

Last System 450

Chapter 450 Dark Smoke

What we found couldn't be called a river. It was a mere stream of water meandering between bushes and trees as it moved northwards where it would likely join with the main river.

And while it was possible to just spend some time to get all the way north to where we would get all the water we could want...

I didn't forget about my worries from when we were crossing that river. And even if the likelihood of monsters being somewhere so remote was low, I didn't really see the need to risk it.

"We will wash first," I said as I pulled my hand out of the water, doing testing for its quality and temperature. "Once we are done and as we will be drying, we will wash the meat."

Theoretically speaking, it was better to wash the meat first. After all, whatever dirt or other impurities there were on it, the longer it would take us to clean them out, the more time they would have to set in and start rotting the piece.

Yet, practically saying, there was no way I could go on any longer while wearing just some kind of rags wrapped around my hips and constantly reminded of the burning pain of the scratches of all the dried-out liquid that still stuck to my skin.

"Washing in a tiny stream like this..." Mia muttered with a complicated look on her face.

For a second I got worried that my constant spoiling of her actually made her spoiled.

Then, she put a small, somewhat sad smile on her face.

"That brings me back," she said, her lips filling with nostalgic amusement while her eyes took on a sadder note.

'That's one complex set of emotions for someone to feel over a simple stream,' I thought. I then shook my head and proceeded to drop the rags that I carried around my hips.

The stream was only three hands wide and two hands deep at its greatest extent. It was small, for sure, but the rapid speed of the water within somehow compensated for that fact, making it pretty easy to scoop some of it out without affecting the flow of the entire thing.

"Haaa..." I released a moan of relaxation once the water hit my skin and started to dissolve the dried-out filth left on my skin.

Unsatisfied with just pouring plain water on my skin, I walked around the side of the stream for a while before finding a place where I could spot two things that I really looked forward to.

Submerged sand served as the stream's bed and dry sand sat right on the stream's shore.

"Mia, come here!" I called out, scooping out half of a fist's worth of the wet sand. And then, without any hesitation, I slammed it all over my chest before proceeding to rub it all over my skin.

There were no healing or cleaning properties within the sand. It couldn't act like shampoo or soap at all.

No, the only thing that the sand could be used for was a primitive scrubbing device that allowed one to get the filth of their skin far easier than it would be by just pouring water over one's dirties parts.

"It really brings me back," Mia added as she approached, gracefully stepping over the stream with the same suit she came to this world in.

'She looks like a dryad,' I thought, gulping down my saliva.

It wasn't lust that I felt right now. It was adoration, admiration, and extreme happiness.

Mia was so beautiful that she no longer invoked lust in me by walking into my face without any clothes on. No, the sight of her insane figure was something I could only revere, worship, even.

"Care to tell me about your past?" I asked, quite curious about the girl's origin story.

It was the one thing that I never learned about my girl.

Where did she come from? How did she end up at the Skyladder sect in the position of a cultivation slave?

I attempted to ask about it a few times in the past but would always end up withdrawing my questions when I observed how Mia reacted to those inquiries.

As such, when she started to randomly talk about her past...

I couldn't help but get interested.

Hearing my question, Mia looked up before focusing her eyes on my face.

For a few moments, she simply stared my face down with a complicated expression on her face and fell behind her eyes.

Then, Mia averted her eyes to the side while putting a small, shy smile on her lips.

"One day, I will," she promised before turning around and showing me her back. She then reached out with her hand to move her long hair out of the way. "In the meantime," she looked over her shoulder, "could you maybe wash my back?"

'What was I thinking about Mia being too beautiful to feel nothing but reverence towards her?' I asked myself, all my thoughts vanishing when I took a step towards the girl.

The sides of her boobs peeked out of the sides of her waist, the delicate angle at which her shoulders dropped down, the way in which her spine marked the perfect center of her back...

All of that coupled with a mischievous smile on her face as she peeked over her shoulder while playing with her hair...

"Ugh..." I brought my hand up and clutched at my chest, once again worried about contracting diabetes.

Only with the utmost effort of my will, I managed to stop myself from just reaching out to grab at her breasts, opting to pour a handful of wet sand on her back before scrubbing it down.

In the end, cleaning up took us only a moment. And in contrast to my initial worries about Mia struggling to clean herself in such a small stream, I ended up being the one who needed more time, even though I kinda got used to it while living my days as the sect contractor out in the woods.

As soon as we were done cleaning our bodies, I took Mia's prey to the river, scrubbing it all over with several times more sand than we both used to wash our bodies.

Then, as our bodies dried out a bit, we finally donned our proper robes before turning around and leaving back for the city.

Walking out of the forest was easy. Now that we had what we wanted, there was no reason to stay hidden and below the radar of the local beasts.

And frankly speaking, if there was a beast dumb enough to attack me, I would hardly need to pay any mind while disposing of it.

Yes, getting out of the forest turned out to be the easier part of the trip. And it was for one and one reason only.

"Are those..." I muttered once I took a first glance at the outpost in the distance.

There was one element of the picture that didn't fit what I expected.

"Aren't those clouds of smoke?" Mia quickly chimed in, squinting her eyes as she attempted to discern more details.

We both tensed up at the same time.

"Let's go back!" I shouted, grabbing Mia's hand before rushing back.

There were only a few possible reasons behind such a massive cloud of dark smoke raising above the city we were trying to take over and rebuild.

And not a single of the possible reasons were any good!