

Alchemy 131

Chapter 131: Meeting Senior Brother Again

Alex looked at the alligator's corpse in front of him, still somehow floating in the air, just like him.

"It was too weak. There is no way that was an Organ tempering realm monster right?' he thought. He instinctively related the monster to the monster core he had just eaten.

The battle had taken a while, but that was just due to how tough the alligator was. Its actual offensive capability or speed was nowhere near the level of what an organ tempering realm monster should have been able to do.

Suddenly, a yellow aura started to leak out from under the sea. It started off slow near a small shadow, but by the time it reached him, it had sped up by a lot. The yellow aura consumed both him and the corpse in front of him.

Alex realized that he was back in his body and wasn't in his mind anymore. Out of nowhere, a couple of notifications started popping up before him.

<Sun God's Divine Yang Body disintegrates everything>

<The monster core's element aligns with your spirit root>

<You have gained 680,000 Qi>

'What was that?' he started wondering. That fight was in his mind, but it felt so... Real. Almost like he would die if we weren't careful. 'Was that monster real? Did I really fight it? Why in my spiritual sea though?' many questions started running in his mind, but there wasn't anyone who he could ask about it.

He looked at the time and realized he had spent nearly 15 minutes fighting that monster in his mind. He simply shook his head wondering if that had something to do with his body.

'Since it's my body, I should try asking master just in case he knows about it,' Alex thought. He took a deep breath and decided to forget about it for now.

'Do I have to fight today?... No, today is Sunday, so everyone is free to do what they want. I should go and make some pills today.' He thought. 'But before that, I have something else to do.'

Alex got up from his bed and walked out. He walked out to the sounds of numerous noises from the area. Since no one had to go to the sect crater today, they were spending most of their time on the residential mountain.

Alex walked out of the sideways path and walked down the main path towards the main road. He walked up to the gate, however, instead of walking out, he went up to a guard.

"Hello elder, I am here to see elder Liu Xin, can I meet him?" he asked.

"You want to meet the leader? Do you have an appointment or something?" the guard elder asked.

"No, but the sect master sent me. Can you tell him that Yu Ming has come to see him?" he asked.

The elder was surprised when he heard that it was the sect master who had sent the inner sect disciple. He didn't dare go against the sect leader, so he just walked into the building.

After a while, the elder came back out and said, "the leader is waiting for you inside, go."

Alex thanked the guard elder and walked into the building. He found his way to the familiar room he had entered when he came here.

Inside the room was the young black-haired leader sitting in his chair with his feet on the table. "So, you said you came to see me?" he asked as Alex entered.

"Yes, senior brother," Alex replied. The man's eyes perked up when he heard that. He smiled a little and asked, "How did you find out? Did little Mei tell you about me?" he asked.

"No, it was master," Alex replied. The man, Liu Xin, stopped acting like an elder and started acting like an elder brother. "So, did master really send you? He usually just called me in my communication talismans," Liu Xin said as he scrutinized Alex's expressions to see if he was lying or not.

Alex simply said, "No, I needed to meet you so I came up with an acceptable lie."

"Oh, needed? Not wanted? Why would need to meet me? Do you need something? Are you in some sort of trouble?" he asked curiously.

Alex reached into his bag and took out a pink flower. Liu Xin watched him take out the flower with a puzzled face. "What is this?" he asked.

"This is a Spirit Cleansing Lily. Cultivate with this in your hand overnight and you will unlock Spiritual sense," Alex sent the message directly to Liu Xin's head.

Liu Xin was surprised when he heard a voice right in his mind. He asked with wide eyes, "Do you already have a spiritual sense?"

"Yes," Alex replied. Liu Xin was still in awe as he looked at the flower in his hand. Hidden in that awe seemed to be excitement and nervousness.

They talked for a while longer and Alex returned back to his room around 15 minutes later. He logged out a little before lunchtime to talk to the dorm warden about leaving the dorm room.

The dorm warden didn't think much about it and simply noted his name down in his notepad while constantly mumbling, "how many more are going to leave because of that damn game."

Alex was surprised he wasn't the first one to decide to leave the dorm just to play the game. During lunch, he told Logan, Matt, and Eric about his ideas of moving, and surprisingly, they weren't surprised about it.

"Yeah, we are thinking of moving too," said Matt. "But, we will stay as long as possible since staying in a dorm is very much simpler than having your own place and taking care of it. Maybe the dorm will change its policy on the capsules, who knows."

They finished their meals and returned back to the game. Alex opened his eyes inside his room. He looked at his storage bags and started thinking of the many pills he could make.

Finally, after he finished choosing what pills he would make today, he walked out.

Chapter 132: Production Hall

In a few minutes, Alex reached the sect crater. It was past 10 am in the morning, so there were many people here already. However, no one was in the fighting stages and was here for either getting a new technique from the library, training in the Training Hall, or creating something in the Production hall.

Alex wanted to take pills so he beelined his way to the Production hall. There weren't as many people in the Production Hall as he had expected.

'Maybe I'm just too used to seeing every disciple from the sect come down to make pills back in Hong Wu sect,' he thought.

He walked up and got into a queue. Very soon, it was his turn. He took out his badge and handed it to the elder.

"What are you here for?" the elder asked.

"Alchemy," said Alex as he gave a short and to-the-point answer.

The elder walked to the wall behind him and placed Alex's badge on one of the square outlines in a giant wooden board. A small wooden-token-like object fell from the square where the elder had placed the badge.

He came back and handed the wooden token to Alex and said, "Room 26." He then started tending to the other person in the queue. Alex walked into the hall and looked at the doors around the hallway. They all had numbers in them.

He quickly found his way to the 26th door and saw a small hole in the place where a keyhole should be. Alex slid in the wooden token and with a CLANK, the door opened.

