

Alchemy 1111

Chapter 1111: Bring Out the Tools

Alex recognized the young man. He was Yao Bujiang, the one with the reflection dao that he had fought in the battle hall a few years ago.

He looked at the other 3 people as well, and each one of them was very strong. To have reached this high, they needed to have a cultivation base that was strong enough to survive through all the trials and challenges.

"Do you know what the challenge is by chance?" Alex asked.

"Don't be in a hurry," the young man said. "You will find out soon enough."

Another man entered a few minutes later, and a woman came in nearly half an hour after that. Finally, another 15 minutes later the final person entered the room, and the gate closed.

At the same time, the room started speaking.

"This is the Alchemy challenge," the voice said, making many of the competitors frown immediately. Alchemy was the last thing they wanted to have to go through as they weren't very familiar with it.

Alex was also surprised that this was an Alchemy competition. But his surprise came more towards the fact that such a competition would be impossible to hold without ingredients and cauldrons.

A few of the others didn't seem surprised at all, as if they had been through this already.

'So it had to be a slightly different one,' he thought. As he expected, this was not a traditional Alchemy competition.

"I will name a pill and what it does, as well as the final energy held within it. Then, I will show you three different recipes, of which 2 of them will have 1 ingredient changed."

"You will have to figure out the correct recipe," the voice said. "There will be 5 such questions, and you will get an hour for each pill. You will have access to my knowledge of said ingredients, so the only thing being tested here is your knowledge of Alchemy, not your experience or luck."

"The first 3 with the correct answers will be sent to the next floor."

"Also, anyone who gets an answer wrong will be eliminated," the voice said. "If you end the challenge with no answer, you will be allowed to take the challenge again."

"You will be eliminated automatically after 3 consecutive challenges."

Alex was surprised for a second before he remembered something he was told in passing.

From floors 20 to 40, there were rarely any floors that sent the participants down to the first floor. It instead kept them there to take part in the challenge again.

That was one of the ways to keep a steady number of people on a floor without having the upper floors have to wait forever for any participants to come.

"Now, let us begin with the first one."

Three recipes appeared in the air, each of which looked normal at first glance.

"The pill is called Heaven's Strength pill. When eaten, it strengthens one's body to produce physical strength to the same level as your cultivation realm. After 30 minutes of consumption, you will lose all bodily control for the entire next day."

"The final energy of the pill is Metal."

That was all the voice said and left the 8 people in the room to figure out the answer to this question.

Alex had never seen or heard of this pill before, so he too was at the same starting point as everyone.

However, his speed at deduction and understanding of alchemy would leave these people behind soon enough.

He looked through the first recipe and closed his eyes. He read the names of the ingredients, the order, and the instruction. Then, he started formulating a simulation in his head of how those would work.

However, it wasn't long before he realized that he hadn't worked with some of these ingredients, so formulating a simulation wasn't exactly easy.

"Argh! Screw it," he thought and suddenly brought out a cauldron. The other contestant looked at him weirdly, almost not wanting to believe what they were seeing.

Alex looked into his storage bag and quickly brought out the ingredients. After visiting the Forbidden Orchard, he had every single ingredient mentioned in the first recipe.

Every other contestant couldn't help but be slackjawed when he started a fire underneath the cauldron and started making the pill.

"Wait, no, that's cheating, isn't it?" one of them asked.

"Is he an actual Alchemist?" another one asked.

"Let's see if he can come up with the answer," someone else said. "We might be able to use it in the next rounds."

The remaining didn't speak, but they were in an equal amount of disbelief for sure.

Alex didn't care for finesse or quality or even getting a proper pill. He simply followed the recipe as was written in front of him.

As he reached the end of the recipe, he suddenly stopped and tossed everything out.

Then, he looked at the second recipe and started making that too.

A few of the people in the group realized that the first one was not the correct recipe and continued watching Alex as discretely as possible, hoping to get the answer before he could.

Alex started on the 2nd pill as well, and as he got close to the end, he shook his head and discarded it as well.

"The third recipe!" one of them said immediately.

"Wrong!" the voice said and the person who answered was sent back to the first floor.

The others hesitated to answer anything else, and that nearly made Alex break out into a fit of laughter.

"The first one," he said.

"Correct."

Alex smiled as the teleportation power started gathering around him. He quickly put everything into his storage and left the room.

When he arrived on the next floor, he couldn't help but be surprised at how easy that challenge was.

His first pill had resulted in a Metal energy, and with the ingredients involved, he was half-sure that it was correct. However, making the pill and then testing it was not his luxury, so he decided to test the remaining two before he did something like that.

His second pill had resulted in wood energy, which told Alex that it was the wrong one.

He had to still check the third one, but someone gave him the answer to that question by assuming it was the answer to the ultimate question.

With both options gone, he knew the first one was the answer.

He looked around his location and saw an open gate once again. In fact, there were 3 such doors, each one of which was open.

Alex wasn't sure which one he had to enter and looked around at all 3. As he looked, he noticed something he hadn't noticed on the earlier floors at all.

Above each one of the doors, there was an indicator of how many of the slots in those rooms were filled up. Of the 3 rooms, only the first one had people in it, and 3 out of 5 of those slots were filled up.

Alex walked into the 1st room.

3 people were already in there, and Alex quickly checked them all.

They were all in the Saint realm, but only in the Condensation and Foundation realm. None of these people were Saint core realm at all, and that made Alex a bit relieved.

He looked around the room and saw that there were no spots like the earlier floor. The 3 people in the room were all either sitting on the floor or leaning against the wall.

Alex went and sat by the side as he waited for the final person to enter the room.

Alex was surprised when Yao Bujiang walked in as well.

"Hey, brother. That was an amazing show you did on the floor," the man said. "To think we would have an actual alchemist make the pills. That was wild."

Alex looked at him with a surprised look on his face. "Did brother manage to find an answer too?" he asked.

The man shook his head. "Nah, I was annoyed and decided to leave, so I gave a random answer. Turned out I was right, so I got to come here," he said. "I sure was lucky."

"Please stand in the lit-up area," the room's voice said suddenly. Everyone walked over to one of the 5 spots, and as soon as they did, a barrier sprung up behind them, about 3 meters away from the wall.

"If you touch or pass the barrier behind you, you lose," the voice said. "You can take part in the next round if you lose. 3 consecutive losses will eliminate you."

"The last person standing within the circle will get to go to the next floor."

"Begin."

Alex took a moment to take in what was being said and saw that someone was charging for him.

'Send them outside the barrier,' he thought. He understood what needed to be done. He quickly teleported away from the girl and appeared somewhere else.

Yao Bujiang barely noticed Alex's presence, but by the time he could do anything, Alex had used his teleportation dao on him and sent him out of the barrier.

"Sorry, you're the strongest here," Alex said toward the man and turned to look at the rest of the people in the room.

Now that he had taken care of the strongest person, taking care of these was no work at all.

Half a minute later, he was teleported to the 28th floor, where he walked into the room with the most people in it.

Chapter 1112: Puppet Battle

Alex was the last person to enter the room, so the challenge began the moment he was in.

"This is the Puppet fighting challenge," the voice said as it began explaining the challenge of this room. "You will each be assigned a single puppet, each of which has the same strength. You will be randomly assigned an opponent, and you two will have to fight until one of you gets the required amount of points."

"Hits below the elbow and knee won't give you any points. Hits on the thigh and arm give you 1 point. Hit to the torso gives you 2 points, and finally, hit to the head gives you 3 points."

"A single loss means you can't fight until the next challenge. You will have to win twice to move on. Finally, 3 consecutive challenges lost will send you back to the first floor."

"Please connect with your puppet."

A puppet appeared in front of everyone and they were all given time to connect with it.

Alex looked at the puppet, a 6-foot-tall humanoid piece of wood that seemed to have limber limbs and flexible joints.

'How does one connect with a puppet again?' he thought. He had never done it before, but he did know how it was done.

Every puppet had a core that required a master. To control a puppet without using your Qi, you have to connect with this core using your spiritual sense.

It was akin to forming a bond with a beast, but unlike that bond, this thing barely took a fraction of your soul. The best part was, one could take back that part at any moment.

Of course, if the puppet was destroyed for some reason, that part of your soul would be destroyed as well.

Alex reached out his spiritual sense and touched the core of his puppet.

The puppet was conveniently colored in black and white, to represent the arms and legs that could get hit without worrying about losing a point.

He let his spiritual sense linger on the core for a few seconds before trying to call to it to join it. The core easily accepted him as the new owner, and Alex found himself with a puppet he could control.

He moved his arm and the puppet followed him. He moved his leg and the puppet followed him as well.

"Wait no, I need to control without moving myself," he thought. He tried to control it for a bit, but he found it a bit difficult. It was definitely not something he was supposed to be able to do on the first try.

