

Alchemy 1491

Chapter 1491: Auction's End

Alex grabbed Pearl in a big hug as he thanked him for the final help. Had he not reminded him of the thousand spirit stones he had, it would have all been for naught.

As they celebrated, the woman told them to remain there while the auction made some calculations and tallies before doing everything else.

She told Alex to get ready to pay and to bring all the money he had on him at the moment.

Alex nodded and sent the two Elders to meet with Lady Zhan and the Emerald King to bring back what they were promised.

After they waited for half an hour, the door opened and someone handed the woman in the room a talisman, who handed it to Alex.

Alex looked at the talisman and his heart nearly sank in fear. He had spent nearly 400 thousand Saint Spirit stones throughout the entire month of the auction, and more than half of that was just the Mountain Crushing artifact.

Alex handed the list to the elders to make sure everything they bought was there, and once it was finalized, he handed over the money to the woman.

The woman counted the money she was handed with trembling hands as the amount she was holding was not something just anyone could come across.

She nodded and waited for someone to come collect the money. Once the money was gone, they had to wait for another while before 2 things arrived.

The first thing that arrived was their earnings. The woman handed the Storage bag to Alex who took it and opened it.

Inside the bag were so many Spirit stones that Alex sensed and felt overwhelmed for a second by the amount. He quickly closed it and opened it again to focus on it.

While half of his attention counted the spirit stones, the other half pulled out the talisman in the bag that listed down how much of the amount they were paid for was there and how much was taxed away.

The part of him that counted the pill couldn't help but be absolutely floored at how much he had just earned.

836,000 Saint Spirit stones.

Why in the hell was he so worried about just 252,000 spirit stones just moments earlier? The experience felt so surreal to him.

As he finished reading the talisman, he noticed that the amount he had earned was actually 781,000 not 836,000. Why was there a bit more Spirit stones in the storage bag than he should have received as per the talisman?

55 thousand Saint Spirit stones were not just something they could forget about. Had they made some sort of mistake?

When he was just getting confused, he realized what was happening.

Alex couldn't help but smile when he saw a small note at the end of the talisman reminding him that 2 Dao Pills had to be sold to both the auction house's owner and manager.

He did tell them that he would sell them the pills for whatever the pill would cost after taking away the bid from 100,000. It seemed that they were already trying to pay for it to get him to stick to his words.

Alex chuckled a little and pulled out a few pill bottles before passing over pills from one to another. Once done, he handed the bottle over to the woman.

"Give my gratitude to your manager and owner," Alex said once the girl took the pill bottle.

"This is for the owner and manager?" the woman asked.

"Yes," Alex said and handed another pill bottle to the woman. "This is my gratitude for dealing with us for the whole month."

The woman took the second pill bottle with more surprise. "This... is this for me?" she asked.

"Of course," Alex said. "Don't tell anyone I gave these to you though."

"I... I can't... I..." the woman couldn't speak. She didn't know what to say after getting the pill bottle. She didn't know what was inside the bottle, but even if it was just a single pill, she knew it would cost thousands and thousands of Saint Spirit stones.

That sort of money was not something that a woman like her could earn in a few years. It was something that would take her dozens of years to earn.

"Take it," Alex said. "I'm not taking it back."

The woman had no choice. She nodded and thanked him profusely.

"Your majesty, what's going on?" Yao Ning asked. The Elder, Pearl, and Whisker were getting confused slightly by the weirdness of the situation.

Alex tossed the storage bag to the older woman and let her find out herself. He simply sat as the bags were passed around the room and one by one everyone's face went wide in shock. Just like his.

After the storage bag returned to him, he passed along a portion over to the elders and Pearl as well as Whisker. Everyone refused at first, but Alex once again didn't care for their refusal.

He handed them all enough spirit stones to make their eyes pop out and had them shut up.

He took the remaining 600,000 Saint Spirit stones and put them into his storage ring with a feeling of unrealness in his heart.

That was a lot of money for him.

He remembered the time when his pills sold for a couple dozen common spirit stones and those were considered amazing.

And now, he was selling pills that cost tens of millions times more than those pills. It was an amazing feeling.

The door opened again and something was passed along. The woman came up to Alex and handed over a few different pouches.

Alex took them all and knew that they were the storage bags that contained the items they won in today's auction.