"Oh wow," Alex said as he saw the inside of the room. The room looked exactly the same as the rooms in Alchemy Hall back in the Hong Wu sect.

"Did they copy from Hong Wu Sect?" he wondered. "Or did Hong Wu sect copy from them?" but he didn't need to know that. He went and sat near the middle and put aside the black cauldron that was already there.

He took out his own cauldron and put it down on the fire. It still smelled a little like the Blood Improving Pill he made last time, so he gave it a simple swipe with his Qi to get rid of any remaining odors and powders.

Soon, he started making his different pills. He hadn't made one in about a week, so he started off with something easy. And once he got back his habit, he churned out pills after pills.

Unfortunately, none of the pills he made ever crossed the Heaven-grade threshold. However, they did come very close to it. Two of the pills ended up with 47% and one got 49%.

But that only happened when the pill did not split into 2 different pills. When the powders in the cauldron did split to form two pills, the harmony level would generally stay under 40% for each of the pills.

Only on rare occasions when his ingredients were the right age, or when they had the right amount of energy would he get pills with very high harmony even when it split.

After a few hours, he stopped making the pills as he was mentally fatigued and decided to take a few minutes of break. He looked at all the pills he had made by now.

"Oh wow, 26 pills in just a few hours? I have clearly exceeded my record from last time and I could still go for a few more pills if I wanted to," he thought.

"Is it because I broke through so many times that I have so much more stamina? " He wondered. "I should level up more," he thought. But as he thought that, he shuddered a little as he remembered the fight in his mind this morning.

'Just what was that? Now that I think about it, the aura from the monster was definitely the same as the aura from the monster's core I ate," he thought. "Does that mean that the monster only arrived after I ate it?"

"Could it be the monster was already inside the core and it only came out because I ate the pill? If so then how did I not get them from the other cores I ate until now?" he had unintentionally started thinking of it again.

"Wait for a second, the only difference between the core I ate today and the core I ate before then was that none of the monster's cores before were of the Organ tempering realm."

He waited for a few seconds and thought, "Should I try it again?"

He took out a random monster core from his bag and looked at it. It was a monster core from a Bone Tempering 8th realm monster. Without thinking he put it into his mouth and swallowed it.

Within seconds he got a notification.

<Sun God's Divine Yang Body disintegrates everything>

<The monster core's element aligns with your spirit root>

<You have gained 109,000 Qi>

"So little. Having too many similar strength cores does reduce its efficiency," he thought. Then he reached into his bag and took out another core. This time, it was a core from a monster in the Bone Tempering 9th Realm.

He took the core and put it in his mouth. Similar to every other time, he swallowed the core as if it were a pill and within a

<Sun God's Divine Yang Body disintegrates everything>

<The monster core's element aligns with your spirit root>

<You have gained 186,000 Qi>

"Urghh... it dropped by so much."

He then reached back into his storage bag and took out another core. This time, it was a core from an Organ Tempering 1st realm monster. As he did, a small fear started spurting from deep within him.

"God! Should I do this? What if there really is something inside here and I can't kill it this time." He started worrying. But, in the end, he still needed to know if what happened last time was a coincidence or the norm.

So, he mentally prepared himself, put the core into his mouth, and swallowed.

Chapter 133: Severe Itching

As soon as he swallowed it, he mentally prepared himself to find himself flying up above his spiritual sea, facing another monster in front of him. However, all he got was a bunch of new notifications.

<Sun God's Divine Yang Body disintegrates everything>

<The monster core's element aligns with your spirit root>

<You have gained 540,000 Qi>

'Huh?' he thought, 'what's going on?'. He saw the notification and was surprised that he just got the points with no problem.

"Was the last time a fluke then?" the thought of it made him scratch his head. "Ok, I will try this one more time and see if it really was a fluke or not. If nothing happens, I will go back to making pills," he said as he pulled out another monster core from his bag.

From the aura, he could easily tell it belonged to an Organ Tempering 1st realm monster. Without thinking, he put the core in his mouth and swallowed. He was half expecting to just see another set of notifications, but instead, he found himself in a familiar place.

'It happened once more,' he was shocked. 'Then that means that in front of me is...' he slowly looked forward to seeing something clearly visible in the otherwise black sky.

The monster was a bull-like monster with tusks. It suddenly saw Alex and started running towards him.

"Still slow for a monster that is supposed to be in the organ tempering realm. I wonder if I am the stronger here or the monsters are just that weaker in my spiritual sea?"

Similar to last time, it took some effort, but he defeated the monster. As he looked at the corpse, his spiritual sea started to glow. Yellow light started shining from the spiritual sea, surrounding a small shadow. The yellow aura started covering everything and just like last time, it devoured both him and the corpse.

Alex found himself back in the alchemy room as a bunch of notifications went off.

<Sun God's Divine Yang Body disintegrates everything>

<The monster core's element aligns with your spirit root>

<You have gained 425,000 Qi>

"So, it wasn't really a mistake, huh. Monsters do show up in my head when I eat the pills," he said as he sighed. "This monster was weak, comparatively, but what would happen if a strong one showed up."

"Would I die if I ate that one core?" he wondered. He sent his consciousness into his storage bags to search for it. He had never really taken it out or done anything with it as he had felt a bit guilty about it, but now he was thankful he didn't.

He quickly found it and took it out. The Mother cat's monster core. A very thick aura started to permeate from the core as it filled up the room.

Alex's body started to shake as he had two different feelings in his mind. One was an instinctual feeling of fear and made him want to get away from it. While the other was an instinctual feeling of eating, that made him want to devour the core.

Thankfully, the two feelings counteracted each other and helped him keep a clear mind. The aura was something he hadn't felt ever. When the mother cat died, her aura had all but gone, so she couldn't make Alex fear her. But now that he was looking at the core, he started to wonder just how strong the cat monster really was.

