on her blanket and adjusted herself until she was lying down comfortably.

Zhao Tian also slowly lay beside her on the blanket and she covered them with the long white quilt.

There is still a good distance between them and Zhao Tian turned to the left, showing her back to him.

She chuckled in her heart and closed her eyes... drifting to her sleep.

...

As dawn approached, the first gentle rays of sunlight filtered through the small cracks of the tent, casting a warm glow over the peaceful scene inside.

The night air had gradually lost its chill, and the faint songs of early birds echoed in the distance.

Zhao Tian stirred slightly, his eyes blinking open to the soft, golden light that bathed the tent.

He turned his head to see Yao Jing still peacefully asleep beside him, her face softened in slumber.

Slowly, Zhao Tian shifted his weight, propping himself up on one elbow to get a better look at her.

As if sensing his gaze, Yao Jing's eyes fluttered open and she blinked sleepily, her eyes still hazy with the remnants of her dreams.

When she saw him watching her, she gave a lazy smile, one hand reaching up to rub her eyes.

"You're awake early," she murmured, her voice soft and still thick with sleep.

Zhao Tian chuckled, shifting slightly to sit up. "Could say the same about you."

She smiled faintly "Well, a good night's sleep will do that. Though, I must say, it's strange having company in a tent after so long. I thought you'd have tossed and turned all night, keeping me up."
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Zhao Tian's lips twitched "I am not a child."

"Hahaha.. come on, let's go and continue our search. We still have a large amount of land to cover."

Chapter 536: A small look into the past [1]

"Hahaha..."

Inside a cozy room, a little girl with tan skin, short black hair, and green eyes is sitting on the floor, playing with flames in her hand.

The fire danced around her fingers, a reddish glow illuminating her wide, curious eyes as she experimented with each flick and spark, her control already beyond what most would expect of a child.

There are two other women inside the room who were smiling and looking at the child playing with the fire.

"Makena... already controlling the flames to such a degree at her age," one of the women murmured with a proud smile.

The other nodded, her gaze softening. "Hmm, she truly is the pride of the Hafsatu family... a prodigy. She'll lead us into greatness." Continue your journey at m_v--NovelBin.net

Hafsatu family, one of the four duke clans, directly serving to the King of Tapiwa.

Makena Hafsatu, a girl born to the duke clan, one known for their mastery of alchemy and fire cultivation.

From a young age, she was a prodigy, hailed as the clan's pride and their hope for greater influence in the High Star.

Her abilities blossomed rapidly, and her family made her train endlessly, pushing her to her limits in their ambition to strengthen the clan's standing.

She was given countless titles, praised as the "Hope of Hafsatu," the "Future Flame," and the clan's own "Star of High Star."

Her parents and elders constantly reminded her of her value, of her duty to them.

To outsiders, her life appeared perfect—a gifted girl in a prestigious clan, destined for greatness.

As Makena grew up, she was so happy because her people are relying on her and expecting great things from her.

But life in the clan was a gilded cage.

Her every moment was controlled, every friendship supervised, and every smile calculated.

She rarely left the grounds of the clan estate, her world limited to training halls, libraries, and the alchemical laboratories where she was forced to hone her skills.

Her life was a relentless cycle of expectations, and her value was measured only by her skill.

Her tutors, all handpicked by her father and clan elders, controlled every interaction she had.

Friendships were forbidden, and any social interactions were closely monitored, her companions chosen based on their "value" to her training.

No one saw her as Makena Hafsatu, a girl with her own dreams and fears; she was simply a tool, an asset of the clan.

In this cage, Makena grew up working tirelessly to keep up with their expectations.

Any weakness or hesitation was swiftly punished, ensuring she grew cold, focused, and ruthless.

But behind the walls of her clan, life was anything but nurturing.

The Hafsatu clan harbored a dark tradition: every prodigy was secretly bound to a blood ritual, meant to enhance their cultivation abilities in exchange for their freedom.

Makena Hafsatu was no exception.

Her entire life was dictated by the clan elders, who used her talents not only to rise in power but to enforce their rule mercilessly.

