

Emperor 3401

### [Chapter 3401: Looking For Stones](#)

Shi Wawa was meticulous in his search just like a mortal mother looking at fruits at a market. He picked up a stone and gently tapped in order to hear the sound. This seemed to be his selection method.

He didn't leave out a single one while Li Qiye got closer to take a look.

"You're preparing food?" Li Qiye asked.

"Yes, the wind is coming so I need food." Wawa cutely nodded.

Those who didn't know about golems would find this shocking. How could one eat rocks and stones?

"This one will definitely be fine." Li Qiye casually picked up a rock and threw it onto a bigger one in the creek.

"Really?" Wawa remained skeptical after looking at the rock.

"Try and see." Li Qiye didn't mind.

Wawa picked up the rock. It was around the size of a watermelon, quite heavy.

He tapped on it before leaning in so that his ear would touch it in order to hear the echo.

"Really now?" He didn't get a sure conclusion.

"Take a bite." Li Qiye smiled.

"Oh, you're right." He thought that he was stupid and opened his mouth to bite the rock.

Ordinary people would chip a few teeth by doing this. However, Wawa easily got a bite out of the rock. Little pieces fell out.

He could see that it was empty inside from the spot where he bit. He lifted the rock and a clear liquid poured out from a hole. A green grass looking like kelp also flowed out.

"Delicious." Wawa drank the liquid and ate the grass. He smacked his lips with satisfaction and said: "It's been a while since I've tasted such a good rock. It must be from the source itself."

He kept on drinking afterward, one gulp after another. There was enough liquid inside to make his stomach look far bigger than before.

"You want some?" He thought that it was impolite to drink alone and came over.

Li Qiye smiled and accepted the rock. He tilted his head upward for a drink. The liquid was refreshing and carried a kelp fragrance, capable of quenching any thirst.

He had several gulps before returning the rock to Wawa.

"You actually know how to pick them, are you a mason?" Wawa became more curious about Li Qiye.

"No, but this isn't hard. I know what they're like after a glance." Li Qiye shook his head.

“Really?” Wawa became amazed, his black eyes widened. “Golems like us are born with a strong understanding of rocks but we still need to train. I’ve done this so many times since youth but can’t pick the right one right away from a batch of useless stones.”

“This is far from being difficult for me.” Li Qiye smiled and told the truth.

Alas, others would accuse him of boasting because distinguishing source stones wasn’t easy. Even the best masons couldn’t do so.

“You’re that amazing?” Wawa became surprised and didn’t make fun of Li Qiye. He continued: “Well, take a look, see how many I got right.”

“That one.” Li Qiye pointed at another rock in the creek.

Wawa immediately ran over and took a bite. Sure enough, liquid and kept streamed out of the hole, filling his stomach in the process.

“Over there.” Li Qiye pointed again and Wawa ran over in that direction. Yes, Li Qiye got it right again.

Wawa drank more and was utterly convinced by Li Qiye’s ability: “You’re amazing, you can really tell with one glance. Even mason masters can’t do this.”

“That one too.” Li Qiye helped the youth again.

Wawa picked up the rock. However, he didn’t bite it this time and placed it into his pouch.

“Right in front of your feet.” Li Qiye continued.

Wawa busily followed Li Qiye’s instruction and placed more rocks into his pouch. He found so many by this point but fortunately, his pouch was large enough.

There were thousands and thousands of rocks in this place so it didn’t take long before the pouch was filled.

“Okay, okay, this is like several years of food for me, no need for anything else.” Wawa eventually gave up.

Li Qiye smiled and stopped.

Wawa then picked some random rocks and tried his best to push them into his pouch.

“Why do you want them? They’re not source stones.” Li Qiye asked.

“I’ve always liked stones. I might not be a mason and can’t tell them apart but why not collect them?” He smiled wryly.

Li Qiye had no objection to this hobby.

Wawa patted his hands then asked Li Qiye again: “You’re really not a mason master?”

“I’m not.” Li Qiye shook his head.

“That’s even more astonishing, you’re already so good at it so what happens when you become one? You’ll be able to see them all.” Wawa said with admiration and became a fan.

Li Qiye chuckled. This wasn't really a big deal for him.

"Why are you here in Stonewind Canyon? To find some divine stones? I heard we have one here." Wawa inquired.

"No. I'm only here to take a look. Stonewind Canyon is supposed to be the most magnificent place in Stone Plateau, right? Can't miss it then." Li Qiye replied.

"I see." Wawa said before looking up at the sky: "You picked the wrong time though. The winds are coming and our area right now is the most dangerous spot."

"Elaborate." Li Qiye smiled.

"So when the winds come, the entire canyon will be engulfed by them. They'll turn everything alive into rocks and stones. It doesn't matter who it is or what it is or how strong they are, they'll be petrified. We golems always hide in our village when they come." Wawa had a frightened expression.

"Mmm, I've heard of it before. The petrified victims will shatter into little pieces the next day." Li Qiye nodded.

"Right." Wawa went on: "So last year, a group from Yin Yang Gate came and got hit by the winds right outside of my village entrance. They turned into bits the next day."

"Quite a mighty force." Li Qiye smiled while staring at the canyon.

This was the reason why the canyon had this name. Every once in a while, the winds would come along with this petrification power. Nothing alive could escape from it without hiding in the right place.

This particular phenomenon frightened many outsiders. However, the golems still chose to stay here.

### [Chapter 3402: Only One Villager](#)

The sky gradually turned dark as if black clouds were taking over.

Shi Wawa looked up and said: "It's coming so I gotta go. Are you coming with me to the village?"

"Sure." Li Qiye smiled and nodded, also staring at the sky.

Black clouds slowly covered and spread above as if they had their own sentience, trying to sneak into the canyon.

An experienced person unaware of this phenomenon wouldn't think much of it. As for those with a little bit of knowledge or people who lived around these parts, they immediately knew that danger was coming.

The wisest thing to do right now was to either leave the canyon or hide in a village. Otherwise, they would find that their powerful cultivation was useless. The winds of petrification were unstoppable.