Just as he was thinking that his left arm started itching. He tried to scratch the itch away but it didn't go away. "Huh? Did the wound from the saber not heal properly?" he wondered as he kept on scratching it.

He put the monster core back into his bag, and suddenly the itching stop. "Huh?" he was surprised. "Did it..." he took out the monster core once more.

The monster core filled the room with its aura once more and his left arm started to itch as well. "What is happening?" he was surprised. He tried putting the monster core back in and taking it back out. Each time he did that his left arm would either start to itch or stop itching.

He stripped his upper half, revealing his smooth, white skin except for that one scar the wolf gave him. He took out the core once more and realized it was exactly this scar that was itching.

He slowly brought the core towards his arm and it started itching more and more. Finally, he tapped his scar with the core.

FLASH

A bright light flashed from his scar as something shot out. Alex stumbled back in fear as he tried to at what has just come out of his arm.

"Huh?" he was even more surprised now. "No way!! It's you. How did you?" he couldn't come up with any questions to ask.

In front of him was a small monster trying to nibble on the monster core that it took from Alex just now. The little monster was barely any bigger than his actual palm and had white fur all over its body. It was the little white kitten.

It was the same little white kitten that he fought for and nearly died saving. The mother and son pair of the cat monster had disappeared while he was near death and he had not been able to find where they had gone as not even the elders had found anything.

But now, the little cat was in front of him. He finally got out of his surprise and realized the little kitten was trying to eat its mother's core. Alex didn't care if the kitten ate its mother's core or not as it might end up benefiting it in the end. However, if the same thing that happened to him, happened to the little cat, it would certainly take a lot of harm.

"No, don't eat that. Give it to me," Alex said as he tried to take back the core.

"MEOW," the little purred and moved away from the core. Alex was stunned once more as he couldn't help but ask,

"Did... Did you just understand me?"

Chapter 134: Pearl

Alex was a little surprised when he saw the little cat move away from the core. But once he stopped telling the cat what to do, it immediately gravitated back towards the core.

Alex swiftly pulled the core towards him and kept it in his bag. Now that there was no aura from the core available, the cat started blinking its black eyes around, not knowing what to do.

"Meow," it meowed a little.

"Come here, little buddy," Alex said as he gestured the cat to come towards him with his hands.

"Meow," The cat meowed as it clumsily jumped towards Alex and started nudging his head on his knees.

"Where did you come from, buddy?" he asked, and started to think back on what had just happened. 'My arm,' he thought as he looked at his arms once more. 'It's gone. Did my scar heal, or...' he finally remembered what his master had said that day in the auction hall.

'Beast companions are a little unique, in that they don't live in the physical world after they bond with a cultivator,' was what Ma Rong had told him in the auction hall just before showing the tattoo of her own beast in the nape of her neck.

'A tattoo... was my scar, not an actual scar, but a tattoo?' he started to finally understand what had happened.

'But, that would mean...' he looked down at the little cat and tilted his head as he asked, "Did you form a bond with me?" he wasn't expecting an answer and he didn't get any.

He pet the little cat on its back and scratched its belly. "Meow," the cat meowed once more.

"Hmm... don't I have to feed you my blood essence for you to make a bond with you?" he asked. He remembered reading records on beast companions in the library. Although they weren't extensive in knowledge, they did give a general idea of what had to be done.

According to the records, beast companions could only be bonded by the beasts themselves. The humans could only 'influence' the desire to bond. This was why people got cubs and other newly born monsters. So that they could influence them from early on and make them voluntarily bond with them.

"But, Master did say the bonding requires humans to present their essence to the monsters. And the bond is only successful when the beasts accept the blood and drink it. But I haven't given the little cat any blo— " his words stuck in his mouth as he remembered the day back then.

That was the same day he had managed to refine the Steel sword. And refinement process was only done when the artifact accepted the person's essence, an essence which meant blood from their foreheads.

"That's right. The wolf bit me in my head and I was bloody at the time. Did you take in some of the blood at that time? Now that I think about it, I don't remember much of what happened after I pulled out the sword." Alex guessed that the little cat must've accepted his blood essence when he was down and nearly unconscious.

He pet the cat some more and as he was rubbing its belly, he felt its stomach move a little. "Hmm... are you hungry?" he was a little surprised.

He tried to look up its name and suddenly a bunch of extra information came to his head.

[White Cat (Infant) - Bonded

Name: None

Cultivation Base: Skin Tempering 2nd Realm

Evolution Chance: 5%

Cultivation Method: None]

"Oh," he was slightly astonished when he saw the entire panel pop up. This was a new set of information that he had never seen before.

"Name? You want a name buddy?" he asked the cat. "Meow," Alex thought he heard some sort of affirmation in that meow just now.

"Okay then, let's see... should I use real-life names like Toby or Felix? Nah, that doesn't sound right? Can I not choose and instead use a randomizer?" he thought as he clicked on the name.

A panel opened up where he could type and at the bottom left was a randomize button. He clicked on it, and it gave the name 'lingling'.

'Lingling? I don't like that.' Alex went on to randomize once more. He randomized a few times before he saw a name that he liked.

"Hmm... Since you are mostly white, the name fits too." He clicked confirm on the panel. "Alright then, from now on, your name will be Pearl."

"Meow" the little cat gave a questioning look. "Yes, Pearl. That's your name now." Alex said with a smile on his face.

The cat smiled as well and started meowing about. It started running laps around him but after a few laps, it sat near him in exhaustion.

"Are you okay little Pearl?" he asked for a second. The cat purred a little, its voice very weak.