Once everyone had bonded with a puppet, they were made to stand near a corner along with their puppet.

Of the 8, two people were told to bring their puppets to the front. Then, they began fighting.

The fight would last for either 10 minutes or until someone ends up with 100 points.

Alex watched from where he stood as the two puppets fought each other. One of them had a better method of controlling the puppet than the other one, so they were easily getting hits in.

Hits to the face, the chest, the stomach, the back— everything was cleanly pulled off, and before 5 minutes even passed, the better one had won the round.

'Have they practiced before this?' Alex wondered. They were here before he came, so it was possible that the person had been practicing for the last round or two.

Another two people were called over, and their puppets started fighting as well. These two seemed equally talented at controlling, so the battle boiled down to simply who was better at fighting, rather than who was better at controlling a puppet.

The fight continued for 10 minutes without anyone winning, so when time passed, the one with the most points won.

Alex was next in line, so he sent out his puppet. The puppet moved rather awkwardly, but he was starting to get the hang of it.

When the fight began, he controlled it the best he could.

Since he couldn't see through the puppet's eyes, he had to rely on his own senses to control the puppet. It was a little awkward, but he was doing quite well for a beginner.

Unfortunately for him, however, his opponent turned out to be someone with experience. It wasn't even a minute in that Alex realized he was going to lose this round for sure.

So, instead of going for attacks or trying to win, he tried to delay the round as long as possible, while he got used to controlling the puppet. At the end of it, when he eventually lost, he didn't feel as bad as he would have otherwise felt.

The fights went on for 3 more rounds after him, and the 2 losers were immediately sent down to the 1st floor as they had been here for the last 3 challenges.

The 2 winners were sent up to the next floor as well. The puppets disappeared as part of his soul returned to him.

Then, they were forced to wait for 4 new people to come.

2 people came almost immediately, but the other 2 took nearly an hour to come. Once they were there, the entire thing began again.

The explanation came again, and the puppets were presented to them. Alex immediately took the puppet under his control and started moving it around.

He felt very comfortable this time around and got ready for the challenge.

Two people were called out first, whose puppets fought each other. One of them had experience as they were repeating, so the newcomer lost rather easily.

Alex was the 2nd one called, so he sent his puppet up to the challenge.

The puppet got into a fighting stance and the fight began.

The opponent came with a punch, so Alex ducked and gave the puppet an uppercut. As the puppet was thrown into the air, he kicked it in the back.

The puppet fell to the ground and while its owner tried to make it get back up, Alex punched the puppet relentlessly while it was down and easily won the round.

'I got lucky,' he thought. The owner was someone new and couldn't control his puppet. He looked to the ceiling and wondered if it really was luck, or was the spirit forcing older people to fight against newer ones so they could go to round two.

Whatever the reason was, Alex didn't care. He was only here to fight after all.

The other people were done fighting, and Alex was called once again, this time to fight the first round's winner.

The two puppets got ready and the fight began.

The opponent moved with two arms in a cross. It dashed towards him, so Alex had to jump to the side and punch.

The puppet quickly blocked the attack with its own, however, and punched back. Alex took the punch to the chest and used his other hand to grab the punching arm. Then, he pulled the arm and punched the puppet in the face before moving backward.

The score was 2 to 3 with Alex winning.

Alex attacked this time, starting with a kick. He tried to hit the puppet on the side of its chest while its arms were up, but the puppet realized and quickly brought down its arms to block.

Alex frowned. He needed to make his puppet react faster, but to do that, he needed to be able to see faster.

At the angle he was in, the fight was blocked by his own puppet's body and he could only view it with his spiritual sense.

Alex moved his puppet back, getting hit on his thigh in the process, and moved to the side. The other puppet followed, but at least now he could see everything.

He saw the most minuscule flinching of the puppet's left arm and realized it was going to attack. His own puppet's right arm moved to place its arm on top of its own.

When the puppet fully moved its arm, Alex used the action to propel his own arms toward its face.

The person controlling the puppet was surprised. He couldn't tell what had just happened.

Alex saw the left get start moving, so he went for the right one. As the left foot lifted, he swooped its right foot, making the puppet fall.

Then, he gave a few good hits to its face and chest before dodging to the side as its leg came attacking.

With his vision aiding him a lot, the fight became rather easy after that. Although he didn't get all 100 points, he did manage to gain a 60 points lead over his opponent, winning the match at 10 minutes.

After he had won, he had to wait for the next fight.

Once that was done, he and the new winner were sent to the next floor. On the 29th floor, Alex looked at the room that only had 2 spots left.

Without hesitation, both he and the new guy entered that room.

Alex found himself suddenly unable to use his spiritual sense, and then the explanation came.

"You will have to fight against your opponent without being able to see or hear where they are."

The challenge was weird, but Alex was sure he could win it.

The audience got to see everything, but the challenges inside a barrier seemed to be unaware of each other's position.

They threw their attacks randomly, hoping to hit someone.

Alex couldn't help but smile when he saw how the match would be played out.

"This is as good as done."

Chapter 1113: Continued Climbing

The 29th floor was very easy for Alex, as he once again got to cheat his way to victory.

Before he was called to the battle, he left behind Whisker, who could watch everything that was happening from outside.

And since Whisker could see it, he could too.

He easily beat his opponent in a single strike. He waited until it was his turn again, and he beat his opponent then too.

After he won it all, he was sent to the next floor.

The 30th floor.

Alex looked around on the 30th floor. There were not that many people here at all. There were 5 different rooms here and everyone seemed to have entered them already.

'Another 5th floor,' he thought. 'So this one should be a solo one too.'

"Let's see what this one is," he thought and went to one of the rooms that just opened up.

When he entered the room, he saw the same small room as he did on the 20th and 25th floors. There was a glowing wall in front of him, reminding him of the previous floors as well.

A voice spoke, "An attack of the same strength as your Cultivation base will be launched from this wall. Defend it with all you've got. If you can defend against that attack, you will get to move up."

"Okay," Alex thought and prepared himself. A few seconds later, the wall launched some sort of glowing projectile at him with the strength of Saint Foundation 3rd realm.

He easily blocked the attacks with his arms crossed in front of his chest. He moved his arms around a bit after the attack disappeared and waited for himself to be teleported.

"You pass," the voice said. "But you have a chance to skip the next floor. If you can defend against an attack that is stronger than your cultivation base by a realm, you can skip the next floor. If you fail, however, you will be sent back to the first floor. Choose."

"Oh! It's a skipping floor," Alex thought with surprise. He had gotten to skip 21 through 24 floors thanks to the challenge on the 20th floor. The 30th seemed to be a similar one as well.

"Go ahead."

He got his guard up as another attack landed on him. He easily defended against that as well.

"Would you like to try again? This time around, you will have to defend against an attack that is stronger than your cultivation base by 2 realms. You can skip the next 2 floors if you are successful."

"Yes," Alex said and defended again.

Once again he was successful. His body alone was strong enough to defend against the first two attacks, and the third attack merely needed him to use a bit of Qi

At this rate, he was going to get to skip another 4 floors.

"Would you like to try again?" the voice asked. "This time around, you will have to defend against an attack that is stronger than your cultivation base by 5 realms. You can skip the next 3 floors."

"Of course," Alex said and defended once more. Since this attack was Saint Foundation 8th realm in strength, he had to use his Qi to stop it. If not for that, he would not have been able to do so as well.

"Would you like to try again?" the voice asked one more time. "This time around, you will have to defend against an attack that is stronger than your cultivation base by 10 realms. You can skip the next 4 floors."

"10 realms..." Alex paused. "Can I defend against Saint Core 4th realm?" Definitely not with his Qi and body alone.

A blood armor formed around him as he accepted the challenge.

"I can do it," he said. A very strong that could deter some of the strongest people in the tower currently landed on him and he himself was surprised at how easily he defended against it.

He could defend against attacks from early Saint Soul realm cultivators, so this really was nothing.

"Would you like you to try again?" the voice spoke once again. "This time around, you will have to defend against an attack that is stronger than your cultivation base by 20 realms. You can skip the next 5 floors."

Alex was tempted for sure, but even with everything he had, he knew he couldn't defend against the attack of a Saint Soul 5th realm cultivator.

He had been destroyed by a Saint Core realm cultivator exploding, this was definitely even stronger.

He shook his head. "This is it. I would like to leave," he said.

"Congratulations on skipping the next 4 floors," the spirit said. "You will now be taken to the 35th floor."

As the voice said that, Alex was teleported to the 35th floor, with no one there at all.

'I'm not the first here, am I?' he thought as he looked around.

There were 5 rooms on that floor, of which 3 seemed to be inaccessible. Even from where he was, he could already see the cracks outside of those rooms.