All the inhabitants in the canyon, whether it be human or golem, old or young, male or female - all ran towards the closest village.

"Go back home now, the winds are here!" People started shouting and stopped with their business.

“Hurry or we’ll be too late!” Shi Wawa started running away but noticed Li Qiye still sitting there. He became worried.

Li Qiye smiled and caught up.

“What’s your name?” The youth asked as they ran away.

“Young Master.” Li Qiye chuckled.

“Okay.” Wawa didn’t think twice about it.

His village wasn’t far so they arrived in no time at all. There was not a sound - no dogs barking or chicken squawking, no people either.

The thousands and thousands of runes on the stone pillar in front have connected together by this point. Suddenly, they started flowing downward straight into the mud. They seemingly wanted to reach the bottom of the earth, pouring down like a waterfall.

This wasn’t a surprising sight at the canyon because every single village had a pillar like this. In fact, its presence was essential before starting a village. It was impossible to start a village or a sect here in the canyon without having one pillar.

Li Qiye smiled after seeing it. This wasn’t his first time. However, he didn’t see much else. Only two of them were here in the village with black clouds looming above - a rather frightening scene.

This naturally couldn’t scare Li Qiye as he leisurely walked around.

The houses here had a unique architectural style only found in the canyon. They were small and short; all made out of rocks and stones.

In the middle of the village was a large humanoid statue. Judging by its expression, it seemed to be waiting for something while protecting the village.

Who knows if it was due to old age but the statue no longer had any clear features, especially the face.

There were several rocks of varying size and shape positioned around the statue. Moreover, they had a different degree of being underground. Some were half-buried while others have only fallen down.

Shi Wawa brought Li Qiye to the statue first. He bowed towards it and took out a rock, cut it open, then poured the liquid on the surrounding rocks.

“Great Uncle and everyone, time to eat. Here’s a feast from Shi Wawa.” Wawa earnestly said. The tone was rather childish yet he put on a serious expression - akin to a child from a poor family needed to become the head of the household early.

Meanwhile, Li Qiye watched quietly and waited for the youth to be done.

Once Wawa finished, he pointed at the closest stone to him and introduced: “This is my mom, that’s my great uncle, and that’s my oldest uncle...”

He clearly remembered and could distinguish all of them. Li Qiye smiled and nodded while listening.

Those not from the canyon would find this creepy, especially during this darkened hour. Of course, Li Qiye wasn't surprised at all while looking at the stones.

"Pop was the last to leave me." Wawa wasn't sad at all. On the contrary, he seemed a little excited while speaking: "He worried about me being all alone so he stayed longer. It wasn't until five years ago that he trusted me enough to undergo the full process. Pop's better than anyone, the most talented in our village. He was the last one to leave but he's way deep underground now."

It sounded as if Wawa was celebrating the fact that his father was "dead" and "deep underground".

In reality, atavism wasn't sad for the golems. They took pride in it and celebrated this honor.

Disappearing completely into the ground meant being able to return to the source - a way to live forever with time. This wasn't true immortality but it was still a form of existence.

There have been sages in history who taught that immortality was impossible. However, there were two other methods for continual existence.

One, have enough descendants. Two, let their reputation and tales be passed down for generations to come.

The golems managed to come up with a third method - their atavism started by Golem Ancestor.

Li Qiye wasn't sad looking at the stones since this was the choice of the golems. Outsiders shouldn't judge them either way. Plus, there was nothing to criticize, really. Continual existence in another sense still trumped all.

Since Wawa was finished with his introduction, Li Qiye turned his sight towards the statue.

Wawa took note of this and hurriedly spoke: "This is our forefather, I think Pop told me he is our second-generation forefather."

"Successive style?" Li Qiye stopped looking.

"Yes, you know about it? Pop said that our first-generation forefather lived in the same era as Golem Ancestor. He was extremely strong and later on, our village finally had a stronger descendant who took on the responsibility instead. He chose the pseudo-atavism path and stayed here while the first-generation forefather finished the process." Wawa spoke then bowed towards the statue.

This type of succession was common in Stonewind Canyon and even the plateau. Many ancestors chose the pseudo path in order to protect their descendants.

Because of this, no one dared to look down on the golems even though their population was decreasing. The remaining pseudo-atavism golems were dreadfully powerful.

"Our forefather was so, so strong." Wawa stared at the statue with admiration.

"True." Li Qiye smiled.

[Chapter 3403: Whats Next?](#)

Every golem had a chance to reach atavism. It was a matter of life choice.

This wasn't the case for pseudo-atavism. This required immense power and a high cultivation realm.

This could be compared to the sealing method of the other race in order for their powerful ancestors to stay around longer. Of course, this was even more magical and effective.

Nonetheless, an awakening wasn't easy. The majority of pseudo-atavism experts wouldn't wake up for no reason. It would become harder to go back to their dormant state. Some would have to pay a heavy price.

Wawa showed his respect to his seniors then took Li Qiye to his house.

He was the only one who has yet to reach atavism in the entire village. Thus, from a human perspective, he was the only one still alive.

His room was very simple with only the essentials. He kept it spotless. After letting Li Qiye settle in, he prepared food for his guest - a hot meal consisting of rice and salted pork.

"I rarely eat rice so I don't have anything good." He awkwardly scratched his head, feeling bad since Li Qiye picked out so many stones for him.

"It's fine." Li Qiye smiled. He could still enjoy a simple meal without any problem.

Wawa wasn't interested in this meal and sat nearby, staring at Li Qiye with his chin resting on his hands.

"Young Master, why don't you become a mason since you can spot the stones so well? I think the mason masters from the big sects can't compare to you." Wawa became curious.

"Not interested, my heart isn't in it." Li Qiye shook his head.

"I see." Wawa found this regrettable and continued: "Being a mason master is very prestigious. One came to our canyon before, looking very awe-inspiring and respected."

Li Qiye chuckled and kept on eating. He eventually asked Wawa: "And you, what's your plan? You want to reach atavism like the rest of your family?"

