

302 Interrogation [2]

"I will ask you again, what happened? What happened in the pavilion and in the cave? We both know that you don't need to guard the items or anyone to guard them. So, just answer the question honestly, and I will listen to one request you have." 1

Perpas noticed that being harsh didn't work on Lucas. And the only way to know his intention was to give him a favor, a favor that he shouldn't be expected to actually happen.

Perpas saw that Lucas smiled, and seeing that wide smile, he was interested in talking. Because of it, he couldn't help but be happy as well, and the corner of his lips curled up. Perpas believed in Lucas's expression.

"Okay... I'm in. Let me say this one thing: the expedition team leader is stupid. Where did you get him? How could he get such a stupid idea of entering the cave when we were just done fighting some enormous shining golden monsters and humanoid mud monsters? Hmm? In addition to that, how could he not think that it was dangerous to enter a dark cave where there was the presence of the wind inside that could kill the fire in the torch? Hmm?"

Perpas suddenly became silent as he didn't

expect that Lucas would turn to complain, instead of exploiting his offer. Nevertheless, Lucas changed his attitude again, which added more confusion to his assessment of him. Furthermore, Lucas seemed stupid as well from his perspective, but he wasn't sure if he was just acting like earlier.

"That is an honest mistake. He saw an opportunity and he wanted to grab it hastily. That is what I think is the reason behind his stupid action. Moreover, he came from a lower family, wanting to prove their worth again. That is why he became the expedition leader." Perpas explained to Lucas, who was acting arrogant again. His eyes were wide while his teeth were clenched.

Leadership comprises an individual's, group's, or organization's ability to "lead," influence, or direct other individuals, teams, or entire organizations, both as a research topic and as a practical talent. The term "leadership" was frequently considered a contentious one. And by the flow that had probably entered the expedition leader's mind, impatient of the reward he could get, he forgot all of the essences of being a good leader. Hence, resulting in their death.

'Lucas had explained most of it. Did he slip his tongue? So, what happened in the pavilion

drained their energy. They fought with monsters, as the records said that was the essence of monsters at the peak of the mountain. However, the record left an important note that they didn't know where since the chaotic Qi disturbed their senses. So, it is safe to assume that the monsters present in the pavilion were easy to defeat, or at least manageable, contrary to the General Spirit Realm monsters that they sensed... So, the cave had those monsters?' Perpas thought deeply as he bit his lip while trying to patch up the information he got.

'But, it is not safe to assume that what I thought was real. There could be a chance that there were still General Spirit Realm monsters in the pavilion, and they were just hibernating. In addition to that, the monsters that killed them inside the cave were just able to kill them because of the darkness and fatigue. It doesn't mean that they are strong. Fuck... I just need to know where those monsters are and proceed with the theory about the red sky. If they were still hibernating, what would be the meaning of the red sky?'

Going back to the records, Perpas recalled the theory about the red sky.

'The red sky had also appeared in the past, but it was only limited to the peak when the masters of

the past discovered the hidden pavilion at the peak of Great Ming Mountain. However, they classified the red sky as a sign of monster hibernation because the presence they sensed was noticeably harmless since they were sleeping and inactive. Their sense of direction in finding where the monster was was the flaw of their discovery, making them end the expedition and record it as something dangerous and a threat. But what does the wide red sky mean? It doesn't mean that the monsters were still hibernating. The masters made sure that the red sky appeared while the monsters were asleep. So, this should not mean that they are awaking!

Meanwhile, in Lucas's mind, he thought of the situation with the expedition team leader. He hadn't argued against him, but what came into his mind was probably the effect of chaotic Qi. It was certain that the chaotic Qi disrupted people's natural senses, making it hard to breathe and also feel. Hence, the expedition team leader's mind was probably attacked by the chaotic Qi since being exposed to those Qi harms people in ways other than harming them in their cultivation.

"I see..." Lucas mumbled. "That's how it is... Okay, I will tell you. I just felt that we both understood each other. After the pavilion, we went to the cave beside it. Inside the cave was a nest of

monsters of different sizes humanoids. Furthermore, it was the house of a giant serpent, which caused the wind to appear and make our torch dance. It was fortunate that we didn't wake it up, or else I would have died as well."

Of course, Lucas wouldn't die from it. Lucas's powers were already equal to the divine beasts, reaching the second cultivation stage of the Immortal Realm. However, officially, to be measured by the quantity, he was still in the Emperor Spirit Realm, but the quality he had could rival those who had Immortal Cultivation.

"So, how did you survive?"

A moment of silence engulfed the whole room as the question was uttered from Perpas's mouth. From the silent treatment of Lucas, Perpas could hear his own heartbeat. He was anticipating the answer, as this had been a smooth advantage to him. Lucas's current attitude gave him answers, and he was tasked by the First Elder.

"Does this mean you will still grant me another different request?"

'Lucas is easy to talk to.' Perpas thought, hence, making him easy to talk to as well as the flow of their conversation becoming smooth. Lucas stopped being stubborn, giving him the answers he needed. He could see if Lucas would lie, as lying couldn't make sense sometimes. Moreover,



what Lucas said to him currently matches the record left by the previous masters.

"Yes... You can trust me with it."

"Alright. I was able to survive because I left when I saw the swarming numbers. I am not stupid. I knew that we didn't have any chance, so I left. That is how I survived."

Perpas became stiff. That answer was the least he was expecting since, earlier, he could see that Lucas was arrogant, and arrogance had some basis. It could be power or luck. No one knew which one of those was the source, but there would always be one that could save him from that danger. Lucas wasn't stupid after all. He was calm and rational, which he had noticed since the examination. He also had the power, that was why he just couldn't expect that Lucas would escape.

He sighed. 'Well, we just couldn't judge a person by one perspective. It doesn't mean that he has the power, it means that he also has the courage to selflessly die with others. Maybe he also thought that being alive could be useful, and had a change of heart when the military treated him harshly after knowing that he was the only survivor.'

Lucas was silent as well, and he had a smile on his face as he stared deeply at Perpas.

"Is that all?"

"Yes, but now, shall I ask what I have in mind?
The request, I mean."

"What is it?"

"Tell me, how will you introduce me to the 11
Elders?"

Out of nowhere, everything stopped. Just as
Lucas was casting something with his words,
Perpas paused and blankly stared at Lucas, who
was also deeply staring at him with a mysterious
smile on his lips.

[Basics of Word Technique: Mental Manner]

He was smiling widely.

'Such good luck! It was compatible. The
conditions were met to cast a word technique.
And who would have thought that the tie that
was supposed to suppress my cultivation just
had array formation, which I am master of? It
was easy to break it.'

And as Lucas's question rang inside Perpas, and
he was captured by his spell, Perpas acted not
normal. His fingers were twitching as if he was
fighting the effects of the Word Technique, but
later on, those fingers weakened and he was
completed under Lucas's control for the
moment.

"If you have something good to offer to them," Perpas answered with a static tone.

"Something good to offer..." Lucas mentioned it once more. "I guess offering them a deal will be a good thing to offer, right? How about you do me the deed, Perpas, and tell them that I have something to offer?"

[Parasitic Shadow: Puppetry Last Form]

Lucas used the strongest form of parasitic shadow since he noticed how Perpas fought against his control. And as the technique was used, a combination of shadow, word technique, and array, a black humanoid, an embodiment of darkness, appeared, then compressed into a ball, and crawled directly to Perpas. It went inside of him, and as it took control of his nervous system, Perpas became under Lucas's control.

"Hmm... Can you free me now? I am a little uncomfortable with this place."

"Yes, Master."

