

Chapter 1441:

Six Paths

“Has your attacking power increased yet?” Ling Mei’er asked as she performed a Thai massage on Han Sen.

“It is increasing, yes. Keep going!” Han Sen said, reveling in the comfort provided by the massage above and the airbed below.

Bao’er, who was near, started to say, “Oh, great shelter master, I want to increase my power, too!”

Ling Mei’er moved over to her and then began massaging Bao’er.

Han Sen decided to sit up and ask Ling Mei’er, “Do you know where Spirit Thirteen’s shelter lies?”

“Yes, what about it?” Ling Mei’er inquired, as she was busy massaging Bao’er.

“According to the Dark Spirit rules, are you allowed to bring down the shelters of others?” Han Sen asked.

“You are planning on taking down Spirit Thirteen’s shelter? No, you can’t take down a shelter belonging to someone in your own tribe. You either have to claim one that was unclaimed at the time, or conquer a shelter that belongs to another tribe entirely.” Ling Mei’er shook her head.

Han Sen always liked exacting revenge, and nothing would put him off the concept. This time, though, it sounded like he’d have to do it quietly.

“I need to think on this a bit more.” Han Sen got to devising a way in which he could whack Spirit Thirteen without arousing suspicion.

Han Sen wanted to boost Ling Mei’er to gemstone-level, too, so she could return to Dark Spirit Shelter. If she could go back, Han Sen and Bao’er could potentially get a good look at the Holy Vine and its gourd.

It would take a while for this, though. And it had been made clear by now that if he didn’t get rid of Spirit Thirteen, he’d keep harassing them without stopping.

He had already tried to assassinate Han Sen, and it would be best if Han Sen eliminated Spirit Thirteen before one of his next attempts actually had a chance of succeeding.

Han Sen asked Ling Mei’er about Spirit Thirteen, so he could learn more about the threat he posed and devise a method in which he might succeed in taking him out.

The Dark Spirit elder had four children, but some of the children reproduced with sacred-blood and others with super creatures. It was because of this, some were weaker than others.

Spirit Thirteen was a descendant of the four children, and the eldest was called Spirit One. Spirit Thirteen was the thirteenth generation, and that was why he was so named.

The other three Dark Spirits were not like them, though, and Ling Mei'er was a descendant of the fourth child.

After the years that had elapsed, their blood had gradually thinned. When they mated with others of a different kind, there were no sicknesses or ill results. As a result, they were all allowed to mate with different races.

Spirit Thirteen was the weakest. There was a big battle before the Hundred-Tribe-Deal was hammered out, and it had resulted in many elites perishing. Only Spirit Thirteen and his father, from their entire lineage, survived. That was why they were in such a rush to produce babies.

Spirit Thirteen was fifty years older than Ling Mei'er, but he was actually much weaker than she was.

Spirit Twelve only had a gemstone geno core, to add to that. And due to his blood being what it was, he could not raise it to a super geno core. They were the only lineage that did not have one.

"It's no wonder they want you so bad." Han Sen did not think Spirit Thirteen had the balls to try to take on Han Sen alone, and he imagined his father was in on his plan to take Ling Mei'er.

If Han Sen wanted to deal with Spirit Thirteen, that meant he also had to consider what he needed to do with Spirit Twelve.

Spirit Twelve was not super, but he was the leader of one of the blood-lines. He had many resources, and he'd be a far more significant threat for Han Sen to snuff out.

Han Sen asked Ling Mei'er something else, while he mulled how he might deal with that pestering father and son. Han Sen was told there was a nearby swamp where a super creature resided. It was a dozen miles from the shelter, but it lived alone.

Ling Mei'er told him about that to warn him, and make sure he stayed away in case something bad happened to him. Han Sen was interested after hearing this, though, and he made sure to ask what sort of powers this creature possessed.

"Okay, she says Yin Dragon has a cold-element geno core, and its breath can freeze people. My fitness, combined with Jadeskin, should be enough for me to resist and adequately combat that cold. I should definitely go give it a shot." Han Sen was now thinking about this.

Han Sen wanted to be able to combat super creatures again. Han Sen never gave up an opportunity that allowed him to take down a super creature, but thus far, he hadn't been strong enough to fight one in the Fourth God's Sanctuary.

Han Sen found an excuse to return to Shadow Shelter after that. Mask Shelter lacked access to the Geno Core Storage, and he thought someone had tried to challenge him.

“Who dares challenge me, huh?” Han Sen’s Real Blood had been there for a long time, and he was curious to learn who thought they had what it took to take him on, all of a sudden.

Rockman read out the challenger’s geno core, and Han Sen learned it was called Six Paths. Which shelter the combatant hailed from, he did not know.

Han Sen thought it was rather strange. He checked out the leaderboard and recalled that this challenger wasn’t in the top ten, last time he was there.

Han Sen could see it was in second place. It had even pushed down Crystal Core a notch.

There were only two possibilities that could explain this. Either Six Paths conducted the test and jumped straight to number two, or Six Paths had challenged the person in second place.

Crystal Core was number five now. He didn’t use it anymore, after “losing” to Ghost Eye. As a result, it had gradually descended the leaderboard.

Han Sen donned his armor and accepted the challenge. The only thing he didn’t do was hide his lifeforce. He didn’t want others to piece together that he owned both Crystal Core and Real Blood.

The battleground was still set to the scene of a sand-buried city, lodged in a desert. There was a man in gray, standing on a tower in the distance. He held a black sword. He wasn’t facing Han Sen to begin with. He only turned around to meet his opponent after Han Sen arrived.

The enemy looked just like a human, but Han Sen could tell it was a spirit from the purple eyes he possessed.

“My name is Six Paths. You are the master of Real Blood, correct?” Six Paths asked.

“I am Real Blood.” Han Sen thought Six Paths was using a fake name, so he decided to use the geno core’s name for a moniker, as well.

Six Paths went on to say, “I thought I could reach number one. I challenged the core in number two and thought it was extremely weak. To prohibit me from taking first place, I wondered what sort of powers Real Blood possesses.”

Chapter 1442: Heart Sword

After hearing Six Paths speak, Han Sen thought it sounded like he was confident in his chances of reaching first place. But the placement test had actually put Six Paths in fifth place.

Crystal Core had been in fourth place, and when Six Paths conducted his test, he could not pass it.

“Where are you from?” Han Sen asked. The spirit sounded very confident and full of himself, so he must have had some modicum of proper talent.

"I am an emperor that was created. I come from pure chaos; I have no parents nor background. There is no need to concern yourself with this. Just fight," Six Paths said with a cold tone of voice.

Han Sen smirked. "Do you think I was born yesterday? Born-emperors start with emperor geno cores; you sound like the son of an emperor."

Six Paths looked at Han Sen coldly and told him, "When I came from chaos, I had an emperor geno core. But I didn't like it, and so I killed myself to receive another. Now, I am just like you; starting over with a bronze geno core."