"I, I don't know yet." Wawa scratched his head again: "There are two choices in our canyon, either to turn into stone or to find someone they like for marriage and reproduction. I haven't made up my mind."

The majority of golems have chosen atavism. However, they didn't stop future descendants from reproduction and would often encourage it.

For example, if Wawa chose against marriage, then this village would go to waste after him unless another group moved here. His offsprings would keep the village going.

"Well, what do you want?" Li Qiye pressed on.

"Mmm..." Wawa carefully thought about it. He rarely talked to outsiders before; Li Qiye might be the only person he spoke at length with.

"The truth is that I want to go to Ancestral City. I haven't been there before and I heard that it was the root of our race. That's why I want to take a look." Wawa replied after careful rumination.

“That’s not a bad idea. Go take a look at the world to know how vast it is.” Li Qiye nodded in agreement.

“Right? People say that it is very beautiful and cool. Our Golem Ancestor’s foundation is there, the place where he gave orders to the world.” Wawa’s eyes lit up.

Li Qiye had a faint smile after hearing this.

“Our village doesn’t have any rule about when to reach atavism either, so I’m thinking that I should go take a look before I do it, to the outside world. It wouldn’t be late to come back for my atavism later anyway.” Wawa became excited.

Li Qiye could understand. This was the pure mindset of a child.

“What about a companion?” Li Qiye decided to tease him.

“Well...” Wawa was still too young to think about this.

“Don’t want to look for one?” Li Qiye actually cared about the youth’s choice while teasing him.

“I don’t really like anyone in the nearby villages.” Wawa eventually spilled in spite of the sensitive and embarrassing topic.

“Maybe you’ll find someone outside, like in Ancestral City. That’s the place where the myriad races gather. There should be a miss there for you.” Li Qiye chuckled.

“You might be right.” Wawa wanted to go to this city more and more.

“What if you like someone from a different race?” Li Qiye continued.

“I...” Wawa had no response.

Golems didn’t forbid marriage with another race. This was common at the plateau and especially at their Ancestral City.

However, this placed certain restrictions on the golem. Only golems could reach atavism, not their half-blood offsprings with another race.

“If, if that’s the case, then we’ll see, I guess. I probably shouldn’t rush my atavism too quickly.” Wawa said with hesitation.

“You have to try first to know whether it’s good or bad, experience will show you the colors of this world. As you are now, still a kid, having to reach atavism and becoming a sinking rock...” Li Qiye paused for a bit before continuing: “Then what’s the point of being born? So what if you can obtain immortality? The lack of experiences means wasting your life. There are millions and millions of existences but not all of them have sentience and intelligence. The fact that you’re here is a rare miracle, don’t waste it now. Follow your heart and experience more, whether they be good or bad, fruitful or otherwise. One day, you’ll be able to look back at those memories with fondness, perhaps even the bad ones.”

Wawa listened attentively the entire time.

“Most importantly, without experiences, you would be nothing more than a blank piece of paper.” Li Qiye concluded.

This last phrase kept on playing in Wawa’s head.

Li Qiye finished his spiel and resumed eating. Meanwhile, Wawa sat there in a daze. Li Qiye’s words have struck a chord, opening a door for the youth’s heart.

Atavism was possible for all golems at birth. It was a matter of decision.

As for Wawa, he grew up in Stonewind Canyon. His family all chose this path and sank to the ground.

This type of life naturally affected Wawa too. He didn’t have many thoughts about the outside world. Only Ancestral City interested him.

Li Qiye’s words lit up something in the boy - a portal. It was as if by crossing through this portal, he would be able to see the outside world.

Wawa’s desire to visit Ancestral City was nothing more than a desire. Now, he wanted to make it happen.

“I understand, Young Master.” Wawa regained his wits and became excited: “I’ll definitely go outside, a trip to Ancestral City!”

Li Qiye smiled approvingly.

By this point, the sounds of wind blowing could be heard outside the door, gradually intensifying.

#### [Chapter 3404: The Winds Rising](#)

The winds outside didn’t relent since danger was coming to the canyon.

Li Qiye looked out from the house and saw that it was dark due to the black clouds above.

The canyon was gigantic, capable of separating Stone Plateau into two sections. In other words, it most likely spanned up to ten million miles long. However, the entire place was still covered by black clouds. They looked like a colossal dragon hovering above.

“Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!” The winds caused sands and debris to go flying along with flowers and leaves.

“It’s starting.” The cultivators and mortals who have yet to make it to safe harbor started panicking.

“We need to get to a village now!”

One could hear the horns from certain villages. They served to summon late arrivers or to warn the outsiders.

The animals began to run. They have lived in the place long enough to be aware of this danger.

The pillar in front of each village also reacted and became resplendent. Their runes had a clear light at this point, seemingly always there and only activated when necessary.

The clear light seemed to be coming from the ground up through the runes, not the other way around.



After the runes reached a certain stage, they no longer needed to absorb the power from underground, evident by having enough radiance. On the other hand, the absence of this empowerment would render the runes useless.

“Poof!” The pillars became bright as well and created barriers around the villages. These barriers had a purifying property, capable of removing all evil.

Because the entire canyon was dark right now due to the clouds, the pillars served as guiding lamps. One would be able to see them and make it back to the nearest village.

Li Qiye watched this process with keen interest and derived the runes. Normally, even the greatest masters would have a hard time comprehending them.

However, the runes turned into ever-changing supreme words in Li Qiye’s eyes. They were flowing from the pillar down to the ground.

He could see what lies below - an invisible grand vein just like a sleeping dragon. Its majestic power flowed in silence beneath the earth.

The runes wove together to form laws and began to flow with the grand vein. Remember, the canyon had countless pillars. When they connected with the grand vein below, this culminated into a peerless grand formation.

This formation received the power of the grand vein and in turn, it protected the villages from harm. Someone extremely powerful had prepared this formation inside the reclusive grand vein.

The pillars were nothing more than the eyes of the formation on the surface. The creator of this formation naturally knew about the dangers of the winds and wanted to protect the villages.

