

God of Thunder

Book 9 - Chapter 19 – Sky Marrow Stone

The Ice Cave Plains and the Qianyin Ice Mountain are quite similar. Both are filled with holes, the difference being that the Qianyin Ice Mountain is above ground, while the Ice Cave Plains is a flat plains, filled with caves under the top layer of ice. There wasn't any place to walk in the Ice Cave Plains. If anyone who came here couldn't fly, they will die beyond a shadow of a doubt. It was as if the floor was filled with traps.

Only practitioners above Sixth Ring could survive in the Ice Cave Plains. No matter whether it is on the ground or on the walls, there are holes of different sizes, including giant gashes in the ice where it cracked. If someone who couldn't fly fell in, they wouldn't be able to get out.

The entire Ice Cave Plains was contained in an area of about a square kilometer, encompassing all the maze-like holes, plains, and structures. Above it was a huge ice covering, naturally formed over tens of thousands of years. Underneath this roof, there will sometimes be strange bugs or animals taking up residence within.

Most practitioners did not come here. If Song Qiao had not taken them here of his own volition, they'd never have chosen this spot to mine.

Song Qiao was very familiar with the ice cave, and he knew exactly where he was opening his Gate to: between the ground and the ice cover, in the large empty space in between.

Lei Xinfeng was amazed and surprised when he walked out of the Gate. The sky was a massive dome, reflecting all light. It wasn't dark at all inside, and there was even some plant life. They weren't green, of course. They were yellow, or white. Small animals ran about.

"It's a maze in here, very big. If you didn't have a Hidden Gate, you wouldn't be able to get out if you got lost," Song Qiao said.

"Lost? You'll be fine as long as you went up, right?" Lei Xinfeng asked.

Song Qiao laughed. "Sure, you could up and out, but think. The only time you could come out is right after the frost, only a few dozen days. Even if you found the way out,

you must wait for the frost to pass. If you miss the window, then you'll be back where you started. A few Ninth Ring Sages was stuck here for several years before they finally escaped."

"We won't be trapped here, right? We have you so we can leave whenever, right?" Lei Xinfeng asked.

"Of course. Now let's go mine. It's a great place. How about we use our old agreement. I don't need the fifth, just the ores you direct me to mine," Song Qiao suggested. After a taste of that efficiency, he could never go back to mining blindly if he could help it, not to mention he was very satisfied with his gains last time.

Lei Xinfeng nodded. "No problem. I'll look, but we should find the spot first and see just what we have there." He was getting more and more confident in his eyes.

Everyone began following Song Qiao. All the time, he was lecturing. "If someone could come and mine, then there's definitely a Monarch supporting them. If you see any other practitioners, do not start anything no matter what!"

"We won't offend anyone," Xin Zhaolun promised.

"But what if someone comes looking for a fight?" Lei Xinfeng asked.

"They won't. Anyone who is here will probably be under orders of their elders. They won't start fights for no reason," Song Qiao said.

The topography of the ice layer was extremely complicated, like the surface of a bread full of pores. After a few hours of water, Lei Xinfeng became utterly confused and lost. No matter where he looked, it was all the same. Blue layers of ice were everywhere, as well as countless twisting and winding paths that led to who knew where.

However, Song Qiao seemed familiar with this place. It was like he was walking in his own backyard, leading without a single hint of hesitation. After going through a few ice tunnels, they came to a giant space, a meandering path of rock. It was like a giant stone snake had appeared in front of them. The ice cover above was like a giant umbrella, covering all the ground beneath.

Lei Xinfeng breathed in and slowly let it out. "My heavens, this terrain. If the ice cover fell, none of us will escape."

Everyone else silently agreed, each looking up, tilting their head back.

Song Qiao laughed. “Stop looking. The ice cover is several hundred meters thick. It won’t fall, so relax!”

“Are we here?” Lei Xinfeng asked.

“Yes, we’re here. Do you see that stone belt? It’s very rich in ore.”

“What kind of ore?” Xin Zhaolun asked.

“The ore here isn’t worth much to you Sages, but they’re extremely valuable to Monarchs. However, it’s still good to start hoarding them early on. Even if you’ll never use them, you can still trade it with Monarchs for Yin Rings.”

Instantly, the Ninth Ring Sages all showed a pleasantly surprised expression. The only way they would’ve been able to find a mine like this would be if a Monarch like Song Qiao showed them. They’ve never even seen these ores before, so they probably would’ve discounted them as trash.

“What kind of ore is this?” Lei Xinfeng asked again.

“Tiansui stone (Sky Marrow Stone). Heard of it before?”

Of the entire audience, only Xin Zhaolun had a clue. Everyone displayed a confused expression. Xin Zhaolun had a look of awe, which quickly turned to elation.