She became known as the clan's "Crimson Heir," a symbol of fear to their enemies, her hands stained red with the blood of those her family commanded her to kill.

Her fire not only has the purity to burn herbs, but it even has the purity to burn corpses...

Purifying corpses and extracting their blood essence to enhance their cultivation... this is the secret of the Hafsatu family.

Her flames no longer brought her joy; they had become a symbol of control, twisted into a force of destruction.

"Makena, you are the Hafsatu clan's greatest pride. But your loyalty must be proven not only in our stronghold but on the battlefield. There are enemies who dare to defy us, and your flames will purify them."

Makena felt her heart grow cold, but she nodded.

She had no choice.

The Hafsatu clan's thirst for control eventually led them into conflict with the Thando clan, another powerful duke.

But this war was not over resources or honor; it was a brutal feud driven by ancient grievances and old, bitter hatred within the Tapiwa kingdom.

Knowing that they can't win, Makena Hafsatu's own father struck a dark deal with a evil sect, promising them her loyalty and soul if they aided him in decimating the Thando clan.

Makena is an important asset to their clan, but what is she worth if the clan itself is going to be destroyed by the Thando family?

And the evil sect was also very interested in Makena's fire, which could purify even corpses, so it was perfect for them.

Makena Hafsatu was given no choice but to comply, manipulated with a potion created by her father that eroded her will, making her a tool of destruction.

And soon, the war between the two clans began...

As the war progressed, Makena was forced to unleash horrors upon the battlefield.

She created powerful potions that caused plague and diseases across the battlefield.

Her purifying flames burn the corpses of the soldiers to cinders, turning their blood to essence to feed upon by the evil sect.

She watched as her enemies fell before her, screaming in agony.

She fought without mercy, her soul growing emptier with each death, knowing that her actions were not her own but dictated by a father who saw her as nothing more than a weapon.

...

As Makena Hafsatu stood amid the battlefield, her once-bright green eyes dulled by the horrors, her heart felt as cold and hollow as the corpses strewn around her.

The stench of death hung thick in the air, and her flames danced ominously, fueled not by her spirit but by the twisted will of her father and the pact he had made.

She had become the "Crimson Heir" her family had always envisioned but at a cost so deep that her own spirit felt caged and suffocated.

Her father, Duke Hafsatu, watched from afar, eyes gleaming with a chilling satisfaction as Makena's flames burned through the bodies of Thando soldiers, reducing them to smoldering heaps.

Each corpse purified by her fire left behind a crimson essence that was greedily gathered by the evil sect, their cloaked figures hovering at the edges of the battlefield, taking the life force she unwittingly extracted from the dead.

As she looked at the corpses, her eyes moistened and a tear slipped past her eyes as her mind flashed back to when she was a little girl, sitting on the floor of her family's hall, laughing as she played with her flames.

But even the tears themselves evaporated into steam by her flames "Even my tears don't belong to me... I want to go back."

Chapter 537: A small look into the past [2]

As Makena stood in the aftermath of the battle, she looked at the corpses around her... they were the bodies of every innocent life she had unwittingly taken.

Her father's voice echoed through her mind, reminding her of her "duty" to the clan, but each of his words felt like another rope tightening around her throat.

She felt suffocated, as her identity was swallowed by a role she had never chosen.

The evil sect, watching from the shadows, sent their acolytes to gather the crimson essences left from the scorched corpses.

They didn't see Makena as the prodigy she was raised to be but as a resource, a well of unending power they could drain.

The High Priest of the sect approached her, a grotesque figure dressed in dark robes.

His skeletal hand reached out, touching her shoulder with a mockery of kindness.

His touch was ice against her skin, chilling her to the bone, yet she couldn't move, bound by the potion that eroded her will.

"Your flames are extraordinary, child," he muttered.

"A gift so rare... but I see your sorrow, your longing for freedom. Perhaps... you have grown tired of the Hafsatu family."

"Come to us willingly, and we can grant you purpose beyond the cage they've trapped you in. Serve us, and your pain will be... transformed."

Makena's heart wavered, a flicker of desperation surfacing in her gaze, but she knew that any deal with the evil sect would lead to a fate far worse than the life she already endured.