“Such great length to protect the descendants. Ingenious even. Very few people know about the three grand veins.” Li Qiye touched the pillar and praised.

Plenty of secrets hid underground, unbeknown to most. The person who did this had access to these ancient secrets on top of being mighty.

Li Qiye had a smile on his face while touching the pillar - one small part of the great formation. Taking away one pillar out of greed for its power would be a futile endeavor.

“The legend says that this was left behind by our Golem Ancestor.” Shi Wawa spoke with pride: “The great ancestor created an empire at the plateau and left behind pillars at the canyon to stop the scary winds. This allows us to live here safely.”

His pride was understandable. The rest of his race also felt the same about Golem Ancestor. They virtually worshipped him.

“He’s one of the greatest dao lords too.” Wawa continued. He hasn’t seen much of the world, only having heard about the exploits of Golem Ancestor, enough to memorize all of them.

“An amazing fella indeed.” Li Qiye nodded. Also unreasonable and unreliable at times - he thought.

Golem Ancestor had certainly left his marks on his story, just not his actual identity with the exception of Li Qiye.

“Black Duck” might have hidden his roots quite well but it wasn’t enough. Regardless of how cautious he was, there were still clues that would lead to him only. This allowed Li Qiye to calculate the guy’s true identity and origin.

By this point, the winds have stopped and the canyon became quiet once more.

“It’s coming, don’t be so close.” Shi Wawa quietly told Li Qiye while retreating cautiously, still keeping an eye towards the outside.

This had nothing to do with cowardice. In reality, everyone should exercise prudence when dealing with the dangerous petrification found here.

Strangely enough, they also had a feeling of reverence towards it. This could be considered an instinct imprinted deep in their soul.

The next development was fog spreading at a rapid rate. It encompassed the entire canyon in no time at all. A certain dimness took over. One wouldn’t be able to see their hands in front of them even though there was no complete darkness. This was a bizarre feeling.

“It’s coming.” Wawa reminded Li Qiye.

“Boom. Boom. Boom.” A series of quiet noises could be heard only by the attentive listeners. At first, they sounded as if they came from the distance. However, after a careful listen, they should be coming from below the ground.

#### [Chapter 3405: Petrification Power](#)

“Boom! Boom! Boom!” A mysterious power engulfed the canyon.

“Croak.” A frog didn’t know anything and jumped out of its hole onto a rock near the village entrance.

“Buzz.” It immediately turned into stone and stopped moving, similar to being frozen by extreme cold.

It still had its jumping posture with the right leg raised. Its left leg couldn’t touch the ground before the petrification.

“It’s here.” Shi Wawa warned Li Qiye again: “Don’t stay near the entrance, that power is terrible.” He then moved back deeper into the village.

This wasn’t his first time seeing the perilous phenomenon. Alas, the fear still struck him each time.

He went back into his house and only extended his head out the door for a look.

Li Qiye remained standing by the entrance in order to sense the mysterious power in the fog.

“Hurry, come back here!” Wawa shouted.

Everyone in the canyon was hiding in their own house. That’s the only way to guarantee safety. Taking one step out of the village meant certain death.

“Boom. Boom. Boom.” The sounds approached like an indistinct whisper.

It resembled an ancient grand dao echoing in one’s ears, a type of mantra wishing for someone to understand it.

Li Qiye carefully listened. “Boom. Boom. Boom.” All could hear the sound despite how quiet it was. There was an unknown rhythm belonging to an old period.

“They’re right there at the entrance! Come back to the house or it’ll petrify you!” Shi Wawa panicked.

Li Qiye didn’t heed the warning.

By this point, one could only see the fog outside the entrance, nothing else.

The pillar became even brighter and shot out more rays in order to strengthen the barrier around the village. This looked like sparks suddenly shooting out of a bright lamp.

“They’re right there.” The reaction of the pillar told Wawa what was going on. He hid inside the room.

“Boom. Boom. Boom.” Li Qiye heard this sound as clear as possible.

There was a lack of fanfare and divinity but the most majestic force suddenly emerged. This power could crush the firmaments. However, the fog was keeping it under control, not letting it erupt.

Li Qiye continued sensing this power. “This is...?”

He became surprised because this power and rhythm were very familiar to him.

A figure finally emerged inside the shrouding fog, barely visible. It seemed to be jumping forward.

One more figure emerged not long after and another after and another. These figures moved too quickly for anyone to tell. This only served to scare people even more.

A spectator would assume that there were corpses jumping in the fog or some other evil creatures.

The lack of identification spawned multiple explanations about the fogs. One said that evil creatures in the fog were finding food.

But why the petrification? Because these evil creatures immediately sucked the victims’ soul and essence, leaving behind an empty stone shell.

Another theory stated that the fog came from the opening of a terrifying world with dreadful existences. Alas, these beings couldn’t come through this opening. They could only breathe out the fog to suck the life essences from this world. This theory made some people think that the canyon contains a portal to a dangerous realm.

“How odd.” Li Qiye raised his brows while looking at the figures. He stretched his hand forward through the barrier to touch the fog.

“Buzz.” The petrification process immediately turned his hand into stone.

“Are you insane?!” Shi Wawa saw this and was scared out of his mind.

He mustered courage out of nowhere and ran out of his house towards the village entrance, pulling Li Qiye back from the fog.

The power permeating through the barrier truly affected him, causing him to stagger backward in fear. Nonetheless, he didn't let go and continued pulling Li Qiye back.

"Do, do you have a death wish?!" He was furious and shouted at Li Qiye: "Do that again and the monsters in there will eat you!"

Li Qiye smiled and stared at his stone hand.

"No, no, no! Your hand is done for, nothing can cure this petrification, not even the greatest alchemist. It'll shatter tomorrow." Wawa became aghast.

"Says who?" Li Qiye chuckled and channeled his vitality using Chaos Mantra. The stone hand became resplendent and vitality returned.

"Buzz." The stone affinity melted like snow and disappeared from sight. His hand turned into normal, completely undamaged.