“Whoa...what? Tiansui stone, this place actually produces Tiansui stone?!”

“Elder brother, is Tiansui stone rare?” Xin Zhaolun asked.

“Rare? Last time, the Great Master used several hundred Yin Rings to trade for a tiny amount of Tiansui ore! Unprocessed! Do you think it’s rare or not?!” Xin Zhaolun sputtered.

Lei Xinfeng didn’t think that the Founder would need Tiansui stones. This thing was doubtlessly valuable.

“If Ah Feng wasn’t so good at finding ores, I’d never have brought you guys here! Haha! This thing... Eh? You still have your founder?” He almost jumped in surprise. If someone was old and powerful enough to be the founder of Xin Zhaolun’s secret sect, he was definitely a freak.

Xin Zhaolun nodded. “Yes, we have a founder.”

“Your...founder. Did he already surpass Monarch?” Song Qiao asked.

Xin Zhaolun shook his head. “I don’t know what level our founder has ascended to.”

“Then your master. Is he a Monarch?”

At that, Xin Zhaolun nodded with confidence. “Yes, he is beyond a doubt a Monarch.” There was nothing to hide, and he admitted to it.

Song Qiao smiled bitterly. Originally, he had plans to just steal Lei Xinfeng away, but upon hearing that, he decided to do away with that plan. If not, he’d probably offend someone much more powerful he was, with capabilities he couldn’t fully grasp. After a sigh, he said, “Tiansui stones are hard to mine. They’re all over the place. Even though this area is rich in it, it’s all relative. Without great luck, you won’t find much. I’ve come here many times, but I didn’t manage to mine much.”

Song Qiao already came here a dozen times, but he could only find a few chunks every time. After discovering that Lei Xinfeng could see ores, he immediately brought him.

“This time, if you manage to find Tiansui stones, you can trade them for Yin Rings with me, or others. I definitely won’t shortchange you, so how about it?” Song Qiao said.

“Let’s try first,” Xin Zhaolun replied.

“It’s pointless to dig aimlessly. This is why it looks like,” he said, producing a Tiansui stone and handing it to Lei Xinfeng.

It was a stone the size of a walnut, white with black marks like ink on it. Those black marks were thin like silk, struck all over the surface of the white rock, giving the stone an overall shade of grey. After studying it for a bit, Lei Xinfeng found that within the black marks, there was a needlepoint of golden light.

He passed the rock to Xin Zhaolun. “This is the ore, right? You didn’t purify it?”

“It hasn’t been purified. It’s hard to dig and is easy to miss. The stone is usually found in bedrock, and you must shatter the bedrock to get at it,” Song Qiao said, then warned, “you must be careful, or you’ll shatter the stone along with the bedrock.”

“That’s difficult,” noted Jin Daya.

To be able to come here and be able to mine these in here, a general minimum level of strength was Ninth Ring. However, if they wanted to harvest good Tiansui stones, just power wasn’t enough. They had to be careful, or they’ll break the stone. For this reason, even a Monarch could do no more than looking slowly like everyone else.

Xin Zhaolun turned to Lei Xinfeng. “Ah Feng, did you find anything?”

Lei Xinfeng had begun searching. What surprised him was that he could already see abnormalities in the stone. Dark spots would appear on the stone, but he wasn't sure if they indicated where the Tiansui stones were. “Let me try,” he said.

There was a lot of rubble on the ground, extraneous rock cast away from previous mining attempts. Lei Xinfeng picked one up and saw the dark spot on it. However, after a while, it disappeared.

“Try tapping it open with a hammer,” Song Qiao suggested.

Lei Xinfeng did what he was told and took out a hammer, tapping lightly. A sharp crack sounded, and the rock split into several pieces, revealing half a Tiansui stone, the other half still embedded in the rock. With a bit of careful chiseling, the rest of it could be extracted.

Song Qiao could not help but cry out in joy. “Hahaha! He did it! Hahahaha!” He was so happy he didn't know what to do. He needed a large amount of Tiansui stone, or he'd never come here. As soon as he confirmed that Lei Xinfeng could find locations of the stones, he was so happy he couldn't control himself. He could probably finish gathering everything this time, and he'd never need to come to this damn place again!

“Alright, I know what to do now,” Lei Xinfeng said.

“Ah Feng, please direct us. We'll all listen to your orders.” Who cares if he was a Monarch. If he could gather enough Tiansui stones, he'd do almost anything.

“Alright, everyone has to listen to me! Does anyone have objections?” He could help but crack a joke.

Of course, no one had objections. “Go on,” Xin Zhaolun prodded.

Vocabulary Change: The 原 in 冰穴原 does not mean origin, but instead means plains, as in a grassland. Also, I changed Hidden Door to Hidden Gate. Doesn't Door sound so mundane? Unacceptable!