"Oh, right. You were hungry. What do you eat though, meats? I don't have any." Alex said. Any restaurants he could visit were outside the sect and that would take quite a while to reach.

"Ah, that's right, monsters eat other monster's core too, right?" he took out a core from a very weak Skin Tempering 3rd realm monster and gave it to the little cat.

"Here Pearl, can you eat this?" he asked the cat.

"Meow Meow," seeing the monster core, the little cat's eyes immediately lit up with hunger. Alex put it near its mouth and it started to immediately nibble on it.

Unlike its mother's core, however, it easily started biting off the low-level core. Within minutes, it managed to finish the entire core and started meowing like it was getting tired.

"You want to sleep buddy?" he asked. He wanted to put him in his robes, but then remembered that beast companions usually stayed on the person they bonded with.

"Alright, can you go back here?" he asked as he pointed to his left arm. Immediately, white light shone from the cat as it leaped into his arm, turning to a tattoo of a paw.

Chapter 135: Beast Care

"What does a monster eat exactly? Meat may be?" he thought. "Urghh... I wish master had gone more in-depth when she taught me about the beast companions," he started whining a little.

He decided to go to the market outside and buy something for Pearl later on. For now, he would continue with the alchemy.

He proceeded to make a few pills before taking a break to get some food and returned back to make some more pills. He continued until it was 6 pm.

"I should stop now, and go do the other things," he thought as he left the alchemy room. He took the wooden token from the door and returned it back to the elder outside.

The elder looked at the time and calculated the price based on the amount of time he had spent in the room and the discount off of his badge number.

"168... that is 46% discount off of 2 spirit stones for each hour. Rounded off, you have to pay 8 spirit stones for the entire day." The elder said.

Alex took out 8 spirit stones from his storage bag and paid for it. The sky was starting to darken and since nobody was fighting today, most of the disciples had returned back from the crater.

Alex slowly made his way back to the other side of the mountain. However, instead of going back to his home, he left for the market in front of the sect.

After walking past the gate, he looked around to see if there were any restaurants there. Instead, he found something better. Towards the outer area of the market, he saw a small shop called 'Beasts Care'.

"Is that like a Veterinary?" he wondered and walked towards the shop. The shop was very small compared to the other shops in the market.

As he entered, he saw a very old man sitting in a chair, petting a little bunny on his lap. As soon as he realized someone had entered, he looked to the side and asked, "What do you want, boy?"

Alex was surprised when he saw the man be grumpy without even him doing anything. The man was wearing an elder's robes, so he decided to not say anything regarding his grumpy personality. Instead, he put on a friendly smile and asked,

"Hello elder, I got a new beast companion and it seems to be hungry, can you tell me if there is something I can buy here to feed it?" he asked.

The elder didn't look towards Alex at all and went back to petting the rabbit on his lap as he asked, "What beast?" he asked.

"It's a little kitten of a White Cat monster," Alex replied.

"Hmm..." the man turned towards Alex as he looked at him with a confused look. "What beast did you say?" he asked once more.

"A White Cat monster's kitten," he replied.

"A White... Cat? Show me," the elder said as he got curious.

"He is currently sleeping elder," Alex tried to say, but the elder just spoke back once more with a more authoritative voice, "I said show me."

Alex flinched a little. "Hey Pearl, can you come out?" he slowly whispered to the cat. However, the cat showed no response whatsoever. He tried softly calling it a few more times, but he was left unattended by the cat.

"What is going on boy? I told you to bring out the beast?" the older man started to get angry.

"I'm sorry senior, this is my first time trying to call out my beast companion, but he seems to not hear it when he is inside the tattoo," Alex replied.

"Your first time? Just pour some Qi into your tattoo and call it, let me check," the elder said.

Alex did as the elder said and poured some Qi into the tattoo. Surprisingly his tattoo swallowed in the Qi, never to be seen again. Alex faltered slightly when he saw that immediately found his footing and started calling Pearl out.

His tattoo suddenly itched and within a single second a white light suddenly shot out of his arms. Pearl, the little cat, was standing straight on top of the counter.

It turned around to look at Alex and meowed but immediately started purring with a serious face when it saw the old man.

"It's okay Pearl, he's not here to hurt you," Alex said calming Pearl down, and only then did pearl stop purring.

"Fascinating," the old man started mumbling as he walked up to Pearl and looked at him more carefully. "So fascinating. A monster I have never seen before. I never thought I could find one that I wouldn't recognize."

He suddenly turned to Alex and asked, "You said this is your first time taking the cat out, right? Then you must've gotten it recently. Tell me, Where did you get it?"

"Umm... it's actually been around 3 weeks since I saw him last. He bonded with me in the southern forest without me knowing and only came out today for the first time," Alex answered.

"Hmm... 3 weeks ago... southern forest... cat..." the elder's eyes suddenly lit up as he turned back towards the cat. "No way, the cat monster that was said to be in the saint realm. That cat?" the elder said with shock.

Alex was shocked too. 'He knows about the crater? I don't remember seeing him back there?' he thought.

"I see, no wonder I have never seen it. It's the child of a saint realm monster that came here from far away. Then that must mean that you were the Hong Wu Sect's Disciple there at the time."

The elder eyed Alex up and down and started saying, "I see, I see. You were the little kid they said Wen Cheng went out of his way to make a disciple."

Alex was a little shocked, "You know about me?"

The elder chuckled a little, "Hahaha, I am one of the few ones who do. In fact, I am even part of the reason why the other elders do not know about you."

Chapter 136: Elder Xian

"You were the reason the other elders don't know about me?" Alex asked curiously.

"Well, a part of it, but yes. Basically, when Wen Cheng and the rest returned from the crater where the saint realm monster fell, they started talking about how Wen Cheng had gone far and out to make you a disciple even though you were a part of the Hong Wu Sect already."