"Really?" Han Sen's eyes opened wide. He didn't expect a spirit would ever give up an emperor geno core in exchange for a bronze geno core.

"What would I gain by lying?" Six Paths glum seriousness suggested this really wasn't a joke.

"Why didn't you like your previous geno core? Your body has the same element, and the second core can't be all that different from the first. What's the point?" Han Sen asked.

"It is pointless to earn something grand when no effort of your own has gone into its retrieval. I'd prefer to earn things through my own hard work; the satisfaction gained that way is far more meaningful." Six Paths peered down at Han Sen for a moment, before continuing. "I destroyed my geno core, but my emperor body is still here. I will scale down my power to combat you."

"Okay, let's see what you got." Han Sen used his hands like blades and began slashing towards him.

Han Sen was employing Ghost Slash, which involved the powers of time and space.

Six Paths pulled out his sword and struck Han Sen's hand. The collision of powers made an explosion. Six Paths was not moved, but Han Sen staggered backwards through the air a few meters.

"I know your power. I will scale down. Fight me!" Six Paths said.

Han Sen frowned and thought to himself, "He really does have the body of an emperor. Ordinary super creatures could never possess such power!"

Han Sen looked dim, but he wasn't going to turn his nose up at the prospect of making battle with an emperor.

Han Sen did not use his Real Blood geno core, and instead, he used his phoenix techniques to fly towards Six Paths. Six Paths scaled his level to match Han Sen, and his speed and power were brought down to a similar, more manageable amount.

"Use your geno core!" Six Paths blocked Han Sen's attacks three times in a row with just his hands, and his opponent still refused to use his geno core.

“Feel free to use yours. I’ll use mine only when I need to,” Han Sen said.

“Okay, then. So be it.” Six Paths pulled out an ancient sword.

Han Sen felt a chill run down his spine when he saw it. It was wholly black, with no sheen or gloss. It didn’t reflect a single thing, and it looked almost sullen. The appearance of the sword made something clench in Han Sen’s gut, as if he was in danger.

As Han Sen watched him hold the sword, he believed the spirit really was named Six Paths. His sword, the Six Paths Sword, became one with its wielder.

“My Six Paths Sword has six different powers; I will make use of the first. It is called Heart Sword.” Six Paths pulled out his sword.

Han Sen only knew there was an animal path, but he had never heard of the heart one.

When Six Paths attacked, Han Sen felt a great power overwhelm him. He felt as if he wanted to get stabbed.

It was like watching a horror movie. They could cause much distress due to how terrifying they were, but people insisted on watching them to ride out the thrills, anyway. Han Sen felt like a moth, drawn to a flickering flame that could incinerate him.

Han Sen used his phoenix techniques to dodge, but he couldn’t shake the desire of wanting to get stabbed.

Fortunately, Han Sen had an incredibly strong will. Most would find themselves thrown onto the sword by now already.

Six Paths attacked swiftly, and over time, the attraction grew stronger. Han Sen was having to fight physically and mentally, the latter being the temptation.

From Han Sen’s point of view, Six Paths was an alluring person. He felt as if he wanted to die by the spirit’s hands.

Although Six Paths scaled his power down, Han Sen realized he was at a genuine, clear-cut disadvantage. This had never happened to him before.

“This Heart Sword is evil!” Han Sen did his best to fight back against that suicidal attraction.

Six Paths was able to see into Han Sen’s mind and read what was going on, and he said, “The path of the heart is one of faith. It makes people believe what you say, regardless of whether you’re right or wrong. Your faith becomes stronger than everything else, and that is why it is called Heart Sword.”

Han Sen thought the man was extremely attractive, and he felt small and unworthy in his presence.

Six Paths had gone on to tell Han Sen his secrets, but Han Sen was so selfish he hid everything. It made Han Sen feel like he was a much worse person, and Six Paths was someone he could greatly admire. His sword was extremely attractive.

“This skill is so powerful! I cannot believe I underestimated a spirit in this sanctuary.” Han Sen thought he was invincible against those of the same level as him. Now, Six Paths had revealed to him that spirits of such might, at that level, still existed.

Chapter 1443: The Most Delicious Food

It wasn't just physical attacks he had to deal with; Han Sen had to battle within the mindscape. There was no skill involved there.

You could lie to others about the power you possessed, but you could never truly lie to yourself. If Han Sen's mind was weak, his nemesis would not have to exert effort in trying to kill him. If Han Sen was weak, Six Paths could just ask Han Sen to kill himself and he'd do what was bidden.

There was a clear difference between the heart and willpower. Willpower improved one's faith, but that was not all.

People with normal willpower and normal body power could still have strong faith.

People with a strong mind might not be the strongest physically, but it was still common for physically strong people to have strong minds.

The fists collided with a sword while faith clashed against faith. There were no sparks for the latter, but the lethality of that dance was just as wicked and dangerous.

Every hit and every turn teetered on the brink of a knife. A misstep would bring certain death.

Han Sen had experienced many life-and-death battles in his time, but his mettle had never been tested this much before.

Han Sen fought his hardest when he was in combat with an enemy that was clearly stronger than he was. But in this fight, he couldn't solely rely on his body. He had to rely on his heart as well.

This was almost overwhelming, and Han Sen was exhausting more power than he should have been to make decisions.

Beneath that power of attraction, Han Sen still managed to keep his head clear. His objective had not been mired and he did not let himself succumb to the charm of his opponent.

Han Sen didn't think highly of himself. He was a demi-god, one of the best in the Alliance. But at the end of the day, what Han Sen wanted out of life was fairly simple.

"So what? It doesn't matter how good you are. I'm soil, and I will grow my own faith! I don't need others influencing me." Han Sen's heart was incredibly strong. He really admired Six Paths's faith, but he would never consider trying to become like him.

"All I have to do is remain who I am. Be myself." Han Sen was really strong of faith, and he was most certainly not going to change due to the skills that Six Paths possessed.

Suddenly, Six Paths withdrew his sword and stopped for a moment. He stood where he was, unmoving, just staring at Han Sen.

"Why have you stopped?" Han Sen looked at his enemy with confusion.

Six Paths shook his head. "Your talent is too strange. It seems as if you are able to predict the motions of your enemy. My sword was unable to move your heart, so it is pointless for me to fight."

"You concede?" Han Sen asked, with shock.

"I only used my first technique. I have five others, so I won't concede. But you are an enemy unlike any I have ever seen before. You are a rare sort. You did not even have to use a geno core to do combat with me. I don't want to fight you."

"What does that mean? Are you fighting or not?" Han Sen did not know what he meant.

Six Paths said coldly, "The most delicious food must be enjoyed. To me, that is what you are. But you are not strong enough for me to enjoy the thrill of fighting you to my fullest. I will wait until the day I do not have to scale down to fight you."

After that, Six Paths withdrew his weapon and readied himself to leave.

"Hang on!" Han Sen shouted.

"What is it?" Six Paths turned around.