"See, still good." Li Qiye touched it, amused.

Shi Wawa became slack-jawed. This was his first time seeing a recovery from the petrification.

"What?" He started touching Li Qiye's hand. Sure enough, it was made from flesh and bones. "Is this magic? How did you chase the petrification away?"

"Because I'm Li Qiye." Li Qiye smiled, not revealing the actual reason.

"..." Wawa had no choice but to believe it since he witnessed the whole thing with his own eyes.

"Stay in the village." Li Qiye turned and walked towards the entrance.

"What are you doing?!" Wawa became afraid.

"Going to take a look outside." Li Qiye said flatly.

"No, don't do it! No one can survive in the fog!" Wawa panicked and tried to stop him.

### [Chapter 3406: Into The Fog](#)

Li Qiye had already stepped out of the village and into the fog before Shi Wawa could finish.

"Buzz." His entire body instantly suffered the petrification process.

He turned into a statue, looking quite animated and expressive. He maintained the same walking pose with one leg up and both hands swinging. The process was just too fast and powerful.

Cultivation, merit laws, and treasures didn't seem to matter in the canyon. The only way was to hide in a village. Entering the fog itself was even more perilous.

In history, numerous experts have tried to study this mysterious power to no avail. No one could obtain nor understand it.

“Noo!” Shi Wawa shouted after seeing Li Qiye being petrified.

He rushed over but stopped at the entrance after calming down. He knew that it would be futile and that he would suffer the same fate.

Emotions nearly got the best of him earlier. Fortunately enough, he stopped just in time.

“He’s done.” Wawa shook his head. The only thing he could do now was to wait and pick up Li Qiye’s corpse tomorrow. Only little pieces of powder would be left.

“Buzz.” His expectation was betrayed by what could be described as a miracle. A light emanated from Li Qiye.

It wasn’t particularly bright but still easily broke through the outer layer of stone. It served as a starting spark. More rays started coming out afterward.

It didn’t take long before the entire layer of stone was gone. The pieces fell to the ground and disappeared from sight.

“What...” Shi Wawa’s black eyes were as wide as can be after seeing this unbelievable scene. This was his first time experiencing this. It went against all conventional wisdom in the canyon.

Li Qiye actually survived after being petrified in the fog. Wawa started rubbing his eyes but this was indeed the truth.

“Is he a god...?” He murmured. Since he was a child, he believed that only a god could be impervious to the petrification process. Of course, he simply didn’t know the subtleties behind it all.

In reality, even a top master here would find this astonishing. How could a Silver Carapace cultivator survive the famous petrification?

Little did they know that Li Qiye had experienced it before. He knew about its profundities better than anyone else along with its source. That’s how he could easily deal with it.

“So damn cool.” Wawa praised while witnessing an unraveling legend.

“Clank! Clank! Clank!” Li Qiye channeled his merit law and the underlying dao. The laws came together and formed a peerless chapter - one that was unique in history. It felt so natural inside Li Qiye’s body as if they were one.

People would sense something extraordinary. It felt as if the fog wasn’t the thing surrounding him but rather the opposite. He was the one engulfing the entire canyon, the plateau, and all of northern West King...

He clearly stood in the same spot but in the next second, he seemed to be all-encompassing. The galaxy and the three thousand worlds were within him.

This infinite expansion made the canyon small in comparison. Eventually, even Eight Desolaces became tiny before Li Qiye. Thus, the fog and the petrification force naturally didn’t matter. They were the same as a speck of dust.

Shi Wawa could feel this magical transformation and dropped to the ground, butt first. He looked up and couldn't see Li Qiye any longer, thinking that the guy was bigger than the sky.

Li Qiye walked deeper into the fog while the youth was stunned, completely unaffected by the petrification process. This was akin to a single drop of water unable to stop a conflagration.

The youth eventually regained his wits. He opened his mouth but didn't know what to say. He was still too young with not enough experiences, especially one that had exceeded his ability to comprehend.

As Li Qiye walked in the fog, all types of visual phenomena popped up - a true dragon roaring, an immortal phoenix screeching, the cries of immortals across the trek of time...

Then there was a world of bones, another with an ocean of blood, one completely destroyed. The cycles of the ages could be seen. These phenomena were stunning enough to bewilder any spectator, just not Li Qiye.

His dao heart was unaffected. His eyes narrowed as his forehead lit up.

"Activate!" Li Qiye roared and destroyed all illusions in order to see the truth! He exuded a radiance with the intensity of a thousand suns erupting.

"Pop! Pop! Pop!" All the phenomena broke down like bubbles and disappeared from sight.

"Buzz." Only a painting remained in front of him.

#### [Chapter 3407: Just Who Is It?](#)

It seemed like a painting but was actually a magnificent world. It had a majestic aura and brimming with life force.

The races prospered with cultivation sects competing against each other - a true golden age. Billions of existences could have a bright future here; all things were possible.

"The nine worlds." Li Qiye murmured after seeing the all-too-familiar worlds. He remembered the cities, sects, and races there.

His mind shuddered as lost memories resurfaced like a tsunami. He quickly calmed his mind and became normal again.

He took another step forward to enter the painting. A grave tablet still on the high mound, a continent with nothing but ruins, a sect with eagles and cranes, the burial grounds here were still profound and impossible to grasp...

He traveled to many familiar places, even areas with unpleasant memories when he had to bury his followers. Another contained joyous laughter coming from the heart; all worries were thrown away.

There was no time in this painting. Everything kept on moving as normal but the temporal flow had stopped. One could stay here forever without affecting the external timeline.

Today, the memories of the past for him seemed so distant. This was his nine worlds yet not. Of course, the nine worlds were no longer around, replaced by Eight Desolaces.

This painting managed to preserve the nine worlds in such a perfect fashion. A powerful seal was in charge of this. It was also deliberate and meant for the fated ones. Or rather, perhaps it was meant for Li Qiye only.

He stopped in one vast realm with three ancestral veins together. It was naturally prosperous thanks to them.