Alex looked through them and the very first item he searched for was the Mountain Crushing artifact.

Once he got that artifact, he let the elders check if everything they bought was there or not.

Once that was confirmed, they left the room.

Chapter 1492: Excited Checking

Alex walked out of the auction house and met up with the other kings as well as Lady Zhan. He thanked the two as soon as he met them, which was not surprising to the other two monarchs.

The Silver Queen had contacted everyone else most likely and by now they all knew who had won the artifact.

"Congratulations on winning the final bid, Your Majesty," she said.

Alex smiled. "You nearly beat me too, Queen Mao," he said. "I have to thank you that you stepped back at the last moment. I had no more spirit stones after that."

The Silver Queen's eyes looked at him in surprise and then it grew incredulous when she realized he wasn't lying. "So... I lost because I gave up?" she asked.

"Did you have any more to spend?" Alex asked.

The Silver Queen nodded. "I had just found someone to aid me after you refused to help me," she said. "But once the bid crossed 250 thousand, I thought it was better if I didn't continue."

"I see," Alex said. "I got lucky then. Thank you."

The woman didn't know what to say and sighed in the end. "Luck is a skill as well, I suppose," she said. "Congratulations all the same."

Alex smiled and they continued back to the palace. Along the way, Alex handed over 100,000 of the spirit stones he had to Elder Liang, who took it to the other auction house where Hao Ya and Jai Heiyun would still be vying for the final item in the auction.

He would meet with them when they walked out, but for now, he was more than excited to check on the items he had received up close.

Once they arrived at the palace, Alex first finished his with the two he had borrowed his money from.

To the Emerald King, he gave a few more pills than he had asked for.

To Lady Zhan, he gave the two pill recipes as he had promised. He made sure that she made an oath as she had said she would and then had her remember the recipe before destroying it.

At that point, he had nothing to worry about.

Once the both of them were dealt with, Alex walked into his room, along with the Elders who were as excited as him to watch the whole thing.

Whisker and Pearl were ready to watch the whole thing as well, so he didn't waste a single second.

He started with the tiny things. An earring for his mother, and a pink dress for his daughter. A sword for his sister and a bracelet for his master.

He pulled dozens of things out before anything of significance started coming out at all.

The first thing that came out was the Dragon Heart Gauntlet.

He put on the gauntlet and looked at it for a moment. The greenish blue scales on the gauntlet shined under the light of the room and glimmered light onto the walls like waves of water.

He placed a few spirit stones inside as instructed and activated the item. He attacked a dummy he placed in the distance with the technique that was carved into the scales.

The attack was barely any strong at all, but that was not why he bought this thing anyway. He used the second defensive skill as well, but that wasn't that good either.

Finally, he activated the third skill which increased his weight by a large amount. He felt heavy all of a sudden as if a weight had been put onto his whole body, distributed equally.

'Good,' he thought. He would've found it terrible had it only increased the weight on his arm.

"Father might not even notice the increase in weight," he said as he took it off and let the elders try it out. They were surprised by the weight much more than Alex could ever be.

Alex pulled out the next item from the bag which was his Frostfire Inkbrush. He handled the brush around in his hand, memorizing the weight, texture, and balance.

The swirling red and blue pattern on the shaft of the pen made it look far better than it actually was.

Alex put it to the side for others to check if they wanted to and brought out the next thing.

The Bottomless Jade Flask. Of course, it wasn't bottomless. But it did have a lot and lot of storage space it in, all meant to be for liquid.

He looked at the wines that were there and thought of making some in the flask too, but what was the point? He didn't really have the time to learn how to make wines anyway.

Maybe some other time.

He pulled out the next item which was a triple set of formation flags for a formation known as the Enriching Mists formation, meant for enriching alchemy gardens, which Alex intended to have back in his own Palace.

They were a set of masterfully designed formation flags that worked as if they were 3 different Saint Formations, when they were, in fact, a single one.

There was no way to test the flags, so he had to trust the auction house's words and put them aside.

He then brought out the Nine Clouds Wind Fan and gave it a flip. A subtle breeze moved through the room, carrying hints of understanding into the Wind Dao.

Alex did so again, stronger this time, and the Dao became a little more clear, albeit completely elusive to everyone in the room.