"I can let you take first place. Just give me an item to trade. My geno core was reinforced nine times already, anyway. You've only done it eight times, correct?" Han Sen made himself look like a charitable person.

But in Han Sen's heart, he thought, "You are an emperor. Even if you destroyed your geno core, you should still have a bunch of worthy goodies. Give me something better than that Ghost Eye did."

Six Paths looked at Han Sen with much surprise, and he said, "Okay. I'll trade this with you."

Han Sen accepted what Six Paths offered him. It was a wooden sword. It looked like the Six Paths Sword, but it had been crafted from black wood instead.

Han Sen had no clue what wood it had been made from, but it wasn't a beast soul or a geno core. It really was just a hunk of wood.

"I crafted this wooden sword when I was practicing. This is all I have to give," Six Paths said coldly.

"Um, okay. Then I'll leave." Han Sen said he was going to leave, but his legs did not move.

Han Sen thought he'd earn a treasure off the man. He didn't expect he'd only receive a plank of wood.

"I hope you can become stronger soon, so we can have a real and true fight someday," Six Paths told him.

"Okay. I will work hard to ensure that," Han Sen said randomly and then quit the fight.

"This is bad. I swapped my first place for a wooden sword?" Han Sen regretted his decision, but he didn't want to backpedal on his word.

Six Paths becoming first place did not create much of a fuss. People believed Six Paths's new geno core was bound to be better than his old one, so it didn't come as much of a surprise.

He was not a nameless emperor. He was from chaos. He had been alive for a thousand years, and none could rival him.

His old geno core was the second best on the super geno core leaderboard. It had made a big fuss in the Fourth God's Sanctuary before, so this was more-or-less a repeat that didn't warrant the same fanfare. Spirits believed it to be a normal, almost natural and expected occurrence.

Han Sen brought the wooden sword back to the shelter with him. He went and saw Moment Queen, who wanted to access the Geno Core Storage.

They said hello to each other, but when Moment Queen saw the sword Han Sen held, her eyes opened wide.

"What are you doing?" Han Sen saw Moment Queen approach him and grab the wooden sword with profound excitement. It was like she was looking at some extremely expensive antique or relic.

"Impossible... how can..." Moment Queen's face stiffened with a massive shock.

Chapter 1444: God Wood

"Is this something good?" When Han Sen saw Moment Queen's face, his heart jumped.

"Of course it is! Where did you get it from? But I wonder why it has become a wooden sword. What a waste." The way Moment Queen looked at Han Sen was like a spoiled woman.

"Where I got it from is none of your business. Tell me what it is." Han Sen was really happy, and the way in which Moment Queen spoke suggested he was holding onto something pretty special.

Moment Queen paused. "If I am not mistaken, it is a branch of the Godspeak Tree."

“What is the Godspeak Tree? It sounds powerful.” Han Sen had never heard of it before.

Moment Queen rolled her eyes. “You’ve been in the Fourth God’s Sanctuary for a while now. How come you’ve never heard of it?”

“Just tell me. If I knew what it was, would I have to ask?” Han Sen sounded annoyed. Every time Moment Queen opened her mouth, her speech was crooked and not to-the-point.

Moment Queen said, “Godspeak Trees grow in the Fourth God’s Sanctuary. Legend has it, they connect to the Fifth Sanctuary. If you scale the entire tree, you are made a god and you can go there.”

“That sounds a bit too easy. If all you had to do was climb a tree to become a god, we’d all be one by now.” Han Sen smirked.

“Actually, no one has ever made it to the top. No one has become a god,” Moment Queen clarified.

“No one? No way. Is that tree thousands of meters tall or something? That shouldn’t be a difficult challenge for the elites.” Han Sen did not believe her.

Moment Queen stroked the wooden sword and said, “No one knows how tall these trees are because no one has yet reached their tops. Not even emperors have managed to scale such trees completely.”

“If the tree was that big, then this branch should be worthless.” Han Sen was disappointed. He didn’t care about reaching the top, but hearing of how big the tree was really did devalue the rarity of such wood.

Han Sen thought Moment Queen’s surprised reaction indicated he was holding something very special, but it turned out to be something rather common and unspectacular.

Moment Queen rolled her eyes and said, “Who do you think has what it takes to cut down a tree called Godspeak? Not even emperors can scrape its bark. You cannot fathom how hardy such trees are.”

“Interesting.” Han Sen stroked his jaw.

“It’s not just interesting. Some people believe the Godspeak Trees are seeds of the Fifth Sanctuary. It makes sense, since emperors are unable to damage them,” Moment Queen said.

“If emperors are unable to damage them, where did this hunk of it come from? Maybe it’s not even Godspeak Wood at all.” Han Sen eyed the wood suspiciously.

Moment Queen shook her head. “This is Godspeak Wood. Although emperors are unable to break such trees, every ten thousand years, branches are known to drop.”

Moment Queen gave Han Sen a few more details about this. Every ten thousand years, thunder rained down across the trees. The thunder could incinerate everything it touched. If an emperor came into contact with it, they'd be instantly rendered charcoal.

But the Godspeak Tree couldn't be damaged, for the most part. There was simply the occasional chance a small branch would be struck, and it'd fall from the tree. These rare fallings were called Thunder Godwoods.

Thunder Godwood was incredibly sturdy, but they weren't as strong as they had been before being sundered. If an emperor was strong enough, they could actually pull them down.

It was considered a lot, even if only three cropped up every ten thousand years.

Thunder Godwood had some special attributes, however. If you carried it with you, it could moisturize your body and your geno cores. It could even influence geno cores to evolve at a faster rate.

Some emperors carried Thunder Godwood around with them as a trophy of sorts. It acknowledged or underlined their reputation.

Moment Queen looked at the wooden sword in her hand and she said, "Thunder Godwood; the bigger the better. Seeing just one foot of this is rare. The emperors are so proud of theirs, but this one is three feet long. Furthermore, it has been carved. The handle is thicker than your arm. It must have been very big before, and I must confess I think it was a bit of a waste to have it carved into a sword."

Han Sen almost had tears running from his eyes. It was a treasure that could make geno cores evolve, and yet, it had almost been ruined.

Han Sen took back his Thunder Godwood and stroked it like a lover. He told it, "I am so sorry you were unfortunate enough to end up in Six Paths' care. Come with me and I will treat you well. I'll take care of you as if you were my baby."

Before Moment Queen entered the Geno Core Storage, she turned around. With a serious look on her face, she said, "It would be best not to let others see it. If emperors see it, they will undoubtedly want to take it from you. You cannot fight emperors yet, isn't that right?"

Han Sen nodded. "I didn't know it was a treasure, at first. Now I'll be sure not to let anyone else see it."

Moment Queen departed, and then Han Sen brainstormed a few ways in which he could mask the sword and prevent others from recognizing it.

He had to carry it with him, too, because Han Sen could not put it inside the Cruel Bottle. Six Paths was able to carry it, but it would be easily noticed if Han Sen was carting it around.