Still, her soul was so tattered, and the hope of freedom... was tantalizing.

As she stood paralyzed, her father's figure appeared on a distant hill.

His silhouette was framed by the moon, a shadow watching her, ensuring she fulfilled her purpose.

His gaze was cold and empty of the love she had once dreamed a father should have.

The High Priest's voice whispered once more in her ear. "There is another way, if you so wish it. We have powers that can... ease your suffering. All it will cost you is one small favor."

Makena's heart scorched, her hatred flaring briefly within her hollow soul.

She knew they wanted to drain her power, but in that fleeting moment, the idea of escape... burned within her.

"What favor?" she asked, her voice barely more than a breath, her gaze dropping to the blood-soaked earth.

The High Priest's grin widened, his teeth flashing like daggers. "Your father. The man who shackled you to this life. His death would free you from this path... allow you to join us without his interference."

"You could be so much more, child. We would teach you the true secrets of your flame, beyond even what the Hafsatu clan dreams of."

...

thirssh The flames flickered under the moonlight, casting a dim glow over Makena Hafsatu's lifeless eyes as she stood amidst the chaos her sister had unleashed.

Her home, the Hafsatu estate, one of the four powerful duke clans within the kingdom of Tapiwa, was now little more than a ruin of burning corpses and shattered walls.

She had known something was off the moment her younger sister, Zara, had gone silent for days.

Zara Hafsatu, the beloved jewel of the family, had played her role well; gentle and obedient girl loyal to the Hafsatsu family.

No one had suspected that beneath her demure exterior lay a bitter resentment, a resentment strong enough to consort with the Thando clan and betray her own blood to escape the very fate Makena herself had been condemned to.

Zara also learned about the blood ritual within the clan and her sister's torment... so she decided to betray her family to escape that fate.

In the ruined wreckage, Makena's gaze flickered to Zara's body which was torn apart into shreds and her head is lying on the ground with lifeless eyes along with other corpses.

Even though she helped the Thando clan, in the end, she got struck between things and got killed.

Now in the ruined battlefield, both Thando clan and Hafsatu clan members' bodies are there... both clans destroyed in one night, fighting against each other.

trek *baam* Hearing some noises of crunching stones from behind, she turned her gaze and saw a figure emerging from the broken wreckages.

The man has lost his one eye as blood is seeping down his face and he also lost one of his hands... and yet, even in his state, he retained that familiar, cold arrogance.

The man's eyes turned to look at a man's dead body on the ground and a mocking grin twisted on his lips as he crushed his boot down on the man's face, grinding the heel into the flesh with a cruel satisfaction.

"Duke of Thando family.... is dead. Haa... even though our clan and the evil sect is almost destroyed. We killed the Duke."

Then the man's gaze flickered to Makena, who was also bleeding with scars and bruises all over her face.

"Makena... quickly give me a healing pill. I lost my spatial ring in the battle."

Hearing her father's command, Makena stood there still, her eyes devoid of any emotions.

He took a step closer, his one good eye narrowing as saw that she is silent. Stay tuned with mvl

The Duke's face contorted with irritation, as he took another step, his voice rising, "Are you deaf, girl? I told you to give me a pill. Now!"

"Curse you, Duke Hafsatu..."

From the shattered walls, some men came there and the High Preist was among them, limping his way towards them with a broken staff in his hand.

"Urrrghhh, We lost almost all of our men, Duke Hafsatu. Your family is ruined, and our sect lies in shambles. We sacrificed so much for this alliance... How are you going to compensate for all of this?"

Duke Hafsatu clutching the blood on his left hand, forced his breath to speak "M-Makena.. you can have her."

The High priest clicked his tongue; he thought that after killing the Duke with Makena, he can plunder the clan's resources.. but now they were all destroyed.

Well, whatever, as long as he gets Makena Hafsatu.

Makena's eyes glistened in disgust looking at the two men bargaining her as if she were some product.

But again, thinking about it...

"Haa..."

For the first time, Makena's lips parted, and a hollow, humorless smile tugged at the corners of her mouth.

"Hahaha..."