He looked at the fan with a bit of a smile and put it down on the bed as he would look at it in detail at some other time.

There were only two more items left for him to check now. One of them was obviously the Mountain Crushing artifact, which he was excited to check for sure.

But he was equally as excited to check the other artifact as well. So, he brought it out and let everyone see it.

The Mirror of Barren Truth

Chapter 1493: Mirror and Crusher

The Mirror of Barren Truth was surprisingly big. It was nearly a meter tall and half a meter wide. The mirror itself was smaller than that as a thick, golden frame made up a third of the entire thing.

At a glance, the mirror looked normal, but using his Demon Eyes, Alex could see the fine lines that were barely visible across the mirror itself.

Qi lines.

He held the mirror, not as heavy as he had expected, and felt the energy inside of it. There was barely any at all.

He was fascinated by the marvelous design and the talent that went into making such a thing. The auctioneer hadn't mentioned who had made this, and that was clear from looking at it too.

It was such an old item that barely anyone would've remembered who made it. It was even possible that this thing had lasted longer than many of the sects in the Eastern Continent.

Alex wondered if he could one day reach this level with his artifact-making skill as well. Not one where he copied what the others did, but made one for himself, with his own knowledge.

Like he made the various pills.

That was most likely going to take a lot of effort on his end. The effort he wasn't sure he wasn't to distribute onto artifacts.

He moved the mirror around on his hand and wondered if he should attack. Probably not. It didn't have any energy to reflect back his attack.

He stared at the mirror for a while longer, remembering that it too was decently expensive as well. Although, the one-time usage of it made it not so expensive.

He handed it over to Yao Ning, who stood there with a confused look on her face, not taking the mirror at all.

"Your Majesty, I have my own Reflection Dao," she said. "I don't need it."

"Oh, this isn't for you," Alex said. "I was simply hoping you would put some of your Qi in here. Make it strong for me."

"Oh, yes I will do that," Yao Ning said and quickly took the mirror. She looked at it carefully, and the others looked at it with her.

A defensive object that not only stopped an attack but also returned it to the enemy was quite the item after all.

As they were focused on the Mirror, Alex pulled out the final item in his storage bag.

The Mountain Crushing Artifact.

The Mountain Crushing Artifact was not its real name. Its real name had been lost to time, and would most likely remain lost for ages to come. Unless there was an immortal out there that recognized this item, this artifact would remain nameless.

He pulled out the artifact while the others were distracted and placed it on the ground with a heavy thud.

"Woah!" he couldn't help but say in surprise. The artifact was certainly very strong. As soon as the artifact was out, everyone stopped paying attention to the mirror and brought their focus to it.

They moved around it, touching the gold and silver outside, peering into the inside, and feeling the overall sturdiness of the artifact.

This was an immortal artifact and they were more than excited to view it.

They had seen Immortal artifacts before, of course. Alex's Blood God's Manual was it, and even his crown was one, albeit a very weak one. But, the elders weren't allowed to use any of it.

They could only look at him using it from afar. One, however, they were hopeful that they would get a chance to use it.

Alex had no intention of forming a bond with the artifact, so everyone could use it.

"Should we give it a go?" Liang Shufen asked excitedly. She somehow wanted to be the first to try, but at the same time was a bit too anxious to try it. After all, it did cost a bit too much.

"Who should start?" Alex asked.

"You should be the one, Your Majesty," the Elders said, but Alex didn't believe he should be the one. He would rather it not be him as he had other plans for himself.

Also, they would have to stop midway through, which he would not like. He looked at the Elders and thought if either of them would be good enough to go inside.

Yao Ning was old, so he didn't want to put her in. As for Liang Shufen, he felt that she should get some longer time with it.

Pearl didn't even need it, so he was out of the question. So in the end, his eyes fell on just one other being in the room.

Whisker.

Whisker looked at Alex for the briefest moment when he realized what was happening. He did not like it.

He immediately turned into a white light, trying to return to his beast space when Alex caught him halfway through.

As Whisker's master in the master-servant relationship they had, Alex could force Whisker to stay out if he wanted to. It would be impossible to do the same with Pearl as he could go in and out even when Alex forbade it.

As such, Whisker was stuck on Alex's hands with his large whiskers that quivered as he feared what was coming. Pain.