As he mulled this over, he thought of a question. If it was called Thunder Godwood, and it had been thunderstruck, then shouldn't it be a thunder-element treasure?

"Perhaps it will come in handy for the Silver Fox. It is a shame he has not evolved yet. If he had, I'd definitely want him to see this." Han Sen, now thinking about Silver Fox, decided to look at the egg he now resided in.

Han Sen did not put Silver Fox inside the Cruel Bottle, due to it being a separate dimension. Han Sen was afraid he would not evolve inside there.

Han Sen took the egg Silver Fox had become and then, all of a sudden, the lifeless black Thunder Godwood suddenly erupted with lightning. It was going directly towards Silver Fox's egg.

Chapter 1445: Little Silver is Born

The wooden sword was black, but the lightning was white. It struck the egg and was absorbed by the shell. As this occurred, the egg began to shine.

Han Sen looked at the wooden sword and the egg in shock. The lightning from the wooden sword did not look aggressive, but it was radiant and brimming with energy. It looked as if it wished to bestow life upon its target.

Han Sen felt as if the egg Little Silver had become was desiring flesh.

Han Sen then placed the sword on top of the egg, to see if Little Silver would have some sort of reaction. Thunder Godwood was rare, but if it could speed up Little Silver's evolution, Han Sen wouldn't mind spending it on him.

After all, Little Silver had been with Han Sen for a very long time. He had saved Han Sen's life many times, as well. As far as Han Sen was concerned, Little Silver was a part of the family.

When the sword came into contact with the egg, the lightning flowed into the egg like silk. The egg glowed brighter and brighter.

Surprisingly, despite the fact that the Thunder Godwood had been shaped into a sword, it began to look lively. Its charcoal body looked as if it had been moisturized, and it was undergoing a change.

Not long after, Han Sen saw a sprout on the wood. More and more began to pop up across the sword, making it look like some dry fallen log that had submitted to overgrowth.

"Does this represent the turn of seasons; the coming of spring replacing the winter?" Han Sen sighed.

Lightning continued to pour out of the wood, and the egg's glow made it look like a silver sun. The wooden sword had become a little tree, flourishing with green leaves.

This did not last long, though. When the wooden sword was decked in green leaves, the life force it had exhibited began to fade. Slowly, those leaves began to die. And as this occurred, the lightning it generated diminished.

Eventually, all the leaves had died and there was no more lightning. After a momentary stillness, pat! The sword crumbled into dust.

Han Sen felt hurt. It was a treasure one could earn only once every ten thousand years, and it had been procured from an emperor. Now that it had been destroyed, Han Sen was unsure if he'd ever get another one.

Inside the silver light that still burned before him, Han Sen could detect Little Silver's life force becoming stronger.

Katcha!

Inside the silver sun, there was some noise, then a thunderbolt burst out to beam through the entire hall. But the silver light did not hurt Han Sen. It made him feel good, as if he was being energized.

Inside the silver light, something elegant, decked in silver fur, had appeared.

"Little Silver!" Han Sen was so happy that he picked the furry thing up and stroked its head. Little Silver squinted its eyes and looked proud. But above all, it looked happy.

The lightning slowly began to fade, and when it did, Little Silver jumped away from Han Sen. It shook itself, showcasing its extremely smooth hair.

"Don't randomly hold a girl." Little Silver said in a mockingly feminine voice.

Han Sen was shocked, hearing this. He went over to pick up Little Silver again and said, "You speak the human language now?"

"I said you shouldn't grab me. Look, you've messed up my hair again." Little Silver leaped away from Han Sen again and shook down his hair to reset it. With a proud tone of voice, he turned to tell Han Sen, "The human language is easy to learn. It's nothing to be proud of."

"I knew you were the best." Han Sen bent down to rub his head.

Little Silver looked all cocky, but did not tell Han Sen not to touch him this time.

Now that Little Silver had been reborn, Han Sen was exuberantly happy. Unfortunately, this upset Bao'er. She used to be the sole recipient of Han Sen's love, and he took her everywhere. Now, she felt she'd have to compete for Han Sen's attention.

Bao'er and Little Silver looked at each other. A spark of rivalry jolted between them, and they both turned around to look away.

Little Silver was like the heir of a super creature, and so was his fitness level. Little Silver had received a geno core, but it was only a bronze one. He'd have to spend much time leveling it up.

Han Sen planned to take Bao'er and Little Silver down into the Underworld. He worried if he was gone from there for too long, Ling Mei'er would fall prey to another one of Spirit Thirteen's machinations.

It would be a shame if such a cute girl was tricked into making babies for Spirit Thirteen, of all people.

But before Han Sen left Shadow Shelter, he felt something very powerful approaching. It immediately made him frown.

Han Sen knew who it was. It had visited the shelter twice before, after all. It was Qing Le from Outer Sky Shelter.

Han Sen quickly went to hide in the spirit hall, while Cheap Sheep and Green Cow went over to welcome him in and see what he wanted.

Cheap Sheep and Green Cow commanded a few creatures to open the gates. The sheep smiled as the gates opened and said, "Mister Qing Le, welcome! I wonder what business brings you here. Whatever it is, I assure you we will strive for co-operation."

Qing Le looked dim and replied, "From now on, I own this shelter. You are all to follow my command."

Qing Le was in a bad mood. Han Sen was the only member of their search party to escape the mystic shelter. Qing Le and Yu Xuan had been responsible for recruiting Han Sen, so Qing Le expected a reward of his own.

But Han Sen did not provide them with useful intel, and they couldn't claim the shelter. The rewards Qing Le wished to receive did not come.

The reward aside, despite the fact that Qing Le was close with Yu Xuan, Yu Miao hated him. He had been forced to patrol this region, but there was nothing at all around. Shadow Shelter was one of the only decent shelters in the vicinity. Plus, he believed Han Sen's mind had been damaged. Now, he wanted to occupy the shelter.

Hearing him say this, Cheap Sheep and Green Cow's faces changed.

"Mister, there is no need for you to control this entire shelter. Just tell us what it is you need, and we will go and fetch it for you," Cheap Sheep said.

"Cut the crap! Take me to the spirit hall. I'm your boss now." Qing Le was very upset, and he had no interest in discussing matters with the sheep. He barged inside the shelter.

"Fine! Fine! Fine! This way." Cheap Sheep rolled his eyes and lowered his head as he spoke.

Chapter 1446: Revenge

"What's going on with Han Sen?" Qing Le asked Cheap Sheep, as he walked inside.

Cheap Sheep looked at the spirit with disdain and answered, "His brain had problems. We chased him off, seeing there was no point keeping a simpleton around. Having an idiot running the place would be silly."

"Yeah! Yeah! He became so dumb! He cannot even tell the difference between men and women now. No one would even accept him as a slave," Green Cow added.

"That makes sense. Do you know where he is right now?" Qing Le asked.