Chapter 538: A small look into the past [3]

Makena's gaze condensed, disgust bubbling up within her as she watched the two men barter her away like some prized possession.

She was no longer a person in their eyes... just a pawn to use.

The bitterness that had simmered within her for years now burned into something more dangerous.

But again, thinking about it...

"Haa..."

For the first time, Makena's lips parted, and a hollow, humorless smile tugged at the corners of her mouth.

"Hahaha..."

Her laughter was low, but it carried a weight that silenced everything around her.

The men turned to her, startled by her sudden laughter, and in their eyes, she saw the faintest flicker of fear.

She took a step forward, and with a sudden burst of energy, flames erupted from her body like an inferno. *woosh*

Seeing her maniac laugh, The Duke's eyes widened, and for the first time, the arrogance in his face vanished, replaced by terror. "M-Makena..." he stammered.

'My authority over her will... just now.'

The Duke's face twisted in anger and desperation as he took another shaky step toward Makena, "Makena! Obey your father!"

Beside him, the High Priest, clutching his broken staff, sneered as he limped closer to her.

His voice was rasping as he spoke with a grin. "Obey? Duke, you're a fool if you think she still serves you."

He turned to Makena, his tone dripping with wickedness. "Makena, you were destined to serve the High Order. As I already said, we'll give you true power... far beyond what your family could."

"Bahahaha..."

Her lips curled up in a cold smile "True power?"

Her voice was soft, almost mocking. "You think you can bargain with me now?"

With a pulse of astral energy, her body began to swirl with flames, as they grew brighter in the cold night.

"You wanted a weapon, didn't you?"

She extended her hand, flames swirling around her fingers, crackling with deadly energy. "Let me show you what you created."

The High Priest's face twisted in anger as he watched the flames rise around her, and his grip on the broken staff tightened. "You think your flames frighten me, girl?"

Raising his broken staff high, he began to chant as dark energy swirled around him, casting a gray aura.

treak With a thunderous crack, a wave of dark energy burst from his body, pushing her back momentarily.

Makena staggered but quickly steadied herself, her gaze narrowing as the High Priest's body began to glow with a dark aura.

She knows this is the perfect time to finish things as they are all gravely injured.

The High Priest's eyes brimmed with energy, and a dozen ghostly figures emerged from the shadows, their tortured faces twisted in agony.

SCREECH They rushed toward her with clawed, spectral hands, screeching as they closed in.

Makena stepped forward, her flames flaring brighter, and the spectral beings shrieked as the intense heat met them, their bodies melting away like smoke in the sun.

The High Priest's mocking grin faltered as Makena raised her hand, and a single, spiraling flame shot forward.

woosh It twisted through the air like a serpent, and before he could block it, the flame struck his chest, burning through his robes and branding his bones in flames.

"Curse you!" he growled, staggering back.

swoosh With a sudden burst, she lunged forward, flames erupting from her hands.

The High Priest barely had time to raise his staff before her flames engulfed him, his screams echoing through the ruins as the fire seared through him.

"ARGHHHH!!! AAAHHHHHHH!"

As the flames devoured him, the High Priest's body disintegrated, his ashes scattered into the night air.

crack His staff cracked and splintered, falling to the ground in useless fragments.

Duke Hafsatu staggered back, his eyes shaking in terror. "Makena, stop! This isn't you!" he shouted in a desperate voice.

Makena turned her gaze to him, a hollow emptiness in her eyes. "You don't get to tell me who I am."

She took a slow step toward him, flames swirling like a storm around her, casting her in a blood-red glow.

He tried to raise his hand, but Makena disappeared like a blur as she surged forward.

sleesh She swiped her hand through the air, and a wave of fire slashed across him, tearing into his injured body.

"ARGH!"

thud He stumbled to his knees as he coughed up blood, his hand clenching his chest.

Around them, the remaining members of the evil sect looked on, stunned, and one by one, they tried to flee.

But Makena had no intention of letting any of them escape.

Her flames bellowed, expanding outward in a circle, cutting off their retreat.

She moved through the chaos, like a gust of flame... dispatching each one with brutal precision.