The man reached into his storage bag and took out a small piece of what looked like dried meat. He put the meat near Pearl's nose and suddenly, Pearl started munching on it, meowing from time to time.

The man smiled and continued, "Wen Cheng justified his action by talking about how talented you were and some other things. So, the few elders that were there came to a decision to only spread the information about the monster, but nothing about you."

"If your information of you being the sect leader's disciple is ever spread, the other elders would target you and make sure you were never high in the rankings. All so they can fight at a chance to become the sect leader themselves."

He then looked at Alex and tilted his head as he said, "In maybe a year or maybe even half a year if she is lucky, little Mei will surely breakthrough to the True realm, at the time, the seat for the first place will be empty and in contention from everyone. Will you be able to do your best and take the seat by yourself?"

Alex was a little surprised, 'Will I?' he started wondering. While his initial speed of breaking through had been very fast, he was starting to slow down. And now that he couldn't eat monster cores as freely anymore, he was starting to doubt if he could reach the higher realms as quickly.

'No. I shouldn't doubt myself. I still have many other ways I can do that. Especially since I have the God Grade talent,' he thought.

"Yes, I am sure I can do it," he replied to the elder.

The elder simply smiled and said, "Anyway, let's get back to what you were here for initially. What exactly did you want to know?"

"Well, I originally came to buy some food for little Pearl here, but now I want to learn as much as I can about beast companions and how to take care of them," he said.

The elder thought for a little and said, "Let's see, I think it would be better if you just go and learn these from the library." The elder said.

"The library? Don't I just get techniques from there? Will knowledge like this also be available there?" he asked in confusion.

"Ah, it seems your time in Hong Wu Sect has clouded what is normal and what is weird. The library is originally made for information to be shared for free."

"You can just go to the library and read anything on the lower 3 floors for free. The techniques and other important records are kept on the 4th floor and up, and will cost you money."

Alex nodded in understanding as he said, "I see. I will do as you say, elder. In the meantime, can I know what I should and should not feed my cat?"

"Stop treating a monster like a house pet. They are used to living in the wild and will eat anything they can. As for beast companions, they need even less food as long as you give them your Qi from time to time. It was probably hungry in the first place since you never fed it your Qi since you didn't know about it."

"Now that you do know it is staying with you, feed in a little Qi every day and it will be satisfied." The elder said.

"Oh, and what about the different monster cores? I heard that monsters can eat other monster's cores to increase their own cultivation. Does that mean, I can feed the cores to my cat and he will increase in cultivation as well?" he asked.

"Yes and No. While it can eat cores to increase its cultivation, if it eats a core from a monster stronger than it, it will not be able to handle all the energy and will die. There have been cases where the monsters simply exploded from eating a monster core from a much stronger monster."

"Also it is better if you don't feed your beasts as many cores. Similar to normal cultivators, they also need to stabilize their cultivation base before breaking through. If you keep on feeding them from very early on without properly maintaining their cultivation, they will end up with a bad cultivation foundation and will end up much weaker than what they should have been."

"Well, that is all I will tell you. Learn other things on your own at the library," the elder said and went back to sitting on the chair and started petting the little rabbit he was petting when Alex first came in.

"I understand, Thank you ... uh, what should I call you, elder?" he asked.

"You can call me elder Xian," the elder said.

"Thank you for the information elder Xian," Alex bowed a little in respect as he called back Pearl and started to leave the shop.

"Where do you think you are going boy?" the elder suddenly shouted from behind him.

Alex stopped in surprise and turned around to look at the elder with a curious face, "Do you have some more things to tell me, elder Xian?" he asked.

"No, I don't, boy," the elder simply said which confused Alex even more, but then he followed it up with, "But you should know I am not operating a charity here. You came into my shop and took information from me, it's time you pay up."

"Oh, yes elder," Alex was a little surprised, but still complied and took out some spirit stones and gave them to the elder. The elder took what was handed and simply said, "I have checked your little cat, he is perfectly healthy and you have nothing to worry about."

"I see, thank you, elder." Finally, Alex left the shop and went back to his room.

Chapter 137: Blood Essence

Alex returned back to his home a little later and logged out to get some food. He returned back to the game after a while.

He logged back into his lit-up room and looked at the time. It was half-past 7 right now.

"Hmm... what should I do now? Just wait around for it to be 9 pm?" he started to wonder. There was still over an hour before he had to go train with his master.

"Oh right, the cauldron. It should be used enough that it will be refined now." Alex thought and brought out his cauldron.

He placed the cauldron in front of him and placed his palm along the side of it. He slowly pushed his Qi towards the cauldron and instead of sending it in, he started washing the insides of the cauldron walls with his Qi.

"I don't feel any resistance anymore. Should be enough," he thought and took out his steel sword. He looked at the giant sword in front of him and thought, 'I should get a dagger or something like a knife. I can't keep on taking out such a big sword for small things like cutting my skin.'

He proceeded to turn the blade's tip towards his forehead and slowly made a small cut on it. His forehead started to bleed, but it also started to heal immediately. Alex stopped and looked as his skin wound healed within 5 minutes.

But, blood had already flowed out of his head, so he was fine with the wound healing. He took the blood, which was his blood essence, and slowly dropped it inside the cauldron.

ZMMMM

A small vibrating sound appeared from the cauldron and it started to glow. The drop of blood inside the cauldron started to move around but then was immediately swallowed by the cauldron.

The vibrating cauldron stopped, and a pair of notifications appeared.

<' Golden Jade Cauldron' has taken in your blood essence>

<' Golden Jade Cauldron' has accepted you as its master>

<Congratulation, you have successfully refined the True Earth grade artifact 'Golden Jade Cauldron'>

"Yes!! For a second there, it scared me," he thought as he looked at the cauldron's stats now that it was refined.