"Who knows? I sometimes seem him skulking around the alleyways, munching on leftover food. He knows they're just bones devoid of meat, but he still ravenously gnaws away at them." Cheap Sheep was saying a lot.

After Qing Le heard this, he didn't want to know any more about Han Sen. "Who asserted leadership over the shelter, then?"

Cheap Sheep and Green Cow played dumb, and just said, "You're the boss now, eh?"

"Before I arrived, I mean. Who was the boss?" Qing Le stared at the two.

"There was a female spirit leading us, called Moment. She left a few days ago, but she has yet to return. No one dared ask her where she was off to," Cheap Sheep said.

Qing Le asked a few questions regarding Moment, but Cheap Sheep and Green Cow kept saying they didn't know.

Qing Le was satisfied, regardless. Cheap Sheep and Green Cow were being polite, after all. He walked around Shadow Shelter for a bit and came to quite like the place, and after that, he went to wait inside the spirit hall. He asked for the two to gather everyone the next morning, so they could announce who their new leader was going to be.

Cheap Sheep and Green Cow agreed to do this, but eventually, they sneaked off into a stone house together. Han Sen, Moment Queen, Bao'er, Little Silver, Red Pony, and Galaxy Beast were all there waiting.

"Boss, we've calmed him down. What do we do now?" Cheap Sheep explained what had occurred to Han Sen.

"Why don't we kill him in his sleep?" Green Cow spoke with a hushed voice, one that harbored contempt.

Han Sen shook his head and said, "Qing Le is from Outer Sky Shelter. We don't have the strength to combat such a place, and killing Qing Le would only draw trouble from there. You guys continue the charade for a few more days while I figure something out."

Cheap Sheep and Green Cow patted their chests and said, "Don't worry, we are loyal to you. Even if we stand next to Qing Le and look faithful, at heart, we are forever yours."

"Good. For as long as I breathe, I'll take care of each of you the best I can." Han Sen's voice turned cold, and he went on to say, "Go back for now. Do as he commands and keep up the act. We can't afford him growing suspicious."

When Cheap Sheep and Green Cow left the house, they began speaking to each other.

"Cheap Sheep, should we follow the old boss or the new boss?" Green Cow's voice dipped even lower. She was close with the sheep, and she trusted his judgment.

Cheap Sheep rolled his eyes and said, "We follow the strong one, of course!"

"Does that mean the new boss? He is from Outer Sky Shelter, after all. He must be stronger than Han Sen." Green Cow made her opinion clear.

Cheap Sheep touched Green Cow's leg and said with a smirk, "You don't know anything. No matter how strong Qing Le is, he is still the slave of someone else. There is no use in following a slave. Do you really want to become the slave of a slave?"

"I thought you said we should follow the strongest?" Green Cow asked for clarification.

Cheap Sheep sighed and shook his head. "Are you stupid? Are you really not able to tell how powerful our boss is? If Qing Le did not already belong to Outer Sky Shelter, I guarantee the boss would have killed him by now."

"The boss is that strong?" Green Cow's eyes opened wide.

"That is why I called you stupid. For as long as the boss is around, the shelter will still belong to us. Of course, if you want to pledge a short-lived allegiance to Qing Le, go right ahead. But with your measly power, it won't make a difference once the tables turn."

Green Cow said, "I suppose you are right. You and I lack power, and it was very courteous for the boss to let us run and manage the shelter."

"Exactly. And the boss has not told us to be hostile. He's kept things friendly and maintained the quo."

...

Han Sen left the shelter. He was not afraid of his companions being rats. Qing Le was merely a royal class spirit with a gemstone geno core.

He needed to avoid Outer Sky Shelter's wrath, above all. If that wasn't an issue, he would have killed the pompous spirit already. Qing Le obeyed others, so his spirit stone was inside his body. He couldn't even revive.

Han Sen was determined not to let him get away with this, but he wanted to go to the Underworld before he did anything and retrieve his maggots. If he pinned the death of Qing Le on those creatures, they wouldn't think to put the blame on Han Sen.

Han Sen walked a few miles, but after a while, something white approached him. It was a three-meter-tall white ape. Its muscles were like steel, and the only places not coated with its lustrous fur were its face, hands, and feet.

The ape had already reduced its power, but with his Dongxuan Aura, Han Sen was able to tell the creature was extremely powerful and far better than the maggots he was setting out to retrieve.

Han Sen did not want to fight, though. So, he planned to avoid it. But the ape already had Han Sen in its sights. It ran towards him like a train, sounding furious, and it bellowed, "Are you from Shadow Shelter?"

Han Sen eyed the ape up and down and thought to himself, "He must be looking for trouble."

Han Sen quickly answered, "I was there, but I just got kicked out."

"Good. Take me there and I'll kill the master. No one will kick you out after that," the ape said coldly.

Han Sen felt a chill run down his spine, as he was actually the shelter's master.

"Wait, the shelter is owned by Qing Le now," Han Sen realized. "Do you have a grudge with the new master there?"

"It goes far beyond a grudge!" the ape roared.

Chapter 1447: Because I'm the Master of this Shelter

Han Sen brought Snow Ape to Shadow Shelter, feeling exuberantly happy.

Along the way, Han Sen asked the creature many questions. Snow Ape was the heir of a super creature known as Daymoon Ape. After he was born, though, for reasons he never learned, he was unable to see his parents. Not long after that, Nan Litian captured him and brought him back to the shelter to conduct tests and experiments on him.

Nan Litian did not expect to get so lucky and capture the baby of a super creature. But still, Snow Ape was actually a sacred-blood creature. Snow Ape claimed it was Sacred Blood because its blood may have been impure. Su Mianhua had taken much of his blood to run many tests.

He had been fortunate to escape captivity one day, while Nan Litian was away from the shelter.

And then, he got even luckier. He leveled up and his geno core became a super geno core. With such might and confidence, he planned to return one day to slay Nan Litian.

Unfortunately, that was a long time ago. He was young when those atrocities were committed. He didn't actually remember Nan Litian's name, and neither did he remember what he looked like. He only remembered a vow he made long ago, and that was to kill the master of Shadow Shelter.

Han Sen felt relieved he had narrowly avoided being the ape's target, and he thought to himself, "It's lucky Qing Le came when he did. If he hadn't, this big ape would be out for my blood instead."

Snow Ape didn't sound like a bad person, though. He was very grumpy, but he wanted to keep his rampage focused on the person he vowed to kill. He didn't want to kill anyone else.

They traveled back to Shadow Shelter, and when Snow Ape's eyes saw it, they turned red. The ape cried aloud, "This is the shelter!"

After that, Snow Ape attempted to run right for the shelter. But Han Sen stopped him first and said, "Mister, don't go yet."

"Why not? Are you going to try and stop me?" Snow Ape stared at Han Sen with anger, as if he—rightfully—knew the human would be unable to stop him.

"No, not at all. But you don't know what his face looks like. If you go in with such bluster, you'll frighten everyone. And the master is sly, so he will probably blend in with the terrified crowds and not admit to being the one you're looking for," Han Sen quickly explained.