One of the sect members tried to strike her from behind with a blade gleaming in his hand.

But Makena spun, grabbing his wrist and twisting until she heard it snap.

She shoved him to the ground and unleashed her flames, watching him reduced to ashes.

The last of the men fell before her, eyes wide with terror. "Please," he begged, crawling backward, his hands raised in surrender. "I was only following orde-"

She silenced him with a single, fiery blast, his words dying on his lips as he crumbled to nothing.

When the battlefield finally fell silent, Makena turned to face the Duke, her flames dimming slightly.

He is lying crumpled on the ground, barely clinging to life as his body is charred and broken.

She kneeled beside him, her voice soft, almost gentle. "You raised me to be your weapon," she murmured.

"But you never understood that a weapon, once unleashed, has no loyalty."

With that, she pressed her hand to his chest, and fire poured from her palm, sinking into him with deadly heat.

"GAAHHH!!" He gasped, his body convulsing as the flames consumed him from the inside out.

When it was over, only ashes remained, scattered across the scorched earth.

Makena rose slowly, her gaze sweeping over the ruins of her former life, the shattered remnants of the Hafsatu clan, the evil sect, and the twisted legacy they'd tried to force upon her.

"Haa..."

Looking at this, she couldn't help but laugh...

"Haha.."

"Hahahaha..."

"HAHAHAHAHA!!!"

...

"HAHAHAHAHA!"

Yao Jing was laughing loudly while being carried by Zhao Tian on his back as she clung to his neck with her legs around his waist.

Zhao Tian was holding her thighs as he continued his walk through the snowy landscape "Stop laughing, you idiot."

Yao Jing pouted her lips and pinched his cheeks "Who are you calling idiot, you scoundrel."

Its already been 2 weeks, but still they haven't found the herb.

Chapter 539: Alchemy Exploration [4]

It's been already 2 weeks since Zhao Tian and Yao Jing started their journey to find the Misty Moon petal.

"Haa..." A hot breath escaped Zhao Tian's lips as it turned to snowy mist in the cold surroundings.

Carrying Yao Jing in his back, he walked through the snowy path, her body heat giving him comfort in the cold.

He could feel her breath close to his ear, steady and calm, as she rested her chin on his shoulder, her gaze watching him with a playful glint.

Hugging his neck from behind, Yao Jing placed her chin on his shoulder "Tian'er."

As he heard her whisper, his body shuddered and he turned to look at her, his lips twitching "Can you stop doing that?"

Yao Jing's lips curled in a teasing smile, and she leaned in closer, letting out a slow, warm breath near his ear.

"Haa... What do you mean, 'stop it,' disciple?" she replied in a voice laced with playful seduction, her tone causing a wave of heat to rise up his neck.

Zhao Tian gritted his teeth controlling the Yang energy in his body 'Fuck.. my yang energy has already increased after entering the Empyrean realm.'

'And I didn't take any virgin energy for months... and this woman is whispering seductively, making me even more horny.'

His eyelashes trembled 'if things become worse, I got no other choice... but to enter the artifact and ask Yao Lian's help.'

He thought remembering the pink fox staying inside the artifact.

Seeing him visibly shaking and the flush on his face because of the cold made Zhao Tian even cuter in Yao Jing's eyes, making her want to tease him more.

Her soft lips parted and she softly nibbled on his earlobe.

Wha-

"Y-you..." Zhao Tian stammered, swallowing hard as he attempted to control his voice. "I told you to stop that. You're teasing a young man, and it's... dangerous,"

She smiled faintly. "Oh? Dangerous, is it? And what exactly would you do, disciple?"

Her voice dropped to a whisper, the words brushing against his ear like a tantalizing caress. "I can't imagine my Zhao Tian would dare to push me down here and... force himself upon me."

For a heartbeat, Zhao Tian felt his self-control waver, the yang energy inside him stirring like a barely contained flame.

His gaze darkened, and he felt an almost irresistible urge to answer her challenge and push her to the ground.

But he exhaled, forcing himself to breathe and push away the tempting thoughts.