“Stone Medicine World.” He murmured, deciding to find the source of this world. The creator of this place wanted to show him something.

Everything was hidden extremely well. Another master might be able to reach this painting but wouldn’t be able to find the source because they didn’t understand the creator well enough.

“Geezer, what are you trying to show me? There has to be a reason right? You wouldn’t do this for nothing.” Li Qiye said.

He took a deep breath and eventually entered the deepest parts of the three ancestral veins. The place was still the same as before. Remember, this wasn’t reality, only a remnant image.

He stood on a cliff to look at everything here. There was no sound, only peace. He tried to sense the changes in this place.

He has visited this place many times in the past. A lot of things happened here. However, this wasn’t the time for remembrance, only to see what the geezer left for him.

“Activate!” His supreme eyes derived the mysteries and profundities in the next second.

“Rumble!” The entire courtyard and phenomena crumbled. A terrible power pulled everything downward.

Darkness took over; the light seemed to have been devoured. Li Qiye was in free fall for a long time. It seemed to be a bottomless abyss requiring a billion years of falling.

Li Qiye still managed to stay calm and waited patiently.

Who knows how long this went on for? “Boom!” Everything suddenly stopped along with Li Qiye’s fall.

He floated in the air and saw an entrance with light. This light was quite dimmed. It seemed to be another realm there, looking blurry and ethereal.

His eyes shot out a beam of light to penetrate the entrance. Unfortunately, even his scanning ability couldn’t see the situation in that world.

The recording image seemed incomplete. This made him try again numerous times in order to compile all the small details.

He didn’t want to miss a single one since the answer was hidden in all of them. Finally, after countless sweeps, the dimension popped like a bubble.

He found himself standing on the same cliff. The courtyard was still around. Below the cliff was nothing but pitch-black.

He started thinking. "Looks like you do get me." Li Qiye said: "Leaving behind this original form for me to see, knowing that I'll return alive."

No answer came from the cliff this time, only a creepy silence.

Li Qiye knew that something had happened here and the geezer wanted to let him know.

"I'll get to the bottom of this, be sure of it. The villainous heaven didn't do this, not those fiends either. They don't have the ability!" He stayed quiet for a while before speaking again.

By this point, nothing should be able to elude him. Alas, this development was out of his expectation.

Back in Divine Black, he noticed something strange going on while learning the history of Eight Desolaces. Now, this certainly proved his prior speculation.

The old man purposely left this behind for Li Qiye because he knew that there were only two who could solve this mystery- the dark crow and the villainous heaven!

Li Qiye pondered again. It couldn't have been the villainous heaven. Not the fiends either; they didn't have the necessary condition. Moreover, this happened under the watch of the villainous heaven.

Who else could it be then if not them?

He had plenty of speculations after reading the historical texts. Alas, most of them were now eliminated after reaching this place.

#### [Chapter 3408: Leaving The Village](#)

Shi Wawa has been waiting for Li Qiye's return. He propped his chin with both hands while staring at the fog with a grimace.

Li Qiye has been gone for so long now. What if he had died?

The long wait made him drowsy. His head shook a bit, causing him to wake up again. He looked outside and coincidentally enough, a figure appeared in the fog.

"You're back!" The drowsiness dissipated right away as he stood up and rushed towards the entrance.

Li Qiye sauntered out of the fog; the petrification force still couldn't touch him.

"Thank god you're back, Young Master." Wawa placed his palms together and celebrated.

"Are you okay?" He looked at Li Qiye from top to bottom. No petrification anywhere. He then started touching Li Qiye's arms. Still fine. Every inch was still made of flesh and blood, no sign of stones.

"You're really something else, Young Master. Only an immortal or a god can walk in the fog like that." Wawa was lost in admiration.

Li Qiye chuckled and returned to Wawa's house then sat down. Wawa followed and sat down next to him, overwhelmed with curiosity: "Young Master, what's actually in the fog? A devil like people say? What does it look like?"



Wawa has heard of many legends about the canyon and the fog. No one knew what was inside so he was very curious about Li Qiye's findings.

"If there's actually a devil in there, there wouldn't be peace in the canyon. It would already be reduced to ashes without a single grass around. These pillars can't guarantee peace in that case." Li Qiye smiled at the youth.

"Makes sense." Wawa scratched his head and agreed.

The petrification power didn't target anyone inside a village nor tried to invade one. The thing was bizarre.

"So what is it?" Wawa remained curious.

"You can't understand it right now. You'll figure it out when the time is right." Li Qiye shook his head then stared out the window.

Wawa stared at Li Qiye instead. The guy's eyes pierced through the fog and reached the deepest part of the sky. They were unfathomable, a thousand times deeper than the sky.

Li Qiye didn't move an inch, seemingly becoming a statue. Wawa didn't know what he was doing. However, he felt that Li Qiye was looking at a peerless mystery.

In reality, Li Qiye was actually lost in his thoughts, contemplating recent events. After a while, he withdrew his gaze and sighed. "This makes no sense. What is the villainous heaven thinking?"

He had a slight frown. In the modern-day, no one understood the villainous heaven more than him. However, the current events made it quite confusing.

The heaven didn't cause all of this. This wasn't its style; it had a penchant for total destruction. [1]

As for the fiends, they couldn't do something to this level, especially not so silently. The heavenly execution was still looming and waiting.

That's why it was so strange for the villainous heaven to not react to these events.

Li Qiye had read the records of Eight Desolaces with a focus on the big disasters. He found very little, only a few lines here and there. Future descendants didn't know about it.

The geezer left behind the most accurate thing in the form of various images, solely meant for Li Qiye.

Unfortunately, everything suddenly stopped after the entrance of light emerged. The geezer didn't leave behind any clues about this.

The geezer was the wiliest of them all. Something unexpected must have happened for the message to stop.

Li Qiye had to think of all the possibilities; millions of potential paths flashed in his head.

His session was interrupted by sun rays. He looked out and saw that the fog was gone. The pillar was no longer bright either. Everything resumed to normal just as before.