"That makes sense." Snow Ape groaned.

"How about you hide your strength, like you did earlier, and come back there with me? I'll help you find the master, and once he admits his identity, you can go right on ahead and kill him."

On the inside, Han Sen thought to himself, "I killed Nan Litian and already got you your vengeance. Now you can return the favor and help me get rid of Qing Le."

When Snow Ape heard what Han Sen told him, he replied, "Good thinking. Take me to the *sshole so I can kill him."

Han Sen nodded and brought the Snow Ape straight to the spirit hall.

Qing Le was having a meeting in the spirit hall at the time. He was sitting upon the throne, gobbling up all the geno fruit Cheap Sheep and Green Cow had been delivering him.

Shadow Shelter was better developed than he believed it to be. He thought he could rake in quite a lot of profits with this place under his control; it was a concept that perked up his mood quite a bit.

All of a sudden, someone unwelcome entered the hall. Qing Le thought it might have been a Metal Eater, but it wasn't. It was Han Sen, and at his side was a white ape.

“Han Sen? What are you doing here?” Han Sen was useless to Qing Le now, so he was going to spare all his courtesies and niceties.

“You’re asking me why I’m here? Why are you sitting there?” Han Sen asked, angrily.

“Why? Because I am the master of this shelter.” Qing Le spoke very cockily, gesturing with his arms that the entire place belonged to him.

Those words were perfect. Han Sen was delighted to hear him say that, as he expected he’d have to say a lot more to get the spirit to admit it. Qing Le was so arrogant, he jumped right into the admittance. It rendered Han Sen’s prepared speech useless.

“You really are the master of this shelter?” Snow Ape did not make a move yet, and just tried to suppress his anger.

“If I’m not, who else is? You?” Qing Le did not have Dongxuan Aura, so he couldn’t tell how incredibly strong the Snow Ape really was. Thinking him average, and knowing no other creature there could stop him, he was fearless.

When Han Sen heard this, he again felt relief. And he thought to himself, “Qing Le, you just played yourself.”

After this answer, Snow Ape kicked up a display of wrath before Qing Le. His gold claws immediately came down on the spirit’s head.

Qing Le was shocked, and he quickly shouted, “Gah! Who are you?!”

The ape snorted and answered, “I am the little ape you once captured and drained the blood of. I am here to exact my revenge!”

Qing Le was confused, but before he could plead his innocence, the Snow Ape tore the spirit in half. His blood coated the spirit hall red. He had no chance of fighting back.

Qing Le was a spirit that obeyed Outer Sky Shelter. His spirit stone was a part of his body, just like Moment Queen’s. He could put his spirit stone in the spirit statue, but he’d still be unable to revive.

Now that Snow Ape had ripped him apart, he was gone for good.

Snow Ape was still extremely angry. He repeatedly pounded the ground and smashed the guts and limbs of the lifeless spirit into mush, over and over.

“Poor guy. How dare you pretend to be Cheap Sheep’s boss.” Han Sen looked at what remained of Qing Le and sighed.

Cheap Sheep and Green Cow were frozen. Qing Le was a powerful royal spirit, and he had just been torn to pieces in a flash. He didn’t even stand a chance of fighting back.

The creatures and spirits that had arrived there for the meeting saw the messy leftovers of what had transpired, and they were brought to shock.

After killing Qing Le, the ape turned around and left. He did not fancy staying there a second longer.

Han Sen reminded him, "Be careful. He obeyed Outer Sky Shelter, and if they find out he was killed by your hands, they will come after you."

"I'll kill whatever comes my way." Snow Ape spoke with anger as he slowly walked off.

Chapter 1448: A Mushroom You Cannot Touch

"Boss, you are really smart and really strong. Qing Le was such trouble, and you found someone to get rid of him." Inside the spirit hall, Cheap Sheep praised him proudly.

Green Cow also chimed in to say, "Boss, you are blessed. You are so young and so handsome; all the woman cows are sure to fall for you, head over heels."

"You can keep them," Han Sen thought to himself. He then turned to look at them and said, "If an envoy from Outer Sky Shelter comes, do you all know what to say?"

"Yes. A creature named Snow Ape came and killed Qing Le. He was a spirit with many enemies, so it didn't come as a total surprise," Cheap Sheep quickly answered.

"Good. Honesty is the best policy." Han Sen smiled.

"Thank you for the compliment. From now and into the future, I swear to serve you as best as I may." Cheap Sheep had a renewed vigor and a spring in his step. He used the phrase Han Sen had taught to both Bao'er and Galaxy Beast.

Han Sen handed matters of the shelter back to Cheap Sheep and Green Cow once more. They were a strange duo, but they got things done. He didn't expect them to be loyal forever, but as long as they kept the income flowing, they were fine to handle things however they chose to.

Most spirits and creatures were unable to speak the way they did, as well. It did not matter how strong others were; none matched their eloquence for diplomacy.

Han Sen left Moment Queen in the shelter, and even Little Silver. He activated his super king spirit and re-donned his Dollar identity, and then, he took off to the Underworld shelter.

Bao'er did not want to stay in Shadow Shelter, and Han Sen needed to take her to the Holy Vine, anyway. Thus, he brought her with him.

As they left, Bao'er sat on Han Sen's shoulder. She gave Little Silver a smile, as if she had asserted victory.

Little Silver ignored her and continued to rest on the bed. His attitude and lack of caring just made Bao'er angry.

Back in Mask Shelter, nothing ill had befallen the place during Han Sen's absence. Spirit Thirteen hadn't tried anything else.

"Dollar, I located an area with high-tier geno plants. Snake King refuses to take me there, so can you?" Ling Mei'er asked Han Sen.

"What is it?" Han Sen was not interested in any average geno plant.

"It's a cave with an abundance of mushrooms. They look high-class, but I don't know their names," Ling Mei'er said.

Han Sen did not know how to deal with Spirit Thirteen yet, and with nothing else to do, he decided to accompany her and check out those mushrooms.

There were millions of smaller caves and tunnels in that place. If Ling Mei'er was unable to lead the way to them, it was highly unlikely Han Sen would find them himself.

The tunnel was only one-person wide. After a few hundred meters, it opened up enough to allow three people of average build to walk side-by-side.

After a while, Ling Mei'er pointed ahead of them. "Those are the mushrooms."

Han Sen looked at where her fingers pointed, and there were mushrooms skirting a number of rocks. Their caps were white in color and around the same size as a clenched fist.

"Nothing seems to be guarding them. Why don't you just go grab them?" Han Sen's Dongxuan Aura did not detect anything hostile in the immediate environment.

"I tried, but I was unable to," Ling Mei'er said, with an apathetic attitude.

"Why not?" Han Sen couldn't see why.

Ling Mei'er did not know why, either. "I was just unable to. You should go try to pick them up."

Han Sen didn't sense any danger, so he walked right up to one of the mushrooms and tried picking it up.