Instead, he let out a huff of frustration and turned his head to look at her with narrowed eyes. "If you keep pushing me, Master, I just might. Don't say I didn't warn you,"

Yao Jing simply giggled, unbothered by his threat, and gave him a gentle squeeze from behind. "I know my disciple wouldn't do something like that. You're far too well-mannered," she teased, brushing a stray lock of his hair back into place.

As they continued their journey, the sun began to sink lower, casting a golden glow over the snow-covered landscape.

The air grew even colder, and the first stars began to appear in the sky, their light twinkling against the darkening sky.

He slowed his pace and glanced back at Yao Jing. "The sun's setting. We should set up camp here for the night. I'll go gather some beast meat to cook for dinner."

He gently set her down, her feet sinking softly into the snow as she steadied herself.

Yao Jing looked at him with a frown, her gaze filled with concern. "No, Tian'er. It's dangerous for an outer disciple like you to venture out in these woods, especially alone."

Zhao Tian shook his head "Don't worry, I will manage somehow."

Yao Jing turned to look at the trees and spoke "Ok then, be careful out there."

...

swish Zhao Tian's body seemed like a blur as he teleported from one branch to another through the woods, his sharp gaze scanning around for beasts.

As he continued through the woods, Zhao Tian spotted a small snowy hill in the distance, a dark opening in the side of it catching his attention.

Hm? A cave?

He felt two presences inside the cave and his eyes narrowed in thought "Are there beasts up there?"

Some beasts take refuge in caves to escape the sheer cold.

woosh Dashing through the air, he quickly reached the cave's entrance where the frozen icicle hangs in the mouth.

Stepping in, he felt the flicker of flame energy in the air and his gaze squinted.

As he continued going deeper, a bright orange light caught his eye and he looked at the bright orangeish flames.

'An Ember Raven?'

Looking at the large bird with orange fiery embers scattered across its feathers, Zhao Tian was surprised.

The flames clinging to its body were not wild but controlled; they flared and dimmed rhythmically, like a heartbeat of fire.

It is one of the few beasts, prized for their loyalty and strength, that could be tamed and used for travel...

As he approached the large bird, the bird shrieked in defense, and its feathers stood up aggressively.

Zhao Tian smiled and gently waved his hand "It's okay... I am not here to harm you."

These kinds of beasts have intelligence so they can somewhat understand the body language and what Zhao Tian was trying to convey.

swish The bird suddenly opened its mouth as fire energy concentrated in its mouth.

feen It shot a fire laser straight at Zhao Tian, but he simply raised his hand, blocking the attack and the flames didn't scorch his body.

As he is the archon of elementals, elemental attacks won't harm him.

And an Ember Raven's flames are more powerful than normal human's flames... but less powerful than an Emyreal flame.

Only then did Zhao Tian notice that the bird was actually bleeding, with blood dripping beneath its orangish feathers.

As he took another step, it screeched in a loud voice... still cautious of him.

Huh?

However, Zhao Tian soon found out, why the bird is so cautious of him.

Behind the bird, there is a beautiful woman with lustrous black hair leaning on the cave's wall and her face is pale, her body marred with injuries.

Chapter 540: Alchemy Exploration [5]

Looking at the injured woman, Zhao Tian's gaze narrowed and as he tried to move closer, the bird cried loudly, its feathers spreading in defense of the woman.

Zhao Tian waved his arms giving a gesture that everything is okay and uttered "Relax, I am here to help."

As he spoke, he extended his hand showing his palm, conjuring a spark of flame.

The Ember Raven sensed that the flames is powerful... even more powerful than its own flames and showed a curious look.

It tilted its head and moved close to look at Zhao Tian's flames.

Feeling a sense of familiarity with the flames, it crooked its neck and feeling the shift in its demeanor, Zhao Tian retracted the flames.

It stared at Zhao Tian for a while and then stepped back.

Zhao Tian walked closer and raised his hand to pat its head.

The bird looked at his hand for a good while and then slowly lowered its head allowing him to pat its head.

Zhao Tian slowly caressed the head of the bird, as his fingers sank into the bird's feathers, warm and soft, with the comforting heat of a well-tended hearth.