[Golden Jade Cauldron: Refined

Grade: True Earth

Elemental Alignment: Metal - Earth

Weight: 22 KG]

"Oh, it actually has elemental affinity as well? Thankfully that doesn't harm my pill-making," he thought. Alex wanted to bring out the stiletto as well, but he didn't want to break the floor with how heavy it was.

"Uhh... I want to check if there are any differences when making pills with the cauldron. Maybe I will have to wait until tomorrow," he thought. Then immediately thought, "No, I have to look up the information about beast companions tomorrow. After school then? Uhh... I need to go sell those pills in the auction."

"I guess I will have to wait a few more days before I see if there is any more improvement. Although, I don't see why there would be any?"

He kept back the cauldron and started rubbing his forehead to get rid of the remaining blood.

"Is this a waste of blood essence?" he started wondering as he looked at the little bit of redness in his hand.

"Ah, that reminds me, if my blood essence can help refine objects, then what can the blood essences of other animals do?" He quickly thought back to the item that he still had with him. The [????? ????]'s Blood Essence].

"I don't think it's an alchemy material. If it was, I would've known its name, right?" he thought as he took it out to check it. He looked into his storage bag to search for it and found it very quickly.

He took it out and was surprised when he saw it. While it had said blood essence, it was actually a solid ball of blood. Almost like, all the liquid in the blood had dried off.

'Is this what monster's essence looks like?' he wondered. Immediately a thick bloody scent started to fill the room.

"What the..." Alex started to get shocked. The aura that the blood was producing was so suffocating that he almost felt like he couldn't breathe anymore. He tried to use his Qi to bring the essence back into his storage bag, but he couldn't even get his Qi out anymore.

'What is happening?' he wanted to scream, but not even his voice escaped his mouth. The most he could do was grunt in pain as he was slowly brought down to his knees.

Suddenly, a warm flow of hot energy burst out from deep within him, relieving most of the pressure he was feeling. However, he still couldn't stand anymore or even use his Qi.

All he could do was sit around and watch the blood essence float in the air.

"What do I— " suddenly, his left arm started itching and the little cat jumped out. "Pearl? Why are you out?" Thanks to the little relieved pressure he could speak now.

"Meow." Alex thought he could almost hear the eagerness to eat the essence in Pearl's meow.

He remembered back to elder Xian telling him how a monster could die if it ate cores with too much energy in it. If this blood essence was the same thing as the cores, Pearl would be in serious danger if he ate that.

"No, don't. You can't mo—" his words left stuck in his mouth as he saw Pearl walk freely in this intense pressure. He could barely not feel the pain thanks to whatever his body was doing, yet Pearl was walking forward like a fish in water, completely unobstructed by the pressure.

'Is it because the essence came from his mother?' he wondered. He stopped feeling the same panic and fear he felt before and watched as little Pearl stopped right below the floating ball of blood essence.

In a single jump, Pearl reached the essence and opened its mouth. And without a shred of hesitation, he swallowed it.

Chapter 138: Changes in Pearl

Suddenly, the aura inside the room disappeared, leaving Alex finally free to move. He immediately got up and ran to where Pearl had landed.

He took pearl in his arms and started asking, "are you okay? Are you hurt?". But Pearl couldn't hear him. "What is happening?" Alex wondered as he looked at Pearl.

Pearl seemed to be asleep, but his eyes were fully open. His breathing was calm and there were no irregularities in his aura as well. Alex started to worry about what was happening to him.

Suddenly, Pearl jerked as he jumped down from his arms and started running around the room like crazy. "Meow," it screamed as if it was in pain.

"Wha-what's wrong?" Alex didn't know what to do. After a few laps around the room, Pearl finally stopped and released a loud growl, that sounded neither like a meow or a cat's purr. It almost sounded like...

Pearl looked up. His fur even more white, eyes filled with great intelligence and-

"Did you grow in size, buddy?" Alex said as he went up to Pearl to grab him. Pearl went from being about 15 cm in length to about 25 cm. He had grown a little bigger.

"Meow," Pearl meowed in confirmation. Alex got stunned. He could easily tell that Pearl was saying 'YES' to his question. Before, it was a vague feeling of an answer, but now, to him, it felt pretty clear. This was a chance he wasn't expecting.

"What happened to you? Why did you suddenly go to eat the blood essence?" he asked.

"Meow." A long meow came from Pearl and Alex once again was stunned as he could more clearly understand what Pearl was saying. 'I ate it because I had to.'

"Ho-How do I understand you?" He tried to think back to the records he had read and the lessons his master had given him. "Master said that once a beast companion turns adult, you can communicate with them. Did she mean that they could communicate both ways and not just the monster understanding the cultivator's word?" he wondered.

"But, that would mean that you are already an adult, and that is impossible, right? I just saw the system calling your infant this afternoon."

Alex nervously opened the cat's status page once again and was surprised by the difference from before.

[White Cat (Child) - Bonded

Name: Pearl

Cultivation Base: Skin Tempering 8th Realm

Evolution Chance: 40%

Cultivation Method: ????? ?????'s Dominating Body (Shared)]

Pearl had changed from infant to child according to the game. Also, his cultivation base had had a massive leap in the realm.

'Is this normal? Does a beast not need to be an adult to start communicating?' Alex started to wonder. He looked at the Evolution Chance stat and was shocked to see that it had gone from 5% to 40%.

"What brought along such a massive change? Could it be him breaking through? No way, right?" When Alex properly thought about it, he came to a single conclusion. "It was the blood essence, wasn't it?"

He looked at Pearl and thought, " That was your mother's blood essence, but it didn't belong to your mother. If it did, it would say White cat, wouldn't it?" He asked.