'It's getting worse?' he thought to himself.

The other two rooms were both open, so Alex went to one of them. He arrived in a massive room, similar to the ones from the other floors, not something that he expected to be on another 5th floor.

In the center was a puppet.

'Another puppet challenge?' he thought.

"Fight the puppet for the next 10 minutes without losing," the voice said. "It will have your cultivation base."

"Hmm?" Alex was surprised.

"The fight will begin now." Without any other warning, the puppet suddenly moved towards him.

Alex jumped backward and dodged the attack, but suddenly a fire-breathing snake shot out from the puppet's hands.

Alex took out a sword and cut the fire snake, and shot a palm attack of his own. The puppet took the palm attack directly and didn't even take a single scratch as damage.

"Oh, not bad," he thought. He shot out a few sword slashes, which the puppet somehow easily destroyed despite the attacks supposedly being only as strong as his cultivation base.

It then punched and Alex punched too. The two punches clashed, making the room vibrate with so much energy that the walls started softly shining with the formations hidden within it.

'That's definitely my cultivation realm of strength,' he thought. 'But its defense is immeasurable in return.'

As he thought about it, that made sense. The test was supposed to run for 10 minutes, so getting destroyed in the very first minute was probably not what the creator wanted from this thing.

As he was thinking that, a mental attack struck him out of nowhere, distracting him from his thoughts.

"Dammit!" Alex cried out with some annoyance. It didn't hurt, but it definitely didn't feel good. He struck back with his own mental attack, but who knew how that worked against a puppet?

It probably did nothing.

He continued fighting it for the next 10 minutes, throwing everything he could at it, while dodging all the same.

In the end, 10 minutes passed easily and he was given way to the next floor.

So, Alex left and arrived on the 36th floor.

Chapter 1114: A Simple Path

There were 4 people waiting for him in one of the rooms on the 36th floor.

Alex entered and found that each one of these people was thousands of years old elders that were in the Saint Core realm.

When they saw Alex, who was just in the Saint Foundation realm, they couldn't help but be slightly surprised.

Alex greeted the 4 people and went to sit by one of the 8 spots marked on the floor on one side. He realized that his spiritual sense was suppressed as well. Not fully suppressed, but enough to make it mostly useless.

"Do any of you seniors know what we are supposed to be doing here?" he asked.

All of them shrugged. "No idea," they said. "We've been waiting for someone to come so we can get started on it."

Alex couldn't help but be surprised. "Are you all the first 4 to get here?" he asked.

"We're not sure, but we do think so," one of them said.

Alex nodded to himself in realization. It seemed he would have to wait for a long time before someone came again.

He brought out Whisker to keep guard and started cultivating. He hadn't been cultivating properly for a long time, so he took the time to do so.

He had a sinking suspicion that it would take at least 2 days before the challenge in this room would start.

So, he cultivated. They all did.

Alas, Alex's suspicion turned out to be wrong, only in the other direction. It didn't take 2 days for the room to get filled up, it took 9.

He was bored out of his mind before it was finally time for the challenge to begin. He was beginning to understand why it would take so many months for the Sanctum to be completed by someone.

Alex stood up as the voice called for them to be ready.

"The challenge is simple. The first 3 to go through that door on the other side in the next 24 hours get to go up the floor."

The voice stopped speaking after that.

Everyone looked at each other, slightly confused if that was all it was to the challenge. To get to the other side in just 24 hours.

'Why 24 hours?' Alex wondered. 'There must be something going on here.'

One of the people amongst them wasn't hesitant at all and started walking. As soon as he took a single step forward, however, he stopped and fell to his knee.

He said something, but for some reason, no one could hear it at all.

Alex gulped once and stepped in as well. As soon as he did, he felt something wash over him. After that, he couldn't remember why he was standing.

Every memory felt vague, every feeling distant. He looked in front of him and a small white cat scuttled along on the edge of his vision.

"Pearl?" he couldn't help but be surprised. "Is that you, Pearl?"

Pearl turned around and gave him a wide smile before running towards him. Alex got to the floor and immediately gave him a hug.

"I can't believe I finally found you. Where have you been all this time?" he asked. Just as he asked that, something felt wrong.

"Why am I asking where you have been?" he asked. "You should have been with me all this time, right?"

Even as he held Pearl, some part of his mind started giving him a deep sense of discomfort. Something was wrong.

He quickly let go of Pearl. "No, Pearl is in the Central continent. Why is he in the central continent?" he tried to remember, but the answers wouldn't come to him.

"Al, you're making Pearl cry. Don't do that," someone spoke as they came from behind him and held onto Pearl, softly petting his back.

Alex looked at his mother and couldn't help but feel a tear roll down his face. "Huh? Why am I crying?" he asked himself.

"Say sorry to Pearl," Helen said.

"Oh, right. Sorry, Pearl. I don't know what came upon me," he said while shaking his head.

"Don't be like that son," a man's voice came from the front. "You need to take care of your pets well. Didn't I teach you that?"

"Father!" Alex couldn't help but feel like a child in front of this man. "Yes, yes you did. I'm sorry. I'll take care of them properly."

"Yes, take care of all of them," his father said.

"Yes," Alex nodded furiously. "I'll take care of Pearl, I'll take care of Whisker, and I'll take care of..."

He paused. He had another pet, and he could remember her. Scarlet, the phoenix. But she wasn't with him, was she? She was in the Southern Continent, while he was with Pearl in...

He quickly stood back up with a fearful look on his face. "Where am I?" he asked.

"What do you mean?" his father asked. "You're back home, on the farm."

"No," Alex said. "I can feel Qi. Our home doesn't have Qi."

"What are you saying, son?" his mother asked. "We're in the Flowing Brush sect of course. Do you want to meet my master?"

"Qin Shan?" Alex asked. He suddenly grabbed his head. "No, this is not the Western Continent. This is... this is the Southern Continent. Someone is playing tricks with me."

"Son—"

"No!" Alex shouted. "Stop this!"

His intent, along with his spiritual energy, overpowered the Illusory Dream formation that was playing tricks on his mind. He felt coolness pass through his head as he could finally think properly.

The illusions tried to pierce through his intent that was keeping them at bay, but Alex didn't let it. He pushed through them instead, seeing through them clearly, moving toward the door on the other side.

The illusions all but disappeared by the time he reached the edge of the formation, and once he passed through, his mother, father, and Pearl all disappeared at once.

Alex looked back at the formation now that he was outside of it and took a deep breath. "I'll get back to you all very soon."

He turned around and walked through the door.

Alex arrived on the 37th floor, slightly surprised that someone was already there. It was one of the challengers from the previous challenge.

"Oh, someone finally passed," the woman said.

"Finally?" Alex asked.

"It's been 6 hours since the last challenge started," she said. "But of course, you wouldn't know that if you were affected by it."

"Oh," Alex said with a bit of a surprised look on his face. "I didn't realize such a long time had passed."

"Yeah, well. What can you do?" the woman said. "Did you use a talisman or an artifact?"

"Neither," Alex said.

"Neither?" the woman was surprised. "Then you must have quite a formidable mindset to have been able to go through that."

Alex smiled slightly. He wasn't sure if it was his formidable mindset, or his body constantly removing any sort of effect from his mind and body.

It was most likely a mix of the two now that Alex was thinking about it.

"Anyway, which room do you want to go to next? We are the first ones here," she said.

"Oh, right," Alex thought. "I haven't been choosing really. I usually go with whichever one is open."

"What about when all are open?" she asked.

"The first one," Alex pointed to the door to the left.

"Yeah, why bother choosing when it is all chance based anyway," she said and walked towards the room.

Alex looked above the room as he followed, and realized that it was a room that required 8 people to take part. The others weren't any better, so there was no problem with him entering.

After he entered, he saw that spots were lying around the room in a circle, and Alex went to go sit on one towards one side of the wall.

He sighed when he realized that he was going to have to wait again. He feared that it would take a very long time before his wait was over.

Alex was so sure about it, that he brought out one of his pills and ate it as he started cultivating. The pill would leave him unable to cultivate for the next 5 days after he was done, but there wasn't really any need for that anyway.

Nearly 20 days passed before the room was filled. It would of course only take this long since it was the very first time, but still, having to be the one that waited was not a pleasant feeling for Alex.

After everyone was finally in the room, the room started speaking.

"This challenge will require you to fight against each other," the voice said. Two platforms appeared out of nowhere in the middle of the room, each of which had some sort of podium on it.

"You will be called in pairs to come and stand on each of these podiums. Using these, you will be able to launch a simple elemental attack. The attacks will have the same amount of power no matter who is controlling."

"The first person of the two to strike the other person's podium 20 times with an elemental attack will win."