"Please don't put me in there, brother," Whisker said. "I don't want to get hurt."

"It is for you to get stronger. You're not being tortured," Alex told him.

"But it hurts," Whisker said.

"You will get used to it," Alex said.

"But why me? I don't have to fight," he said.

"It's so you don't die easily. We're also just testing," Alex said. "We won't use strong materials. Now, become as large as you can so that we can start."

Whisker wanted to continue grumbling, but he saw that he had no choice. In the end, he was forced to jump into the large artifact.

Alex had the elders collect enough rocks from the garden and other places before placing them in around Whisker.

Once everything was ready, Alex put a little over 1000 Saint Spirit stones and activated the artifact.

Chapter 1494: First Test

A soft hum could be heard as the artifact activated. The golden outlines outside the artifact glowed brightly as Whisker started freaking out a little.

"What's happening? I'm spinning," he shouted. The top of the artifact had shut completely with a lid that appeared from inside the artifact itself, so Alex had to use his spiritual sense to look inside.

Inside, Whisker was being moved around by forces that were not normal. Along with him, the garden rocks and pebbles were also moving around, spinning quickly.

"So that's how it works," Alex said as he saw the rocks hit Whisker while they moved. The rocks tumbled around the artifact and in doing so, they hit Whisker, tearing his body apart.

Or at least, that should have been the case, but Whisker was completely fine.

"Whisker! Hide your cultivation base," Alex said. "You need to be as mortal as you can for this."

Whisker freaked out even more and slowly did as he was told. When the aura around his body was gone, the rocks finally started causing damage. They hit him from all sides, bruising him, cutting him, causing him pain.

Alex nodded to himself and pulled out the book that the Mountain Crushing sect had left for whoever bought the artifact.

While Whisker went through body cultivation, he read through the book. There wasn't much for him to learn from the book that he could say was something he absolutely had to know.

They were mostly records of how long each person stayed inside and what sorts of results they had. It noted how long one had to stay in for the most efficient usage of the artifact.

As it ate a lot of Spirit stones, they had to know what was efficient and what was not. That was not really as important for Alex as he wouldn't be constantly switching the artifact around like they would in a sect.

There was other information in there to make whoever owned this artifact have an easier time. Alex only found 3 pieces of information that he was genuinely happy to learn beforehand.

First was a list of rocks and other hard materials that one could use at each body cultivation level. Normal garden rocks were apparently to be used for someone who had some physical strength and sturdiness.

If they were starting out for the first time, the manual advised that one should use wood instead, that too the normal kind.

"Oops," Alex said and checked on Whisker again. He didn't have to worry about him too. If he was in a lot of pain, Whisker could just use his cultivation base and he would be strong again.

The next point is that one should use small objects in the artifact. The smaller it was, the better it would work as the small objects would find better ways to reach places that a regular-sized rock or substance could not.

Alex decided to use very small pieces of items when he could.

The final piece of information said that the artifact worked even better when placed sideways instead of being made to stand up straight.

"Oh!" he was surprised to see that. He made the artifact fall sideways and laid it on its bulky end where it wobbled a bit as it spun everything on the inside.

The rest of the information was about precaution and how he couldn't use the item without anyone being nearby. Alex ignored them as they didn't apply for him. Even if he was terribly hurt, his body would heal itself.

Death was difficult from something like this unless he used some immortal materials, of which there were none in this world.

After finishing the book, he gave it to the elders to read. They would care more about the information than he did after all.

Then, all he could do was wait. He went back to the other items he had bought and tested them more thoroughly while he waited for Whisker to be done.

Whisker had stopped complaining a long time ago and was simply focusing on handling the pain. It felt a little bad letting him feel so much pain, but he had to. He wouldn't grow without it.

Besides, he had died multiple times already, so a little pain shouldn't be that problematic for him.

After 2 hours, Alex finally stopped the formation and waited for the objects inside to all come to a stop. Then, the top of the artifact opened on its own.

A weak Whisker crawled out of it, walking over the thousands of tiny pebbles, all of which were bloody. He was weak, extremely, and had lost a lot of blood.

He was so wounded that it was easier to point out which part of him was not. He crawled upto Alex, and Alex quickly grabbed him.

"You're fine," he said. "You did good."