He felt the embers pulsing like the heartbeat of a living flame.

Smiling, he channeled a soft light energy into the bird, his healing power flowing into its body to close its wounds and soothe its aches.

The Ember Raven shivered as the warmth flowed through it, healing the small gashes and bruises that had marred its ebony feathers.

Once the healing was complete, it stretched its wings wide, gazing at its restored feathers with something like wonder.

Then it raised its head and moved closer to Zhao Tian, caressing its head on his chest lovingly.

With a soft chuckle, Zhao Tian continued patting its head, and the bird opened its beak, clutching his robe.

It pulled his robe, bringing him close to the unconscious woman lying on the ground.

Zhao Tian quickly crouched beside the woman and looked at the claw marks on her body, which were seeping with blood.

Her body is covered with icicles sticking in her flesh, and some parts of her robes were also torn.

As he reached out and grasped her wrist, he checked the pulse.

He noticed that the pulse was very low and her body was extremely cold.

"Huh? Why do her internal organs also seem frozen?"

His gaze narrowed and glanced at the sharp icicles stuck on her skin, from which the blood was dribbling down her pure skin.

With a sigh, he channeled his fire into her body, trying to melt the ice from within.

swiish As his energy entered her, he could see small clouds of white mist rising from her skin, the evaporating ice particles drifting like ghosts in the cold air.

The woman's body reacted, her muscles tensing as warmth began to replace the chill.

Zhao Tian maintained his focus, carefully moderating the heat to avoid burning her fragile body.

Slowly, the frost melted from her skin, and the icicles embedded in her flesh began to shrink and dissolve, the water evaporating into steam.

As the ice dissolved, even more blood began to seep out of her body and Zhao Tian instantly used his light energy to heal her wounds.

He glanced at her pale face which is slowly regaining color and slowly, the woman's eyelashes fluttered open.

Her vision was blurry as she looked at the face in front of her eyes and could only see his long fluttering white hair through the blurriness.

Zhao Tian also noticed that she was waking up and saw her misty yellow eyes.

"Um.."

As he tried to speak, her eyes again closed losing consciousness.

Zhao Tian let out a sigh as he took a shirt from his storage ring and covered it over her body hiding the torn parts of her robe.

He then cast a barrier around her, so no other beasts would enter near her.

Satisfied, Zhao Tian straightened and turned his attention back to the Ember Raven, who watched him with a curious, almost thoughtful gaze.

He reached out, patting the bird's head with a gentle touch.

The bird glanced at the woman's body, which is healed now, and then turned to Zhao Tian.

The bird lowered its head and reached to its left wing.

Opening its beak, it bit down on the feather and gave it a sharp tug, ripping a feather from its wing.

Huh?

Zhao Tian was startled and the bird raised its beak as if giving Zhao Tian the feather.

With a smile, Zhao Tian accepted it and affectionately patted its head "You are a good girl." he said warmly, letting his fingers run over her soft, ember-like feathers.

The bird closed its eyes and snuggled its head to his chest as it purred lightly.

After a moment, the bird shifted and glanced back at her mistress, who lay peacefully within the protective barrier.

Zhao Tian watched as the Ember Raven moved to her side, nestling down beside her, acting as her silent guardian.

The woman's chest rose and fell steadily now, and her pale body had also gotten color.

With a sigh, Zhao Tian glanced at the cave's entrance and noticed that it is already dark.

He again glanced at the bird and muttered "Take care of her, I will return in a while."

Soon, he dashed out of the cave and again continued his search for any beast meat.

As soon as he left, the woman's eyelashes fluttered open and she looked around in confusion.

Huh?

Seeing the shirt on top of her body and her healed injuries, she was taken aback.

She turned to look at her beast, which is chirping happily now, and asked "Did someone come here and saved me?"

The bird nodded its head and the woman sighed in her heart.

She again glanced at the shirt and her fingers curled up, gripping it tightly.

"I don't know if the benefactor will return to see me... but I can't stay here any longer. Let's leave."

She stored the shirt in her storage ring and her heart felt guilty that she is leaving without even properly thanking.

But she got no other choice...