"Be careful of how the attacks interact with each other. These attacks do not have intent behind them, so they will definitely interact with each other," the voice said.

"Oh!" Alex realized what the challenge was asking of them. It was asking for them to be good at understanding Elemental Interaction.

It was a good challenge for him since he had learned a freaking dao about it.

Chapter 1115: Colors

Alex was the first to be called to the platform, with another person who was to be his opponent.

Once he arrived, he saw that there were 5 small formations on the podium, each of which he could press to throw out a different elemental attack.

"Start!"

As soon as the voice said that, Alex used the Metal attack.

A projectile of no color flew out from his podium, shooting toward the other side. He looked to the other side and saw another projectile flying towards him, that too of no color at all.

When they collided, A flash of blue shined suddenly, and the resulting projectile hit Alex's podium.

'Shit!' Alex thought. He had realized that a water attack was flying towards him and had tried to send out a fire attack of his own to stop it, but it looked like there was an internal cooldown to the podium so that one couldn't continuously send out attacks.

'That was unlucky,' he thought as he shook his head.

He had chosen Metal on a whim, and his opponent had most likely chosen water on a whim as well. When they collided, the Water element was empowered by the Metal element, making the water attack come hit him.

'So I not only need to send out an attack, but I also have to be careful of what I send out, huh?' he thought.

This felt like a Rock-Paper-Scissor challenge in a sense. From what he could guess since each attack had the same power, each element of the same strength, there was going to be 3 results for each interaction possible.

First, his energy would Empower his opponent's, giving his opponent the point.

Second, his energy would Ruin his opponent's, giving him the point.

Finally, they would both choose the same element, and neither of them would get a point.

'But this is definitely not luck based,' he thought. 'Such high into the tower, they are definitely expecting at least some of us to be able to do something.'

Alex suddenly felt a spiritual sense barely lingering around him, not trying to alert him at all. However, he could still sense it rather easily.

'Right, we can check what the other person is going to choose too,' Alex thought. It wasn't a game of elements at all. It was a game of knowing your opponent's next move.

An illusory hourglass appeared in front of them suddenly. "If you don't fire off another attack within this time, you won't be able to fire one at all," the voice said.

Alex saw the sand fall through the hourglass and smiled. 'So it's a game to see who can remain unmoving the longest too,' he thought.

His Elemental Interaction understanding wasn't very useful here, but he didn't care for that. He was having fun.

He openly let his spiritual sense spread around his opponent's podium, letting them know that he was seeing their every move.

His opponent did the same. The both of them waited until the last grain of sand fell from the hourglass.

Then, without having any time to think, they randomly activated two of the formations.

Two white blobs of attacks flew at each other and slammed. A flash of green shined, and it landed on the opponent's podium this time around, giving Alex a point.

Alex smiled. He had gotten lucky.

Still, that made his opponent hesitate a little. They couldn't help but wonder if that had been intentional.

This was definitely a mind game.

Alex decided to have some more fun. He decided to take it a little further.

Suddenly, he took in his spiritual sense, letting his opponent see everything clearly without any obstruction. His opponent on the other hand couldn't help but be surprised that he wasn't looking at what he was choosing at all.

And that made them suspicious.

Alex had both his hands on the podium, ready to press one of the buttons there. Then, he looked towards the hourglass that flipped again.

They were on a timer once more.

He looked straight at his opponent, smiling in the process. His hands were on the podium, but his spiritual sense was nowhere.

His opponent was sure that he couldn't see what they were going to choose at all, but they couldn't help but be hesitant about what Alex was doing.

Still, as the timer reached nearly zero, they pressed something, and their podium attacked.

Alex pressed something as well, attacking back. A flash of red shined and the opponent was hit again.

"What?!" his opponent couldn't help but shout in surprise. "How did you know?"

Alex smiled, saying nothing.

He waited for the timer to start again, and when it hit nearly zero, as soon as his opponent's attack was released, he pressed one of the formations.

With a flash of blue, his opponent lost again.

His opponent couldn't understand at all. They had no idea what was happening.

Alex was having the time of his life as his demon eyes saw everything from the movement of the grain of sand to the color of the attack that was launched.

He didn't even need to know what was pressed as he always did know, just by what the attack was.

His decision to take back his spiritual sense was just to screw with his opponent's understanding of how he was doing this, and that was enough to make his opponent wonder if he was cheating.

A few minutes later, he won and went back to his spot.

'That was rather fun,' he thought. 'It would be more fun if we could truly make it random.'

Of course, in a competitive situation, no one was going to agree to play fair with him. And neither had he.

3 more games were played, some of which were rather close, unlike his.

Then, he was called once again, to fight another of that had won. He easily won against that person without messing up a single time.

Once he had won twice, he was sent to the upper floor.

Alex arrived on the floor and paused. He realized that he was the first one to arrive here.

'Just 2 more floors,' he thought. After he was done with this and the 39th floor, he would be able to enter the 40th floor, from which point on it was all solo challenges. Then, he was going to easily win it all.

Alex looked at the only 2 rooms that were usable and obviously chose the first one to the left.

He went there and started waiting, and sometime later, the other winner from his previous challenge came as well.

Together, they had to wait for the next 30 days before the 8 spots were all filled up and the challenge was ready to begin.

"This is a painting challenge," the voice said. "Please draw on the canvas in front of you the best painting you can within the hour. Every color you need can be changed using the formation."

Alex looked at the white canvas in front of him and a few brushes next to it. Then, to the side, there was a small formation that glowed with a soft black color.

'Why painting?' he thought. He felt somewhat annoyed. 'I've never painted at all.'

Still, since that was the challenge, he had to do it. He sighed and thought of a scene to draw. He remembered the view he saw, standing in the middle of one of the flower fields in the Forbidden Orchard, and started drawing that.

He could freely change the color he needed for the scene with just a simple movement on the formation next to him, and with that, he didn't even need to dip the brush in paint, like he knew painters did.

However, all the features wouldn't stop him from making the art appear very ugly. He had absolutely no idea how drawings were even made in the first place.

"That's as good as I can do in the first round I guess," he thought and stopped painting.

The 1-hour timer ended, and everyone's painting on the canvas suddenly vanished. Instead, it was replaced by 7 other smaller paintings.

"Rank the paintings you see in front of you from 1 to 7. 1 is the best, and 7 is the worst," the voice said. "You may write the number on the painting itself."

Alex nodded and looked through the paintings.

'Damn,' he thought. At least half of the paintings there were better than his. What the hell had he even done this past hour to come up with such a bad painting as his?

He was definitely going to get last place, wasn't he?

Once he ranked the pictures in front of him, the paintings were showcased in the middle, with everyone's overall ranking.

He came 7th.

2 of the 8 people were sent to the next floor, while Alex had to now wait for 2 more people to come in before they started the next round.

2 days passed and the next 2 people were here. Everyone was told the same thing again and this time, Alex decided to go with something a little less complex than a flower field. That had too many colors for him.

He decided to go with something just black and white.

He thought of another scenery. 7 frozen mountain peaks that were illuminated by the silver moonlight.

He drew it as carefully as he could. In the end, it came out as garbage once again.

He failed this round as well.

The final round started 3 days later, and Alex drew the scene of Pearl breaking through to the saint realm in the Lightning Tribulation.

He managed to get to the 5th place this time around, but that wasn't enough at all.

With 3 losses, he was unfortunately sent back to the first floor.

Chapter 1116: Reclimbing

"Fuck!" Alex couldn't help but curse when he got back to the first floor. He was the one that had chosen the room to go into and somehow had ended up with the worst room for himself.

He wanted to say it was unfair, but it really wasn't. Each room was fair to someone and unfair to others. That was how the entire sanctum functioned.

Hell, that was why there were multiple pathways to the top in the first place. So that the contenders had a fair chance to make it up to the top floor, as fair as one could get with luck involved at least.

Alex sighed, but this was no place to be worrying about anything. He needed to continue going up the floors.

A few people tried to ask him about the floors, but he refused to answer them. Instead, he walked over to the first room on the floor and started his journey again.

Along the way, he found out that it had been over 3 months since they had entered the sanctum. He knew it was right, but for some reason, it didn't feel like such a long time had passed.

He practically rushed his way through the rest of the floors, going into rooms he was used to and winning there.

2nd floor, 3rd floor, 4th floor, 6th floor. He went past them quite fast. Not as many people were challenging the tower anymore after losing so many times, so he got the opportunity to go up even faster.

He slowed back down around the 15th floor again as the people who were trying to go up had started to increase in number around here.

Still, that only meant a few days of delay.

Alex arrived on the 20th floor about 5 days later after restarting and was surprised that he had to go through it again.

He skipped the next 4 floors again and asked the spirit on why he had to redo it there but not the earlier floors.