His hand went right through it. The mushroom was giving off a fragrance, and it was plain to see, but he was simply unable to make physical contact with it.

"Weird. It's a shadow," Han Sen said, as he looked at the mushroom.

It was white, with a slight smidgen of pinkishness. It smelled good, and the Dongxuan Aura was telling him it was a sacred-blood plant. Han Sen used his hand to touch it again, but just like before, it slipped right through.

“See? You can’t touch it,” Ling Mei’er said.

“So very weird; why can I not pick it up?” Han Sen used his Dongxuan Aura to scan it again. It was alive, and it most certainly did exist.

But no matter what he tried to do, his fingers could not grip the ‘shroom.

“There’s a lot more ahead,” Ling Mei’er said, as she went deeper into the cave.

Han Sen followed. The cavern was filled with the mushrooms, all of varying sizes. Some were as big as footballs, whereas some were only fist-sized.

Han Sen tried touching them, but again, he failed to make contact. He couldn’t touch any of them.

Bao’er was curious about this phenomenon, so she jumped down off of Han Sen’s shoulder. She successfully grabbed a mushroom and picked it up.

“Bao’er is good,” Han Sen thought.

Ling Mei’er saw Bao’er grab one with success, and so she tried doing the same. Just like Han Sen couldn’t, she was unable to pick one up.

“Dad; this is for you.” Bao’er put the mushroom in Han Sen’s hand. Perhaps it was because it had been picked up, or it had been touched by Bao’er, but the mushroom was now a physical item he could hold onto.

Han Sen gently squeezed the cap of the mushroom, keen to see what it did.

But when he squeezed it, the entire mushroom blew up in his hands. A white light hit Han Sen’s forehead, prompting an announcement to play.

“Ordinary Class Beast Soul Grenade Mushroom obtained.”

“This is a beast soul?” Han Sen was rather surprised.

Han Sen had a look inside his Sea of Soul, and there he saw a white Grenade Mushroom. He checked out its information.

Mushroom: Ordinary Class Plant Beast Soul

“What is a plant beast soul?” Han Sen did not understand.

Clearly, plant beast souls did not come from plants. Han Sen used to have many beast souls, but he’d never seen this type before.

As Han Sen mulled this over, Bao’er picked up another mushroom. She had seen Han Sen break the mushroom, and she decided to squeeze one herself.

“Dad, I got a sacred-blood beast soul,” Bao’er said to Han Sen.

“Why is there such a big difference? Why did I get an ordinary beast soul?” Han Sen’s eyes were opened wide.

Chapter 1449: Grenade Mushroom

“Bao’er, help Dad get another one.” Han Sen thought if there was a sacred-blood beast soul up for grabs from the mushrooms, he couldn’t leave satisfied with an ordinary one.

Bao’er went to pick one up, but Han Sen suddenly blurted out, “That one? That’s only like the size of a fist. Surely it can’t have anything good inside it. Instead, grab that big one there.”

Bao’er grabbed it and passed the football-sized mushroom over to Han Sen. It was much heavier than the one he last received.

“It’s obvious this is the sort to hold something good. The bigger it is, the more lifeforce it has absorbed. It must be a few tiers above the rest,” Han Sen said and then squeezed it.

Pop!

The football-sized mushroom was broken. A white light quickly penetrated Han Sen’s Sea of Soul.

“Ordinary Beast Soul Grenade Mushroom obtained.”

“Sh*t! Why is it just an ordinary beast soul again? Are the smaller ones better?” Han Sen wondered.

“Dad! I got another sacred-blood beast soul,” Bao’er happily exclaimed, having squeezed another mushroom.

“I must have done it in an incorrect position. Surely, I cannot be that unlucky.” Han Sen bit down on his own teeth and spoke to Bao’er, then. He told her, “Bao’er, help me collect another one. This time, I would like the smallest one you can find. It seems the big ones aren’t compatible with my horoscope.”

“What is a horoscope?” Bao’er looked at Han Sen with much confusion.

“You don’t need to know. Go get me a small one,” Han Sen said hurriedly.

Bao’er complied and picked up a small mushroom. Then, she tossed it to Han Sen.

Han Sen caught the mushroom. Before he squeezed it, he knelt to pray. He closed his eyes and said, “Buddha, God, Mary, please let me have a sacred-blood beast soul. I will pray to you every day if you give me one.”

After Han Sen said his prayer, he was going to break the mushroom. But before he did, he suddenly turned around and chose what he deemed to be a lucky spot to pop it in.

“Ordinary Beast Soul Grenade Mushroom obtained.”

“F*ck! The RNG of these ‘shrooms must be broken. It’s not that my luck is bad, this cave is just wonky, with skewed probabilities. I just need to break a few more and I’m sure to get what I need.” Han Sen put aside his superstitions and faith, and this time took stock in science.

“Dad, I got a sacred-blood beast soul. What did you get?” Bao’er gleefully said.

“Something similar. Collect me a few more, would you?” Han Sen coughed.

Bao’er did as she was told and picked up a few more for him. He accepted the mushrooms and took a deep breath. “Those gods are useless. Science is where it’s at.”

“Ordinary Beast Soul Grenade Mushroom obtained.”

“Dad, I got another sacred-blood beast soul!”

“Ordinary Beast Soul Grenade Mushroom obtained.”

“Boring. Is sacred-blood the only thing I can get?”

“Ordinary Beast Soul Grenade Mushroom obtained.”

“Dad! I got a super beast soul.”

“Blergh!”

Han Sen almost coughed up blood, and his hands trembled hearing this. Although he had many more mushrooms, he was afraid of wasting them all.

But Han Sen thought to himself, “Bao’er sure is different. She always manages to get high-class beast souls. Maybe my luck is average and these are the common results.”

“What are you guys doing? What are those mushrooms for?” Ling Mei’er had been watching for a while, but she didn’t understand.

Han Sen’s eyes darted her way. He provided her one of his mushrooms and said, “Break this for me.”

In the first three sanctuaries, if spirits did not obey a human, they could not use beast souls. He wasn’t sure if that’s how things worked here or not.

If spirits could not obtain a beast soul, he wondered what she’d get when she broke it.

Han Sen was excited to see the result. Surely she wouldn’t receive absolutely nothing, even if she couldn’t make use of beast souls.

When Ling Mei’er watched Han Sen and Bao’er compete in breaking the mushrooms, she wanted to join in on the fun. Now that she had been given one, she broke it quickly.

Pop!

A white light exited the mushroom and flew into Ling Mei’er’s forehead.

Ling Mei'er looked surprised and said, "I got a primitive beast soul!"

Han Sen felt frightened. Although it was only a primitive beast soul, it was better than what he had managed to get.

Han Sen gave the two he had left to Ling Mei'er, and she managed to obtain another primitive beast soul and a mutant beast soul.