"Meow," Pearl meowed in confusion as none of what Alex was talking about made any sense to him.

"That must be it. What if that thing whose blood essence you took, what if this evolution turns you into that? Maybe you have a 40% chance to become something else." Alex felt pretty good about this theory and moved on.

Finally, he saw the new cultivation method that Pearl had acquired. "Dominating body?" he was slightly caught off guard. "Why is your cultivation technique a type of body? That should be its own thing no?" he asked.

"Meow"

"Yeah, you wouldn't know. I know. Still, it's weird that a body is a cultivation method. I would've never guessed that." Alex started to accept what was written and was about to close the status page when he finally noticed the 'shared' thing written on the cultivation method.

"What is this?" he was about to question it when suddenly, Pearl started coughing.

COUGH COUGH

"What's wrong? Are you okay?" he panicked as he started rubbing Pearl's back to relieve some stress.

COUGH COUGH

But he kept on coughing. "Is something stuck in your throat?" he tried to send his spiritual sense into Pearl's body, but it couldn't penetrate past his skin.

He started feeling more worried.

COUGH COUGH

COUGH

Suddenly, Pearl coughed out something red onto the floor and stopped coughing. Only then, did he start breathing normally with no more cough.

"It's okay, It's okay," he consoled Pearl while slowly rubbing his back. "What was that?" he turned to look towards the red thing that flew out of his mouth.

There, Alex saw it. Crimson red blood, floating in the middle of the air. Unlike the blood essence previously, it was all liquid. It was floating with an unstable form, constantly moving around, unable to keep a shape for more than a moment.

"Is that Pearl's blood or..." he started to wonder if this was the true form of the blood essence that Pearl swallowed.

Just as he was thinking this, he felt his body start heating up. "What now?" there were just too many things happening one after another for him to process.

"Pearl, get back," he said and waited for Pearl to go back to being a tattoo. Once he was inside, Alex started feeling more and more heat from the inside of his body.

Suddenly, a gravitational force erupted from him. The heat all rushed up to his head and that had become the source of the gravity. The shapeless blood suddenly stopped moving and immediately shot towards him.

It hit him right at the middle of his brows and pierced its way through.

<Blood Essence discovered>

<Source not in database>

<Player is...>

Alex never got to hear any of these as he fainted the moment it entered his head.

Chapter 139: Time Skip

"Uhh... My head!!" Alex stood up, rubbing his forehead as he came back to consciousness. "Wha— Where?" he looked around.

"Game?" he looked around a little more. After rubbing his head for a few moments more, he finally started to think. 'The essence..' He finally remembered what had happened.

He released his spiritual sense to see if anything was different about him. He found nothing. Even his forehead where the drop of blood had pierced through was already healed.

"Is there really nothing wrong with me then?" He had expected to at least be hurt a lot, but after the first minute of intense headache, nothing happened.

"What's the time?" he looked to his top right corner to view the current time. "9:23? I'm late," he thought as he stood up and walked to the front door.

He was supposed to meet his master at 9 pm, yet over 20 minutes had already gone by. His master must've been waiting for a long time.

He immediately opened the door and...

"What?" he was surprised when he saw the outside. It was bright. As bright as the brightest day he could remember. He slowly turned his eyes towards the upper right corner of his vision once more and saw what he had missed at first.

AM. It was 9:23 AM.

"I slept through the entire night?" Not only had he missed his training with his master, but he had also missed the entire night. The only thing he did last night was sleep. Not even normal cultivation.

He walked back inside and got to thinking as to just exactly what had happened. The blood essence had hit him, and he had fainted. He saw nothing else happen.

He slowly poured his Qi into his tattoo and called out Pearl. "Pearl came out with a mighty 'Meow'." Thankfully, he hadn't grown since yesterday and was the same size.

He looked him over and felt his aura. "You look fine. Do you feel fine buddy?" he asked as he petted him.

"Meow," Pearl meowed in confirmation. "Alright, go back now. I have to go to my classes. I will see you later on, okay?" Alex said.

"Meow?" Pearl didn't understand what he meant but went back into his left arm without hesitation. "Alright, let's log out," he said as he logged out from the game.

He went to his classes as normal and studied them properly. Even though he was making a ton of money thanks to the game, he couldn't tell when it would all come crumbling down, so he needed to have some knowledge to get jobs later on.

After he was done with classes, however, he rushed back to the game. He logged into the game at 3 and a half o'clock and walked out of the home.

He walked out of the gate of the sect without saying anything. He quickly found his way to an empty alleyway and entered there. Once inside, he went invisible to change his garments. He took off the yellow robes that would identify him as a Tiger sect disciple and wore light green robes representing the Hong Wu sect.

Once he was changed, he turned off his invisibility and walked out. Then as swift as ever, he made his way to the Pink Cloud auction house.

He wasn't stopped at the entrance at all and was led to one of the rooms inside the hall without hesitation. After a few minutes, Cai Ping entered. It seemed that she was the only one told about his arrival whenever he came here.

"Hello, Daoist Yu. It has been a week since I saw you. We missed your pills during yesterday's auction. Quite a few people were disappointed." Cai Ping said as he teased Alex a little.

"Ah, I'm sorry. I have been busy this week due to something that came upon me unexpectedly. I have barely gotten any time to make pills now. However, I had free time yesterday, so I could make some more pills."

Alex slowly reached into his storage bag and pulled out a bunch of pills bottles. "Here you go," he said as he passed them along.

Cai Ping looked at the pill bottles and picked them up to count exactly 21 pills in total. She then proceeded to take out a pill tester to check every single pill he had brought in.

When she was finally done with all of them, she was dumbfounded. Half the pills among the 21 different pills were above 40% in harmony. 3 of them were even above 45% with 2 being at 47% and 1 being at 49%.