The reason was apparently that everyone can do the 5th, 10th, and 15th floor since it was the most basic way to find a cultivator.

For the rest of them, however, there was a chance that it could be cheated on the pass-through. You could use what was definitely not your skill to skip the floor the first time around, so to weed those cheaters out, they were made to do it all over again.

Alex understood what he was trying to say and thought that was the right approach. His speed slowed down a little from 26 to 29, but it was nowhere near as bad as it was the last time he was here.

Since over 2 months had passed since the last time he was here, the number of people on this floor had saturated. Given the way the floor worked now, the wait actually came from having to wait for the rooms to be empty, rather than full like the last time.

Alchemy battle, Battle royale, Puppet battle, and Blind battle— Alex completed it all with relative ease as he had done it all the last time around and had a bit of practice.

Then, he skipped up to the 35th floor using the Endurance test on the 30th floor.

All this time as he made his way up the tower, there had been a single question on his mind.

Where were the assassins?

As far as he was aware, there were supposed to be 4 more left. He had killed the insect-controlling assassin and 3 clones.

So, by his understanding, there was the Clone's main body, the girl he met at the very start of the competition, and then...

He wasn't sure who the next two were. Since he didn't know anything about their leader, of of the last ones could be the leader, and the other assassin was most likely the red-haired, fiery chick.

But then something didn't make sense at all.

"The hell?" he thought. Had he perhaps not counted right? Or were there simply more assassins than he realized? What if the Dark Phoenix did not have 7 assassins, but more?

"I can think about it after I leave," he thought and continued on with the next challenges.

The 36th challenge was the one that required him to walk straight to his destination while walking through an illusory dream formation that spoke sweet nothings to him.

This time around, with how ready he was for the formation, it didn't work for him at all. He passed the 36th floor and arrived on the 37th floor where he waited for the Elemental battle room to be free.

He was so happy that he didn't have to wait weeks for these rooms to be filled up and instead it only took a day at most.

The Elemental battle was the easiest for him because of his Demon eyes and he got to go to the 38th floor.

Alex arrived at the 38th floor and looked at the first room. He saw that it was open with only 2 more people required.

He then looked at the other one that was open with only 3 people inside, asking for 5 more.

Without hesitation, he went to the 2nd room. He did not want to go through the Painting challenge again.

He was sure that with his talent, after a couple of tries, or even a single session with a master painter, he would learn a lot and his painting skills would improve by many realms.

However, he did not have such luxury at the current time, so he had to take his chances and go with the other one.

Alex walked into the other room, even if it still needed 5 more people to begin. Or 4, now that he was in.

He walked into the room and saw the spots lying around. He was meant to sit on one of the 5 remainings.

He looked at the 3 people in the room and nodded toward them. He was surprised to see these people there.

One of the girls was a plain girl with green robes, who merely glanced at Alex before focusing on her own meditation.

The other girl was a small girl with pink hair and bright blue robes. She gave a small smile to Alex and nodded back to him before looking away.

However, it wasn't these two that surprised him at all.

It was the third girl. It was the tribal girl he had fought in the battle hall, who he had also seen outside the sanctum.

He nodded toward her, but his surprise made him look at her for a second too long. At that time, his memory flashed back to the time when he fought her hand-to-hand.

There was a mystery for him at that time why her body had been so rigid at all. Body cultivators were strong, but her muscles felt very stiff.

When he saw the very well-hidden killing intent in her eyes, he realized what the reasoning was for that time.

Rigor Mortis. Her muscles were tough because it was a dead body.

"Oh fuck," he said softly. "Another clone."

The girl suddenly dashed out of her spot and started attacking Alex. Alex jumped back, but she easily reached him.

Her cultivation base was strong, at least in the Saint Core realm.

"How are you alive?" she demanded. "I killed you."

Alex blocked her punch and gave a swift kick before answering. "Oh, and did you stay around to check if that really happened?" he asked.

"You could not have survived a Core Explosion," she shouted and continued attacking. Alex could defeat her at any time, but he needed to call the spirit to take them elsewhere.

"Do you want to fight me so bad?" he asked, but the girl didn't answer. 'Did she learn from last time?'

"Y-you guys," the pink-haired girl stammered a little. "We-we cannot fight. P-Please, stop fighting."

Her voice came out like a plea and one could hear the desperation and fear in her voice.

"Please, stop fighting," she said and stood up to go stop them. However, before she could move two steps, she tripped over her own foot and fell face-first onto the ground.

"Ouch!" she shouted and slowly got up. When she did, everyone in the room saw her two huge breasts fall out of her robe, fully visible to them all.

"Aaaah! Don't look!" she shouted as she immediately turned around to hide it. However, the damage was done.

Not to her, to Alex.

He was distracted for a split second, and at that moment, a single needle was lodged through his rib that the dark-skinned clone had managed to sneakily attack him with.

Alex was sent flying along the walls of the room and fell on the other side. He slowly got up and immediately palmed the kick from the clone before spinning around to kick her away as well.

"My body is stronger than you might think," he said as he pulled the thin needle from his ribs and smelled it slightly.

"Hmm... poison huh?" he thought and smiled back. "That was not a bad idea. You knew you couldn't beat me, so you went for a poison attack while I was distracted."

His grin turned even larger as he replied. "Sucks for you though. If poison worked on me, the Jade-Faced Assassin wouldn't have died so easily at my hands," he said.

Then, he turned towards the big-breasted petite girl. "That was a nice trick. That charming technique of yours," he said.

"Can't believe I came across two assassins at the same time."

Chapter 1117: Fighting the Girls

"Wh-what are you saying?" the pink-haired girl asked. She blinked a few times, slightly blushing as well.

"Acting coy, huh? You're a pro for sure," Alex said. "Is this how you catch your victim?"

The dark-skinned girl came to attack at the same time, but Alex easily blocked her attacks before sending her backward.

'I can't kill her normally,' he realized. His attacks were strong, but even if he used his sword aura, he wasn't sure that he could hurt her at all.

Her physical body was almost as strong as her cultivation base, and together, they were quickly strong.

The pink-haired girl looked like she was about to cry. She even dropped a few tears as she looked at Alex. "I can't believe you called me an assassin just because I was trying to get you two to stop fighting," she said.

"Is that so?" Alex asked. "If that's the case, then you won't mind if your friend here dies, will you?"

Midnight appeared on his hand and Alex used the skill on the sword without hesitation. Yin energy flowed into the blade as it was suddenly filled with a Death and Darkness aura.

God Rending Death Blade came striking down at the dark-skinned girl, but the pink-haired girl didn't move at all. She made absolutely no sign of helping at all, surprising Alex and almost making him think that he had made the wrong assumption.

However, just then a strong gust of wind struck him from the other side, smashing him into the wall to the side. The wind was strong enough that it ripped off the robe he was wearing and showed the blood armor that he had underneath.

"Dammit, not another robe," Alex said as he slowly got up from the ground. However, before he was fully standing, a green blur caught up to him and a wing blade struck his blood armor.

The attack wasn't strong enough to leave any dent in the armor itself, but it was definitely strong enough to weaken the strength of his blood aura, even if just by a little bit.

"What the hell?" Alex shouted as he teleported to the side and looked at the green blur that returned to becoming just a human.

"You too?" Alex asked, exasperated when he saw the third and final girl in the room attack him as well.

"Of course," the girl said.

"Ahhh!" Alex finally realized. "You're the girl I met on the first day, weren't you? The one that gave me an ultimatum. What happened to that by the way? 2 months passed, but you didn't come to ask me for any answer at all. I was even planning on giving you a written answer, carved directly onto your body with my sword."

The girl frowned. "You were right," she spoke to the dark-skinned girl. "He's definitely strong. "Xue Mei, come. We're killing him together."

"Okay!" the pink-haired girl said as she softly ran toward the other two, her breasts freely bouncing as she did so.

She turned to look at Alex and gave a shy smile. "Like what you see?"

"No, not really," Alex said. "If you think I'm going to think you are pretty when you're literally trying to kill me, you must've been around a lot of weirdos. Or worse yet, you yourself are one."

The girl's smile faded a little and she was about to bite back when the green-robed girl looked at her. "Don't forget the mission," she said.

The pink-haired girl looked at the green-robed girl and cowered a bit. That was expected, however, as the green-robed girl seemed to be a Saint Soul realm cultivator.

'That's... going to be tough,' Alex thought as she finally revealed her cultivation base.

"We'll be done with this mission right here and now," the green-robed girl said. The other girls nodded.

Suddenly, they attacked again.

The dark-skinned girl moved first, hurling in with her body cultivation. The pink-haired girl did something to use a technique that was certainly a mental attack of some sort.