One could hear the dogs and chickens from some of the villages now. The villagers began working once more.

Shi Wawa was also busy preparing food for Li Qiye. Unfortunately, he was the only one here and had no good food.

“Are you going to Ancestral City now?” Li Qiye asked after finishing his humble breakfast.

“I...” Wawa hesitated, having never left home before to such a distant place.

“I’ll be staying there for a bit so if you want to go, we can go together.” Li Qiye said, contributing their meeting to fate.

“Really?” Wawa was ecstatic, having full trust in this man despite having only met.

“Yes, so get ready right now. It won’t be as easy going alone later.” Li Qiye nodded.

“Well...” Wawa scratched his head and agreed again. He was still young without any traveling experience. He was indeed nervous thinking about going alone later: “Okay then, I’ll go with you to Ancestral City, Young Master.”

This rare opportunity took off a lot of stress for him. He went to prepare for the journey and this didn’t take long since he only had a few things.

Before leaving, he went to the central area with the statue. He placed his palms together and said:

“Uncles, Mother... I’ll be going with Young Master to Ancestral City and will return soon. Wait until I’m back, I’ll learn how to reach atavism and join everyone...” He quietly prayed.

This was indeed sad because he was the only one left in the village. He knew no one else in the world. Of course, the golems were used to this type of life.

“Wawa is going now, please watch over the village, Forefather.” He then turned towards the statue and bowed.

The statue didn’t react. In reality, he was still alive because he was only at the pseudo stage. Who knows when he’ll reawaken again?

Li Qiye quietly watched to the side and didn’t comment on this race’s choice for survival. It was indeed worth pondering.

The two left the entrance and heard a crack. The frog from yesterday crumbled and turned to powder. They scattered to the ground and became mixed with the mud and soil.

This was a common sight along the way. The animals that were too late to return to a safe haven were shattering today.

#### [Chapter 3409: Stoneshell Beetle Valley](#)

Li Qiye and Shi Wawa left the village and moved through the canyon.

The place was normally quiet with few visitors. Today seemed to be different.

Many cultivators riding their beast arrived. Others were capable of leaping through a thousand miles with each jump...

They consisted of humans, golems, heavenly devils, demons...

They came from all sects and kingdoms - Firmaments Gate, Divine Stone Range, Celestial Star... [1]

"They're going to Stoneshell Valley." Shi Wawa quietly said while watching the waves of people.

Even the golems from the villages were joining in.

"Little one, it's about to begin. Gather your stuff and we'll go." A few golem experts were ready to bring their juniors to see the fun on top of a potential harvest.

"Other golems want to watch the show." Shi Wawa saw golem around the same age as him and became envious.

"You want to go?" Li Qiye glanced at the excited youth and said.

"I haven't been there before because Father said that it's too dangerous since the beetles there will come out of the ground. Some source stones can be found so it can be beneficial to take a trip. It's just that he never took me there before." Wawa had a dejected expression by this point.

"Okay, we'll go there then and pick up a few source stones along the way." Li Qiye smiled.

"Really?" His expression changed to excitement right away; his eyes lit up.

"It's on the way anyway." Li Qiye said.

"Perfect, I've never seen one before!" Wawa shouted.

The two changed direction and headed for Stoneshell Valley.

"You've been there before?" Wawa was curious because Li Qiye seemed to know the way.

"No, but everyone is going there, no need to know the direction." Li Qiye chuckled.

"True..." Wawa smiled awkwardly, thinking that it was a stupid question.

More and more people were coming to the valley during their trip.

"All the source stones will be mine!" One youth flying through the sky declared.

Sure enough, a crowd of people filled the entrance, whether it be in the sky or on the ground, on the tree branches or the peaks. It was tough finding a place to stand.

The valley wasn't that large and didn't look special either. It was barren with just rocks. This made it quite hot due to the sun.

However, there was a deep, slanting cave at the end of the valley, seemingly bottomless.

Some of the young first-timers looked around and became disappointed.

"This is Stoneshell Beetle Valley? What's special about it? We traveled so far, for what?" One of them complained.

“Patience, you’ll find out soon enough.” A senior nearby said.

“Say the name again, we obviously have to wait till the beetles come out of that cave.” Another older cultivator nearby smiled: “They always come out during this time of the year and go to that cave to produce some source stones.”

“They can produce source stones? That’s amazing.” The young one became surprised.

“Yes, that’s why this place is special. These beetles can only be found here.” The cultivator smiled back.

This area was unique to the canyon. On the day after the petrification winds, the beetles would come out of the ground and go into the cave to produce stones.

“Why don’t we just enter the cave if there are stones in there?” Another youth stared at the cave and asked.

“Its depth is unimaginable, very dangerous too. Rumor has it that all the dangers in this region actually originate from there.” An older cultivator said with a serious expression: “An invincible Heavenly Sovereign entered that place alone before, barely managing to escape a while later with wounds everywhere. On the second day after returning to the sect, he exploded and died.”

The ones nearby shuddered after hearing this. Even a Heavenly Sovereign couldn’t survive? Just what was in there?

The cave has been a mystery all this time. The only consensus was that nothing good would come from entering that place. This prevented the greedy adventurers from doing so.

“So why can those beetles go in?” Another one curiously asked.

“It is in accordance with the heavenly dao and the laws of creation. The various beings have different fits.” An elder-level character said.

All eyes were on the secretive cave now. Li Qiye also gave it a glance. His bright eyes could reach the deepest area. Of course, he wouldn’t personally go down.

“I heard the beetle king is very majestic, do you know what it looks like, Young Master?” Shi Wawa asked Li Qiye.

“I haven’t seen it.” Li Qiye shook his head.

“I have.” An older cultivator near them stroked his beard and smiled: “These Stoneshell Beetles all have the same color, only the king is different. It has a golden shade and can control its kins.”

“That’s not all, the source stones produced by one are extraordinary, priceless even.” A different expert added.

“Yes, they’re the main focus every time. So many people want it.” One more jumped in; his eyes had a flashing glint, seemingly very interested in the beetle king.