"What a piece of crap! Back in the day, I used to get loads of high-class beast souls, the number of which could circle the Alliance three times. Who cares about these stupid beast souls that you don't even have to fight to obtain. I don't need them." Han Sen's eyes twitched as he wrought a painful smirk.

Bao'er walked into the mushrooms and picked up more, merry as ever.

"Dad, they are for you," Bao'er said, trying to hand over a few more mushrooms to him.

"I don't want them. Squeeze them yourself, if you want." Han Sen thought it was a waste for him to break them.

There were around a hundred beast souls in that cave, and at least if Bao'er broke them all, they'd each earn a bunch of sacred-blood beast souls.

Still, Han Sen was interested in learning what the Grenade Mushroom beast souls were capable of. They were all the same, just of different levels.

Han Sen had never seen a plant beast soul before, so he summoned one of his ordinary Grenade Mushrooms. A white mushroom appeared in Han Sen's hand, and he was quite surprised to see that it looked no different than the mushrooms he had broken to obtain it.

"Can I use this like a grenade?" Han Sen threw the grenade out.

Pang!

The Grenade Mushroom hit the floor, and a couple of seconds later, detonated. The explosion was in the shape of a mushroom cloud, and it devastated the rocks around where it blew up.

"Sh*t! I really can use it like a grenade. If the ordinary class grenades are this strong, I wonder how powerful the sacred-blood and super ones are." Han Sen was rather excited.

"It's a shame it is a one-time-use-only beast soul, though," Han Sen thought, eyeing the rest greedily.

Suddenly, a scream echoed through the cave. Something was approaching them.

Chapter 1450: Redhead Cricket

Tzi Tzi Tzi Tzi!

Han Sen looked towards the deeper recesses of the cave. A red light was quickly approaching them.

When Han Sen saw it more clearly, he was quickly relieved. It was not a red light, it was, in fact, a redheaded cricket.

The felon was one meter in length, its body was like steel, and its wings had gold markings emblazoned on them. It was skittering towards them on its six legs. The four up front were small, whereas the two in the back were large. The head and the back of the creature possessed two beardlike whips, and the head itself glowed brightly like a shining ruby.

When the gold wings flapped, it made a strange sound that was painful to hear.

The power of its back legs was shocking to behold. It immediately leaped up towards Han Sen, and it looked at him with anger.

“Crap! It’s a super creature. Run!” Han Sen grabbed Bao’er and took off running, with a surprising lack of concern for Ling Mei’er.

Ling Mei’er wasn’t keen to hang around, either, and she followed after them. But she was slow, and she quickly found herself falling behind Han Sen. The monster would be sure to catch her.

Han Sen heard the sound of something banging around up ahead, and it was then that he realized the cave narrowed to allow only one person to pass through at a time. Snake King was outside, slamming into the stone to widen the way.

But by the time its work was done and it could get to Ling Mei’er, she’d be dead.

Seeing the red cricket behind Ling Mei’er, looking like a hellborn devil with its serrated teeth grimacing in pursuit, Han Sen imagined it’d be capable of tearing through steel with ease.

Han Sen jumped backwards, up and over the struggling Ling Mei’er’s head. He gave her a pat on the back which pushed her out of the way of the cricket’s incoming attack.

Han Sen saw the redheaded cricket’s teeth nip and gnash at each other in its sordid mouth, making squelching sounds as it did.

Quickly, Han Sen then jumped over the cricket’s head and patted its back, too.

He had given it a slap with Super Spank engaged. But he was only able to make its sequence structure tremble a little, and it felt as if Han Sen was bringing his hand against thick, unbreakable steel.

Han Sen landed ten meters behind the cricket. After the hit, the completely-uninjured cricket turned around to look at the bold human.

“Come this way. Chase me, you stupid bug!” Han Sen flipped the bird at the cricket and took off running, back deeper into the cave.

Tzi Tzi!

The redheaded cricket squealed, leaping after Han Sen.

When Ling Mei'er saw what Han Sen had done and that the cricket was going after him, a mesh of emotions crossed her face. She was touched by his courage.

Unfortunately, despite how fast Han Sen could run, the cricket would eventually catch up to him, too. And so it did, shortly after.

Han Sen was able to summon a Grenade Mushroom to throw at the cricket, but it would have been a pointless move. He only had ordinary variants of the explosive 'shrooms, and they'd likely do nothing to the super creature in hot pursuit.

“Bao'er, give me the Grenade Mushrooms you possess!” Han Sen shouted as he ran.

Bao'er complied and quickly gave all her beast souls to Han Sen. Han Sen was shocked at what he received. There were eleven. Ten of them were sacred-blood grenades, and one of them was a super grenade.

Han Sen hadn't expected this to be how he received his first super beast soul as a demi-god. It almost made him angry. He'd spent half the day receiving only ordinary beast souls, but Bao'er had amassed sacred-blood and super beast souls with ease.

But there was no time to mourn those sour results right now. The redheaded cricket was right behind him, ready to strike Han Sen's backside.

Han Sen lobbed one of the sacred-blood grenades directly into the cricket's hungry maw. It rattled down its windpipe until Han Sen heard a low boom. After that, the cricket was gone from sight, vanished in a heavy white mist.

The shockwave blew Han Sen away, and he was sent hurling into a wall.

“One-time use beast souls are stronger than the average variety, that's for sure. That power was almost equivalent to that exhibited by super creatures.” Han Sen stood up, merrily narrating to himself.

But the smile on his face was quickly lost, as the cricket emerged alive, staggering out of the dust. The mushroom had not damaged it. There was no blood, and its lifeforce showed no sign of being any weaker than it was before.

Han Sen got back to the chase by quickly running away. The cave was a labyrinth of complicated pathways, and Han Sen had to use this to his advantage. If he didn't evade the cricket with care, it'd surely catch up and bring him to a grisly end.

The cricket was determined to hunt Han Sen down, though. Nothing swayed its resolve, despite Han Sen lobbing a sacred-blood Grenade Mushroom every time he found himself in a dangerous spot. It helped to slow the creature down.

After an hour of this running, Han Sen had almost run out of grenades. He was down to his last: the super Grenade Mushroom.

The cave ahead suddenly widened, and Han Sen took off for this expansive cavern.

Han Sen ran through it as quickly as he could, and then took off flying towards the Holy Vines he could see creeping across the stone high above.

The cricket was able to fly, and it came after him just as it had been.

Han Sen reached the ceiling of the cave with the cricket at his heels.

Han Sen was going to be swallowed by the rampaging creature if he didn't move fast, so he swirled through the air in an arc like a swooping bird to avoid it.

Boom!

The redheaded cricket hit the cavern's ceiling, and the vines reached out like snakes, lecherously tangling the insect up.

Han Sen didn't want to stick around, as he was unsure whether or not he was immune to the Holy Vine's aggression like Bao'er was.

Han Sen saw the cricket squeal and struggle the best it could, unable to get itself free.

"That Holy Vine is powerful. Not even super creatures can escape its grip." Han Sen was shocked.