Her charms weren't working like they were supposed to, and instead, they were only hurting Alex.

The third girl, the strongest one, didn't move at all until she did. Her very first burst of movement came at such a terrifying speed that it barely even registered to Alex's demon eyes.

He barely managed to move his head to the side as a small dagger cut his cheek and part of his ear. Alex quickly realized that there was something bad about her movement technique that he couldn't understand at all.

He quickly crafted a helmet as well and reacted just in time when the clone girl attacked him.

Without hesitation, he let a terrible fire out of his palm, burning her while she was close. The green-robed girl tried to help, but before she could, something exploded next to her, sending her flying toward the wall in the distance.

The pink-haired girl was caught in the attack too and was knocked back as well.

Alex looked towards the dark-skinned girl and used all his intent to make the fire burn hotter and hotter. The girl shouted in pain, but for some reason, she didn't die at all.

At the same time, a carnivorous plant grew from the ground and ate her completely. Alex was surprised that he lost connection with his flames.

Another such plant grew out from next to the green-robed girl, which spits out the charred dark-skinned girl she was completely burnt, but was somehow alive, albeit shouting out of her mind with the pain.

The green-robed girl pulled out a pill and threw it onto the burnt girl's mouth who quickly swallowed it. She healed, albeit not completely, and was ready to fight again.

Alex got ready to burn them all, and so were the girls ready to fight when suddenly something appeared.

The tower's spirit appeared in between them and looked at each other.

"I have noticed that you are trying to kill each other, even though that is not allowed in the tower," the spirit said. "Can I take it as admission to the fact that you wish to duel each other to the death?"

"Yes," Alex said without hesitation.

The green-robed girl was about to agree too when the dark-skinned girl stopped her. "No, the last time I agreed, that thing took me to someplace else where he killed me. He must be planning something, which is why he is agreeing so easily."

The green-robed girl nodded her head. "No, we won't go anywhere," she said.

"Then will you please not fight? If you kill someone, I will have to disqualify you," the spirit said.

"That's alright," the girls said.

Alex frowned. That's not how this conversation was supposed to go at all. The girls were supposed to accept and he was going to fight them freely, without holding back at all, unlike what he had been doing until now.

"Spirit, you're screwing me over again," Alex said.

"But Master White Tiger, they don't want to fight at all, so we can't hold a duel," the spirit said.

"Of course, they want to fight me," Alex said. "They are here to kill me."

"They said no, so I can't help you," the spirit said as it disappeared.

Alex looked with wide eyes and the girls were surprised as well.

"Let's kill him quickly before that thing returns," the pink-haired girl said.

The green-haired girl nodded. "I will fight him, you two work on distracting him," she said.

"Got it, sister Li," the pink-haired girl said.

The green-robed girl turned into a blur again, barely being seen at all to the normal eyes. Even Alex's eyes were having a hard time following her as she appeared right in front of him.

He tried to react in time by cutting the space where she stood, but before he could do that, the girl suddenly vanished.

Everyone was confused, but then a second later they vanished as well.

Alex arrived at a different room with the girls while the Spirit stood next to them with a smile.

"How was my acting, Master White Tiger? These girls were certainly deceived into falling for my trap, weren't they?" he asked.

Alex looked at him with a weird look on his face. "What trap?" he asked.

"I acted like I was gone so they would fight you, and in doing so accept your duel. That is what—"

An attack passed through the spirit's body.

"— you wanted right?" the spirit asked.

Alex hesitated to say that his acting was very stupid and totally not required, but since he had helped him, he said nothing of that sort. "Thank you, that was much appreciated," he said.

"Of course, anything for you, Master White Tiger," the spirit said and slowly turned around to the green-robed girl who just attacked him.

"Little girl, I am an Immortal spirit. Mere attacks from a mortal won't do anything to hurt me at all," he said. "I suggest you try not to anger me."

The girl slowly backed away as the Spirit's words terrified her. She couldn't imagine just powerful an Immortal spirit would be.

"Anyway, this is the 44th floor, so no one should be coming here for a while. Have fun with your duel. Bye," the spirit said as it disappeared again.

Alex looked at the three girls and prepared to fight when something caught his eye from the corner of his vision.

His spiritual sense hadn't noticed it, but when he turned to look in that general direction, he saw cracks in space that slowly tore away more than just the walls of the room they were in.

And that was not all.

In those cracks, Alex could see multiple head-sized holes that gave him a clear view of what was past those cracks.

The world of silver and purple.

The Void.

Chapter 1118: Battle on the 44th Floor

The purple and silver world beyond the cracks was fascinating, but that only brought some anger from within Alex.

'Goddamn spirit, why did you bring me to a place where Dao won't work?' he couldn't help but ask.

While Alex was distracted by the view of the Void, the green-robed girl moved. She rushed toward Alex, trying to attack him as a blur once more.

However, for some reason, she could not produce the same speed as before and Alex managed to react in time to dodge her attack.

He looked back at her with a weird look on his face. "What happened to your speed?" he asked. He looked around the room and an answer came to him. "Was that a Dao? Were you using a Dao this entire time?"

That explained how she was so fast, despite having never seen anything in the Saint Soul realm be that fast.

"Your fire was a Dao too, wasn't it?" the girl asked. "You won't be able to use it either."

"Be careful of his blood," the dark-skinned girl said. "His blood is strong."

"We'll just have to make him use up his blood aura, that's all," the green-robed girl said. "There's a convenient place for us to dump his body too once we are done."

"What about that thing from before? It saw us," the pink-haired girl asked.

"We'll let the leader worry about it later," the girl said. "We can go into hiding if it reveals what happened here."

The other two girls nodded. "Now, don't try to attack him yourself. I will do the actual fighting, you two just aid me from the side," the green-robed girl said and started attacking Alex.

A few vines grew out of nowhere that tried to crush Alex. Alex tried to cut it with his sword, but the vines were too strong for anything he used that wasn't his blood.

He had to coat his sword with his blood before he could use it to cut the vines. At the same time, another attack fell on him from another side.

A wind slice struck him in the armor, pushing him a little back, but not hurting him at all.

Alex endured the force and swung his sword in the direction of the girls. His blood flew out of his sword, moving as a projectile that would crush anything in its path.

The girl used a technique and a tree with a thick trunk grew in front of her that took the majority of the attack from the blood. Alex's attack fell the tree, but the remaining energy wasn't enough to hurt the girls.

The Saint Soul realm woman struck the blood attack and sent it in the direction of the cracked space where it spread into a thousand different drops and lost connection to Alex.

Alex frowned and coated his sword with blood again. 'I can't do this many times,' he thought. 'I will soon run out of blood.'

He thought of how he could approach this fight, but before he could come up with anything, the pink-haired girl moved to the front and showed off her breasts again. As soon as Alex saw it, she used a technique that was meant to infatuate him with her.

Alex felt only pain at the technique being used.

"Fuck off!" he shouted at her as he sent out a Heaven's Impact. The pink-haired girl lost consciousness for a split second, and Alex launched another attack.

Another tree appeared that blocked his attack, and the dark-skinned girl pulled back the pink-haired girl from harm's way.

The girl came back to consciousness with a small headache. "What the hell is happening?" she couldn't help but ask. "How is this not working? It works with every man."

"Maybe he's different," the dark-skinned girl said with a serious face. "Maybe he's not into girls at all, which is why your charm isn't working at all. It's definitely working on me."

Alex was caught off guard. "Hey! Don't go making me gay just because your charm doesn't work on me. It's only that I've seen a girl far prettier than you, so none of your beauty amounts to anything in my eyes."

Two of the girls frowned at the same time when they heard that. "I'm going to kill him," the pink-haired girl said.

Without any shame, she dropped all of her robes and appeared naked. She felt not the least bit of shame as she started making full use of her naked body to start charming Alex.

Alex couldn't help but frown at the sight of that. The sight didn't work on him entirely, but he was still a man, so the pain got bigger even if he did avoid being charmed entirely.

He dropped his sword and created two blood daggers that he threw at the two girls that were not naked.

The green-robed girl created another tree to stop the attack, but with two daggers coming her way, she needed to focus more. The daggers flew towards both the girls even when they were moving around.

As they were trying to defend, Alex hit all three of them with Heaven's Impact.

The dark-skinned girl and naked pink-haired girl were hit the hardest, while the green-robed girl barely lost her vision for a split second.

At that time, however, Alex had moved and was rushing toward them. The green-robed girl had to stop the two blood daggers and Alex.

She knew she couldn't just defend herself and had to actually fight back now if she wanted to save her friends. So, she was forced to use a skill that would use a lot of Qi at once.

A lightning bolt flew from her palm that struck one of the daggers, while the tree that she grew stopped the other one halfway, while the remaining attack hit the dark-skinned girl.