This was beyond what she had been imagining he would take out. The few other times he had come here, she was already shocked by the sheer number of quality pills he had brought, but now, the quality had gone up in level once more.

'I almost started to believe it was him who made this pill, but even if he is really a genius, that should be impossible. Did senior Ma Rong make it? That would make sense since he was together with senior Ma Rong during the previous auction, but her Common rank pills should definitely go above and beyond Heaven grade.'

'Did she send her failure with him?' she started to wonder.

"Daoist Yu, are you sure you want to sell these pills. They are quite amazing, so don't you want to keep it to yourself?" she asked.

"No. I'm an alchemist. I made those pills in the first place to sell. What would I do with them, if I just keep them in my storage bag, collecting dust?"

"I, see. Then let me set up your contract," Cai Ping said as she proceeded to prepare a contract using the talismans available on the table.

"Wait," Alex said as he saw her hand moving towards the talismans. "I have more to sell this time, other than just the pills."

"Oh," Cai Ping said in surprise. "Can I see what it is then?"

Chapter 140: Selling

Alex reached into his storage bag once more and took out a small box from it. He then handed it to Cai Ping, who curiously looked at it.

It was a wooden box and quite small in size. "An alchemy ingredient?" she asked.

"No— " Alex stopped for a moment. 'Wait, isn't it an alchemy ingredient? Why else could I know what it was?' he felt like he was missing out on this core information for a long time now.

"It's a Spirit Cleansing Lily," he answered, still trying to calm his reeling mind. 'It must be an ingredient to a pill I have no idea about.' That was the conclusion he came to.

Cai Ping opened the box and looked at the orange lily inside curiously. "A Spirit Cleansing Lily?" she was a little confused. "I think I have heard about this somewhere before, but I can't remember. Please wait for a second, Daoist Yu, I will have to call someone."

Cai Ping took out a communication talisman and used it. Within minutes, an old, white-haired man walked in.

'It's him!'. Alex was surprised to see that the old man was the same person that had given them their spirit stones 2 weeks ago after the bi-annual auction. His master had even called him 'senior'.

'Who exactly is this person?' he couldn't help but wonder.

"Senior, " Cai Ping bowed to the old man as he walked in.

"What is going on? Why did you call me?" The old man said as he looked at Cai Ping and then towards Alex without a single bit of change in emotion. It seemed he was too used to meeting different people and seeing many different things.

"Here is the thing, senior." Cai Ping passed along the wooden box with the Spirit Cleansing Lily to the old man. She waited for him to open the box and see what was inside.

The old man, once again, showed no emotions as he opened the box and saw what was inside. He looked at the orange lily and didn't seem to realize what it was either. To him, it seemed like a normal lily.

"What is this?" he asked Cai Ping.

"Daoist Yu here wants to auction this flower. According to him, it's called a Spirit Cleansing Lily. I thought I had heard of it from the records but couldn't remember it. So I decided to call you senior."

The old man listened to this and then mumbled, "Spirit Cleansing L—" suddenly his eyes turned wide open. He immediately took out a communication talisman of his own and called someone else.

A lady came in with a stack of papers and left just as quickly.

The old man immediately flipped through the records and landed on an image of the Spirit Condensing Lily. He looked at the image, and then at the flower in the wooden box.

"It's the same!!" he screamed with astonishment. Cai Ping was now getting confused as to what exactly was happening. The old man looked at Alex, with emotions in his face for the first time, and asked, "Where did you get this flower, Daoist?"

Alex was surprised that an auction house would actually ask for the origin. "Can I not sell this without revealing its origin?" Alex asked.

"Ah, I'm sorry. I was too excited," said the old man. "Of course you can sell it. I was just surprised since it's been forever since one of these popped up in the market. Are you sure you are willing to sell this?" the old man asked.

"Yes, please do." Alex was looking forward to having it sold since it could really bring him a lot of money.

"Yes, we will do that. However, it might take a while, Daoist," The old man said as he contemplated for a while and said, "I don't think we can sell it here."

"Huh?" Alex said with a surprised face. "Are you saying you won't sell it? Didn't you just say you will?" Alex asked with his head full of confusion.

"Oh, no. We will sell it. Just not here. We will have to send it to the capital to our headquarters where we can get the full benefit of selling this."

"The headquarters?" Alex remembered Ma Rong saying something about Pink Cloud auction house's headquarters being in the Cardinal City.

"Is there any special reason?" he asked.

"Well, the Auction house in the cardinal cities has a lot more guests on a weekly basis and also is used to dealing with objects of high value. We will transfer this flower over there during the weekend and as per the result, we will give you your spirit stones right here," the old man said.

"So, it won't take any extra time? I will get my spirit stones this Saturday?" he asked.

"Uh, it might be better if you come on Sunday. The auction in the Capital always takes a little too long." The old man said.

"I see. Please do that then," Alex said.

The old man himself set up 2 different talisman contracts for Alex, one for the pills and one for the flower. Alex thanked both the old man and Cai Ping and walked out of the auction house.

He looked at the time and realized it was barely 5 PM. "Should I go to the library now?" he wondered. He walked towards an empty alleyway and changed back to his yellow robes for the Tiger Sect.

Once he got out, he walked straight back to the Tiger sect. He walked past the gates of the Tiger sect, and as soon as he did that, his badge inside his storage bag started vibrating.

"Hmm..." he sent his spiritual sense inside his badge and saw that he was registered to fight with someone. 'Someone wants to fight with me?'

The badge said that it was someone with the number 173. 'Is this another one of Huo To's henchmen? I hope this isn't someone strong like that last guy.'

'On second thought, they do help me train. Let's see who my opponent is this time.' Alex walked straight towards the sect crater.