“Haha, that is if one is capable enough.” Another crowd member snorted: “The beetle king is dangerous enough, let alone all the greedy competition.”

“Everyone wants that source stone, only to throw their lives away for nothing.” Some became worried. They made up their mind - to leave once they got their stone instead of being greedy.

Why? Because the source stone from a beetle king always brought about a massacre.

People could actually smell the stench of blood after listening to the conversations.

“An elder from Firmaments got the stone from the king last time. He got something amazing inside and immediately went into isolated cultivation.” A knowledgeable cultivator became envious.

“It’s that good?” Others started salivating.

“He’s from Firmaments. Not everyone can hope to do the same.” Another woke the crowd up.

Firmaments was a famous sect in the northern West King. An elder from there was naturally powerful. It wasn’t surprising for him to be able to get a source stone from a beetle king.

“Do you want the king’s source stone, Young Master?” Shi Wawa asked. He believed that Li Qiye was unfathomably strong after surviving the fog. Anything else should be easy for him.

His carefree comment changed the atmosphere in the valley.

In reality, everyone wanted this source stone. However, they kept it to themselves and tried to act nonchalant for now.

#### [Chapter 3410: Stoneshell Beetles](#)

They kept their plans to themselves, whether to do it by force or otherwise. They didn’t want to express their intent in order to not become clear targets.

Now, Shi Wawa’s comment broke through this thin veil and made everyone stare at each other.

He also stared at Li Qiye with wishful eyes. He had heard the seniors in his village praise the source stone from the beetle king before, that it was amazing and priceless, etc...

To be able to see one in person would be incredible and exciting. He would also be happy for Li Qiye.

“Just one source stone, no big deal. I’ll do it if I feel like it then.” Li Qiye smiled at the youth and casually told the truth.

However, others found this grating and became uncomfortable after listening. A few older cultivators had a frown on their face.

Dealing with the beetle king was difficult due to its immense power. This was akin to taking food from a tiger’s mouth. Moreover, other cultivators were waiting too. Whoever obtained the stone first might become public enemy number one.

Therefore, seizing this source stone required ample planning even for the strongest ones here.

Now, Li Qiye spoke as if he could grab one akin to bending down and picking up a random pebble on the street. They felt as if he was being too haughty and contemptuous.

“Hmph, quite a confident fella.” One expert here scowled.

“Just wait and see, it’s too early to talk big and declare victory.” Another sneered.

“No, the source stone of the beetle king will be mine!” A cold and arrogant voice suddenly interrupted the crowd.

Everyone looked over and saw a youth standing on a peak outside of the valley. Five old men stood behind him, looking extremely powerful due to their bright eyes - certainly experts among experts.

The youth looked like a crane among a flock of chickens. He wore an embroidered robe with a four-claw true dragon. His nobility was oppressive and in full display.

“A prince from Wu.” Someone quietly said.

The audience started pointing and gossiping. A few experts had apprehension on their face while looking at this prince.

“A branch of Yin Yang Gate.” Some have heard of this country before.

This was a large and mighty country in the northern West King, a branch of Yin Yang Gate. It always had the support of this behemoth so it became quite influential.

“So overbearing.” Most were annoyed at the prince.

To declare this in front of those who covet it was quite a disdainful action, a challenge to the crowd.

“His brother has a prestigious position in Yin Yang Gate, he’s close to Bai Jianchan.” A knowledgeable expert said.

“Young Lord Bai.” People shuddered after hearing this title since it was thunderously famous right now.

Bai Jianchan of Yin Yang Gate was known by all in the northern West King. People said that Yin Yang Gate would definitely have a dao lord this generation, and this generation was none other than Bai Jianchan.

Realizing these little connections made some give up. Prince Wu was already prestigious alone on his own accord. His older brother would definitely be a big shot later, being from Yin Yang Gate and all.

This was before mentioning the close relationship between his brother and Bai Jianchan. The former might become Jianchan’s right-hand man. That’s enough to make him a big shot all over Eight Desolaces. This made it hard for anyone to provoke Prince Wu.

Furthermore, the old men behind Prince Wu were strong. He himself was no slouch.

“Of course, I don’t mind a little competition.” Prince Wu smiled; his eyes swept through the crowd with a cold glint.

This appearance of his intimidated most. Everyone could see that he was ready to kill those who tried to compete against him for the beetle king’s source stone.

His eyes stopped on Li Qiye. He noticed that the guy was only a Silver Carapace cultivator and sneered: “A firefly trying to compete with the moon.”

This animosity was due to Li Qiye's comment earlier. Alas, he no longer gave a damn about this weakling. Just one finger would be enough to kill him.

Li Qiye only chuckled in response.

"You better watch it, you're the first on his list once the action starts." A kind youth nearby warned Li Qiye.

Li Qiye glanced at him. He looked around eighteen years of age - an ordinary appearance but also scholarly and clean, relatively average in terms of cultivation.

"I got it." Li Qiye smiled.

"My name is Qing Shi, may I have yours?" The youth was quite enthusiastic and introduced himself.

"Li Qiye." Li Qiye replied without looking.

"I see, I see, it's been a while." The youth pondered for a bit before responding.

"We've never met before, so it can't be a while." Li Qiye broke the small talks.

"You're right..." The youth turned red, not expecting to be called out for making pleasantries.

Li Qiye only smiled in response. Someone like Qing Shi didn't attract any attention. No one else gave him a second glance.

"It's about time." An experienced expert from the last generation stared at the sky and noticed the time.

"Buzz." Small noises came from the ground.

"Pop! Pop! Boom!" Next, holes suddenly appeared on the rocky ground in the valley. Little insect feelers dug out of the tiny holes.

This numbered in the several hundred thousand. The feelers moved back and forth, enough to creep the crowd out. The stone beetles finally came out of the holes, completely filling the valley.

Those who have never seen this before became afraid with chills coursing down their spine.

These beetles had powerful claws and legs with a pair of blade-like horns. They had a gray color. If they were to stay on the ground without moving, people might mistake them for being stones.