The dark-skinned girl immediately fell unconscious from the dual attack, and Alex was rushing toward her to make use of this moment.

The green-robed girl moved to defend her, but with how much she had to do just before, she was a step late to defending the unconscious dark-skinned girl.

She could only hope that his thick skin would save the old man from Alex's attack.

Alex arrived right on top of the dark-skinned girl and simply punched her in the chest.

The green-robed girl created a vine from where Alex was to kill him once and for all. Saving the old man was already too late, so in exchange for taking a shot at him, Alex would now have to suffer an attack from her.

Alex's punch landed on the dark-skinned girl's chest piercing her chest easily, while sharp vines pierced through Alex's body easily.

The girl was surprised that she had succeeded. However, it had been too easy.

Alex's body suddenly disappeared into specks of light and the green-robed girl's eyes went wide.

"What! A fake?" she couldn't help but should.

She quickly spread her sense around and it told her where the real Alex was. She turned around just in time to see Alex materialize from thin air as his concealment ability was deactivated.

The green-robed girl's eyes went wide when she saw what he had done.

Two blood daggers were in Alex's hands, each piercing through the naked girl's body. One through the chest at the front and another from the back of her head.

Alex looked towards the green-robed girl's surprised face and moved his dagger down and up from her head and chest, splitting her chest and head vertically, leaving no chance for her to be alive.

He pulled the daggers out and grinned. "Good riddance, right? I can finally fight without any distractions," he said.

Without any other words, he jumped toward the green-robed girl.

The girl couldn't use any of her weapons or treasures, so she was in as much trouble as Alex was when it came to fighting. However, because Alex had his blood techniques and Midnight, he was in a far better spot than her.

The girl ignored defending the dark-skinned girl. The old man could die for all she cared. For now, her own life was in a precarious situation, so she needed to focus all of herself on it.

Without the need for defense, she forced Alex into a one-on-one fight that neither of them could win.

The girl's attacks were almost as strong as his own blood attacks, and Alex's blood armor was able to defend against most of the girl's attacks.

The fight dragged on for nearly 15 minutes as neither one of them got the upper hand.

Alex didn't care for the dark-skinned girl that was unconscious. As long as he could defeat this girl, he could win. So, he gave his all to fight her.

However, after 15 minutes of non-stop attacks, something happened that the girl had been waiting for from the very beginning.

As soon as the girl noticed, she sent a wind slash toward Alex.

Alex quickly used the blood sword on his left hand to attack the wind slice, but to his surprise, it was his sword that was completely destroyed.

The wind slice continued forward, landing on part of his left hand, which was too weak to defend against a Saint Soul realm attack.

His arm was chopped off, falling to the side.

"Hah!" the girl said, heavily breathing. "You've finally weakened enough that you can't stop my attacks now. I can finally kill you."

Alex looked slightly agitated as he realized she was correct. Within a second, his arm grew back, surprising the girl very much.

"You're right," he said while frowning a little. "I will have to switch it up then."

Chapter 1119: Victory?

Alex put Midnight into his storage ring. He didn't find any use for it now that he was weaker than the woman to the point that his blood attacks were doing nothing to stop her attack.

He still had enough blood in him to survive another 30 minutes of battle if he were to use it all, but after that, he would have not a single useful drop of blood remaining in his body.

His undying physique also restored his blood, but that blood never held any blood aura. That came from the blood that was created by his bone marrow, and that took a long time.

'It's all or nothing then,' Alex thought.

He could think of only two ways where he had any chance of victory in this battle at all.

That was something he came to understand after looking at the facts in front of him.

The green-robed woman had been fighting for a while now, so she was bound to be running out of Qi. Given that she didn't have access to her storage bag, she couldn't use any Qi replenishing pill she may have.

As for Alex, he was running out of blood aura, but his Qi was as full as ever. He had been barely using any of it at all, so he had an excess amount of it.

He could only find victory if he made use of this Qi.

The first path to victory was simple, and Alex chose this one to start with.

His blood armor suddenly liquidized to flow into his arm where it formed two long blades. At the same time, more blood came out from within him to replace the armor.

His armor while strong, was mostly for a show at the moment. The only part it truly protected was his dantian, his heart, and his head. Everywhere else from his chest, to his stomach was formed with a weaker blood aura that certainly couldn't protect him at all.

After all that was ready, he shot forward.

The girl was resting for 2 seconds after cutting off Alex's arms before she was attacked again. This time, he jumped towards her with his blood blades.

She attacked immediately without waiting. Another wind slice flew through the air, targeting Alex's body. However, he shifted at the last moment, so that it was only his arm that was cut off once again.

Even as his arm was cut off, he continued moving forward, and the blood blade that was on his arm, flew back towards him as his newly grown arm grabbed onto it and swung at the green-robed lady that was in front of him right now.

A massive tree appeared right in front of her that blocked the attack and a pair of vines appeared from the ground to grab Alex.

Alex jumped backward, but the vines were too fast and grabbed onto his ankles. Without blinking an eye, he cut off his leg and moved back.

By the time he landed, his leg had grown back as well.

The woman looked at him with a horrified face. "How is that possible? What are you? A monster?" she asked. She had never seen someone regenerate that fast. Not even eating pills could make someone regenerate that fast.

So what the hell was this?

Alex frowned slightly. 'That certainly uses quite a lot of Qi,' he thought. He hadn't lost this many body parts within such a small interval, so he was surprised at the overall loss of Qi.

It wasn't a large amount by any means, but it was certainly not a small amount either. He would have to be careful not to overdo it.

He jumped back towards her again, going into closed combat.

His plan was simple. Fight her up close and force her to use as much Qi as possible while trying to land a hit on her with the blood swords.

The woman retaliated with her own attack, which Alex dodged while taking some damage. He jumped back in and made her use more Qi before gaining some distance.

He waited for her to use another ranged attack, and once he dodged that, he went back to her with his two weaker blood blades in hand.

He swung the swords again, but this time a tree root slammed onto his back. He grunted as he was pushed forward more than he wanted to and fell straight onto the path of an incoming attack.

Alex tried to move, but it was too late.

A strong bolt of lightning fell onto him, hurting him despite the armor. The armor cracked in all places but the ones where it was the strongest.

Alex cried out in pain as the lightning burned his body all around. As his body fell uncontrollably toward the ground where the girl launched one of the strongest wind blade attacks yet.

The wind blade struck him and cut his body in half, right from his waist, barely a few centimeters below his dantian.

His body flopped onto the ground in two parts, but the girl wasn't done. Something grew out of the ground and swallowed both parts of Alex.

The carnivorous plant chewed onto Alex's body, slowly dissolving him in its toxin.

The girl finally sat back down in relief as Alex was eaten by her plant. She checked her Qi reserve which was starting to get pitifully low and knew she had not more than a few more attacks in her.

"Old man, are you awake yet?" the girl asked in a tired voice. "We're done here."

"This body... won't survive for long," the dark-skinned girl said as blood trailed from her lips. "Find me another one."

"You're already dying," the girl said. "Your soul is all but dead. There are no people here with a weaker spirit than yours. You are at death's door. Just give up, old man. It will be easier that way."

The green-robed girl turned back towards the dark-skinned girl. She slowly walked toward her and pulled out the bloody dagger that was jammed into her chest.

"I will tell the leader that you died in battle," she said as she brought the dagger high above.

"No, no! Don't kill me. I can live," the dark-skinned woman shouted.

"You've lived too long."

The old man's soul tried to leave the dark-skinned girl's body, but before he could, the green-robed girl jammed the dagger onto the girl's dantian, killing the old man's soul along with the body.

She let go of the dagger and slumped back. "Leader... will get angry," she thought. "So many died. He will have to restart once again."

"That's quite cruel of you," Alex spoke from behind her.

The girl quickly released her sense only to find that Alex had arrived next to her. His hands were empty to her eyes, but to her senses, they held a sword.

He swung it right across her chest.

For a second, the girl thought she was dead. However, she realized that nothing had happened.

"You bastard! How are you still alive?" she shouted as she brought out roots from the ground to attack him. However, the roots that came out were barely strong at all.

Alex casually struck them and they were destroyed.

"What?" the girl couldn't help but ask in surprise. "How did you?"

"So, that makes it what? 5? 5 members of the Dark Phoenix assassin group dead," Alex said. "Thanks for helping me kill one of them at least."

The girl heard those words, but her mind was too jumbled at the moment to listen to them. Multiple questions floated in her head, none of which had an answer.

Why was he alive? How did he regenerate? Why was he not eaten by her plant? What did he do to her? How did he block her attack so easily?

"What is that sword?" she asked.

"This?" Alex lifted the spiritual sword in his hand. "This is my 2nd method of killing you. I'm glad that it works... although you seem to be recovering already."