He quickly checked the damage and was relieved that he wasn't too hurt. Then, he checked on the improvements to his body. That would have to be tested later on.

"We'll test you later," he said.

Whisker disappeared into his beast space. While Alex could feed him a healing pill, due to the Undying bloodline, Whisker could easily heal while he was inside his beast space by using up Alex's Qi.

"Now that we've tested how this artifact works, I think it's time I use it," Alex said. He looked toward the elders and said, "Unless either of you wants to use it too?"

"No, we are alright," Yao Ning said. "You use it first, your majesty,"

Alex nodded. "While I'm using it, find the items in that book to help facilitate your body cultivation later on."

"We will," the elders said.

"Then, please leave," Alex said. "I will start training now."

The elders nodded and left his room, leaving him with Pearl.

Pearl looked at the artifact and asked, "What will you use in it?"

Alex shrugged. "I thought of using the gold I got from the Golden Mountain at first," he said. "But I think there's a better choice here."

Chapter 1495: Pain

Alex got into the artifact after filling it with as many Spirit stones as he could. He had placed enough so that the artifact would run for over 2 days easily.

That was how long he wanted to cultivate.

Inside, he was surrounded by the pieces of rocks that he was using himself today. He could've used any sort of materials he wanted. It didn't just have to be rocks, but it could also be glasses, metals, wood, ceramics, anything.

As long as it was hard and somewhat sharp, it could work. However, no matter what materials it was that the book told him would be useful, Alex didn't believe it would be any more useful than what he had used already.

He had currently access to exactly 3 things. The first were normal rocks that Whisker had been using, there was no way he was going to use them, so they were out of the picture.

The second material was the nuggets of gold that he had mined from the Golden Mountain. While Gold was relatively strong, Alex didn't find it strong enough for his body.

Weak may he be, his body was still in the Saint Core realm. It was nearly realm below his normal cultivation base, sure, but it was still stronger than most people had.

So, Alex had to go for the final material he had.

Starforged Tungsten.

Starforged Tungsten was not just heavy, they were significantly difficult to manipulate normally as well because of their toughness. They were what Midnight, Memory, and the rest of his swords were made up of, so there was no doubt about its quality.

And what Alex was using today were nuggets of this very tungsten that he had yet to refine properly. These were somewhere between ore and raw metal due to the process he used to acquire them.

They were nearly fist-sized and were stacked up around him inside the artifact, ready to hurt him. Alex had smaller-sized pieces too, but this metal was so strong that he didn't want to take the chances at all.

He was going to start with just the large ones.

He took a deep breath and remembered how much he was spending on this artifact right now. Running the artifact with something this heavy for 2 days cost him over 10,000 Saint Spirit stones at once. That was enough to run him dry in just a few weeks if he used it continuously.

"I'll go poor if I have to spend this much each time," he thought to himself. If only he could use some other method of activation.

Curiously, he reached for the base of the artifact and touched it with his palm. He tried to feel the formation that was hidden underneath this and slowly added Qi into it.

His Yang Qi could activate normal formations, so he hoped this one would work as well. However, after just trying it once, he knew that wasn't going to work at all.

"Well, at least I tried," he thought. "I will have to wait until I have Immortal Qi too." He was going to have to wait until he was in the Saint Transformation realm before he tried it again.

"Screw it, let's just start," he thought and activated the artifact.

The top of the artifact closed up all of a sudden, making the inside dark. Alex tipped down the artifact as a whole horizontally and let the spin take him.

At first, the speed at which he spun wasn't that fast. However, as time went on, it started catching speed. A vortex seemed to form beneath his feet that dragged in all the metal nuggets from around Alex.

As it dragged it in, the pieces of the metal nuggets struck Alex. One after another they all started to hit him.

Alex was caught by the vortex as well and he spun along with it all. The nuggets and he spun around hitting each other. Alex felt the pain, but there wasn't as much damage as he had expected from it.

However, that was just the start it seemed. The vortex got even faster and the stones started hitting him even harder.

And then the pain began.

Alex felt the pain flare up all over his body as the intensity got stronger and stronger. It was reaching the point that was normally what he felt when he was with Pearl.

And the intensity was only getting harder. As he tumbled inside the massive artifact, he could feel the wetness of his skin and the smell of blood around him.

He could feel the pain that he hadn't in a very long time. It hurt so much, and it was only increasing.