"I'll kill you!" she grunted.

"Didn't you already? And look what that resulted in," he said.

The girl frowned. She was angry but she had no idea how she could beat him now. He was like a cockroach that came back no matter how many times he was killed, so needed to make sure she killed him properly this time around.

'Am I really going to do this?' she thought. It was a desperate move, so she didn't plan on using it just yet.

At the same time, Alex jumped at her with his invisible sword and started swinging it around.

With each hit, he was weakening the girl's mental connection to her body. That resulted in her not being able to use as much of her body as she could, which then resulted in her not being able to use as much of her Qi.

She could alleviate this by using her own spiritual energy to drive away the effects, but she hadn't realized it yet.

Alex kept attacking, waiting for her to completely run out of Qi before he could kill her. As long as she had her qi, he knew no attack of his could ever hurt her even a single bit.

The woman tried to fight back, but she couldn't use her Qi as well as she wanted. So, as the fight prolonged, she started getting more and more desperate.

In her desperation, she took the only route she thought was the best for her in her current situation.

Alex sensed what was happening and couldn't help but exclaim, "Shit!"

She was going to blow up her body.

Chapter 1120: Demon

"Not again!" Alex shouted as he looked for a place to hide, but there was no such place at all. At least, not to hide.

"Spirit? Have I won?" he asked.

"No, master White Tiger," the spirit spoke from somewhere.

"Goddammit!" Alex cried out in anger. He looked towards the right and saw the cracks in space as well as the void.

"If I can..."

There was no time to think. He dashed forward as quickly as he could and arrived next to the girl's body which was prime for an explosion.

For some reason, her body was already dropping to the ground, but he couldn't guess why. He grabbed the and tossed her towards the fractured space.

The body exploded just as it reached the fractured space and Alex jumped next to the dead dark-skinned girl's body before putting it up as cover.

That barely did anything as the explosion shattered the girl's body into a million pieces, all of which shot onto his own body like shrapnel.

Then, the explosion reached him and it all turned black.

A small, white object flew out from the corner of the room. "Dammit, I nearly killed myself," the girl's voice came out of the white object.

It was her Nascent soul that she had tossed out before her body had exploded. She had tried to run as far as she could, and even then she had taken a lot of damage.

'At least I survived,' she thought. She looked towards Alex who had nearly turned into a pulp and then towards the side where her body had exploded.

She could see that the cracks had grown larger here and the thing beyond the cracks was more and more visible.

'What is that thing really? It's so eerie,' she thought as she looked at the void. It was somehow dazzling and terrifying at the same time.

"Oh right, I should complete the mission," she thought. The last part of the mission, after killing the suspect was to get rid of the body.

Although, she wasn't sure what body there would be after such a massive—

She turned around back at Alex just in time to see his body wriggling. Bones grew out from the dust and muscle fibers soon filled it up.

The girl's eyes went wide as Alex's body slowly reformed itself.

"No..." the girl said softly. "That's not possible. He has to be a demon of legends. How the hell does he keep coming back to life? He should be dead."

In less than 10 minutes, his body was back to normal, surprising the girl to no end.

However, even when his body was back, he seemed to still be unconscious.

"Wait... he survived, but he's still out," she thought as an idea floated into her head. "If I use this opportunity... I can take his body, his body which cannot die."

Without hesitation, she jumped into his body and soon found her mental self inside Alex's spiritual sea.

Godslayer flew aimlessly atop Alex's spiritual sea, half-worried, and half-bored with what was happening.

"Not again. How do you keep falling unconscious every single time?" he grumbled a bit, but he still stayed there, waiting for him to wake up. He was ready to take over for him if Alex needed some help.

His help wouldn't be worth as much since he had lost a lot of his power compared to what he had been before, but he was sure he could still aid a bit.

Suddenly, he sensed something and turned around.

The crystal ball with the black flame in it saw the woman that had managed to sneak in there.

"Who are you?" Godslayer asked as he looked at her closely. "Are you the little brat he was just fighting?"

"Another soul?" the girl looked at Godslayer with a weird look on her face. "Is that how he's been able to come back to life? You must be the soul that has been teaching the young man weird skills."

"Hahaha, soul you say. That's why I say this world is full of frogs that live in the well. Can't even tell the difference between a soul and a—"

"I won't hear your words, you demon," the girl said. "What have you done with his spiritual sea? What is that mountain? Is that an artifact to bring him back to life?"

"I am no demon, stupid girl," Godslayer said as he slowly moved toward her. "Why did you come here?"

"I—"

"Let me guess," Godslayer interrupted her. "It must be so you can take over his body, isn't it? Well, as someone who tried it before and failed, let me give you this advice, little girl. Give up. You can't take over his body."

The girl looked at Godslayer with a smirk and asked, "Was that meant to threaten me into leaving? Demon, you can't make me leave this easily. I will kill you and then kill that kid. Then, I will forever live on."

"I'm not a demon!" Godslayer shouted in an agitated voice. "Hey boy, are you going to kill her or not?"

Alex was still unconscious, so there was no answer at all.

"He's not going to answer you," the girl said. "He's been using some sort of spiritual attack for a while and has definitely run low on spiritual energy. With him unconscious, this is the perfect time for me to take over his body."

Godslayer sighed. "Fine," he said. "I guess I will do it then."

Suddenly, black fog rolled out of him as he was quickly clad in it. It flowed out towards the girl so quickly that she didn't even realize that she had all been surrounded by the fog.

"What is this?" she shouted and tried using her abilities, but the fog ate it all over, destroying everything in it.

"Nice talking to you, little girl," Godslayer said and then the girl died.

The black fog rolled back into him, disappearing completely, instead of sticking around him like the black goo it used to.

"That was a nice meal," he thought. "My strength grew quite a bit too. I knew eating Nascent souls was far better than some remnant spiritual impression from a beast. I should ask the kid to get me some more of them to repay me for my help here today."

Satisfied, he turned around and went back to aimlessly floating around Alex's spiritual world.

Alex woke up sometime later and slowly got up as he looked around in a daze. He remembered a second later what had happened and was surprised that he had even survived such an explosion.

"Did my last-minute idea of throwing the body into the void work?" he wondered. He looked towards the cracked space and his eyes went wide.

The cracks had grown further and seemed more dangerous now.

They filled up a third of the room from what Alex could see and the gaps in them that led to the void were large enough for a human child to fit through without touching any of the sides.

"Holy... isn't that bad?" he couldn't help but ask.

"That's fine for now," a voice spoke from next to him.

Alex looked towards the Spirit that had just arrived. "Why do you always leave me to die?" he asked. "Can't you just save me?"

"I must adhere to the rules, master White Tiger," he said. "I'm sorry I couldn't save you."

Alex sighed but said nothing he looked around. "Where did the..." he looked for the pink-haired girl's clothes. "Must've been destroyed."

He then searched for the other two girls' clothes, but they were not there too. "Dammit, all that battle, and I can't even get any reward in the end? All their clothes are gone," he shouted.

The spirit looked at him weirdly. "You... wanted their clothes as victory loot, Master White Tiger?" it asked.

"What?" Alex looked at him. "No, not their clothes. I wanted their storage bag, which they keep in their clothes. Dammit, not a single one remained."

"Ah, I see," the spirit said. "Well, what can you do? The girl did explode her physical body."

"Right, she did," Alex said. "She was a Saint Soul realm cultivator. What happened to her soul? Is she still alive?"

"No, she is dead," the spirit said. "I will be taking you back now."

Alex absentmindedly nodded and was teleported back outside the floor he had just left.

"There you go, you're back on the 39th floor," the spirit said.

Alex slowly nodded as he looked at the two rooms that were there. "Wait," he paused when he realized what the spirit had just said.

"39th?" he asked.

"Mhm," the spirit nodded.

"I left the 38th floor," Alex said.

"No, you left the 39th floor," the spirit said.

"No, I left the 38th floor," Alex said. "I did the battle against the puppet on 35, walked through a dream-illusion formation on 36, and completed the elements battle on 37. Now it's the 38th floor, with the painting in that room, and whatever it is on the room."

"Ah!" the spirit said. "I see where the confusion is. You are right on all accounts except the fact that you are on the 38th floor. In fact, you skipped the 38th floor, Master white Tiger."

"I... skipped it? Why?" he asked.

"Because I don't have access to it anymore," the spirit said. "The formation there has been completely destroyed, so anyone who passes the 37th floor gets sent directly to the 39th floor."

Alex looked at the spirit in awe. "Does that mean I was one challenge away from reaching the 40th floor?" he asked.

"Yes," the spirit said cheerfully. "Good luck on the rest of the way, Master White Tiger. I sincerely hope you complete all the challenges soon. Goodbye."