Alex tumbled inside, getting dizzy from all the spinning. His body lost blood every second and every second his body regenerated, filling the blood back into his body.

Slowly, the blood from his body started wetting the outside so much that he could feel the droplets striking him.

Alex knew he needed to use them somehow, but all the pain and all the spinning caused him to be unable to do anything. He simply did nothing as he was pelleted continuously by the fist-sized rocks.

He suffered in silence for a long period of time. He knew how long he had set the artifact running for, but he couldn't tell what time it was at the moment. How long had he been feeling this pain?

He was reminded of the first time he went through body cultivation. The pain he felt then, the torture that caused him to feel scared of body cultivation altogether. That was the sort of pain he was feeling once more.

Only this time, he knew he had to take it all.

He opened his eyes sometime later as the artifact slowly stopped. The vortex slowed down and he could finally rest a little.

As he did, he saw a symbol on the inside of the lid slowly dim down to the point where he couldn't tell what it was.

Then, it all finally stopped.

Chapter 1496: Shadow Fan

Alex crawled out of the artifact, his body fully healed, but his mind still remembered the pain. He tried to stand up, but his legs shivered. Half of it was out of fear, and the other half out of the coldness that he felt in his dantian.

While his body used up his Qi to heal him and restore the blood he lost, the Yin in his body had made things worse than normal. In this empty dantian, the Yin was all he felt.

He quickly got into a meditating pose and started using the Five Yang Divine Path technique to draw in the strong Yang Qi from the surroundings. His body slowly calmed down afterwards and the Qi helped push away the coldness as well.

He looked back inside the artifact and saw that half of it was filled with his own blood. The pool of blood had submerged most of the metal ingots.

With a flick of his wrist, the blood flew out of the artifact, leaving only the metal inside. As it was all his own blood, it had a pretty strong blood aura.

Alex looked at it for a few seconds and wondered if there was a chance that he could absorb his own aura and get himself strong. He didn't even hesitate to try.

However, it ended up being impossible. "Thought so. Otherwise, it would've been too easy."

He took all the blood and placed it into the Bottomless Flask. The artifact was made to improve any liquid that he stored in there, but it was doubtful it could do the same with blood.

However, that wasn't really why Alex kept it there. He simply gathered the blood for the next time he was to use it to make Blood Beasts.

He put away the flask and the Mountain Crushing artifact and dressed up. Once dressed, he checked his own strength to see how strong he had become. Unfortunately, it was hard to test something like that on his own.

He would have to find something to test his strength on, that could also tell him how strong he was. "I should buy some strength testing artifact sometime later," he thought to himself. That was the only solution.

For now, even without any testing apparatus, he could feel that he had grown stronger... albeit by a little bit.

"I'll have to use a lot more spirit stones until I find another method to use this thing. Dammit, why doesn't my Qi work?" he wondered.

As he thought along the lines, another idea came to him. "Hmm... that might be possible," he thought. "But I'll have to test it later."

He did not want to go through the same thing just yet. "How long was I even in there?" he wondered and pulled out something.

The VoidSand Hourglass.

He looked at the time that the hourglass told him in accordance with the continuous flow of the Voids and inside of it and realized that over 2 days had passed.

"It didn't feel that long."

Alex went to find the elders. From them, he found out that the two kings had already left for their kingdom.

Even Lady Zhan had already left. She left before anyone as she carried not just her own items, but the items that the Crown Prince had bid on. She had to go provide it to him as soon as possible.

So, the only one that Alex could meet was the Gold King, who too was busy as he had to deal with problems that always came up after the month-long Golden auction.

There were fights that broke out, customers that couldn't pay what they bid, auction houses that didn't deliver the item that they promised, etc. He would have to deal with anything that got a little too big for his officers to handle.

"Use this for now," Alex said, giving the two elders the Mountain Crushing artifact. "Follow the book and don't let it run for too long. If you lose a lot of blood, eat these pills."

He tossed the elders a pill bottle.

"Where will you be going?" Liang Shufen asked.

"To meet with the girls."

Alex went to meet with Jai Heiyun and Hao Ya in a hotel room where they were staying.

"Your Majesty," Jai Heiyun got up and bowed, while Hao Ya remained mostly indifferent to Alex's arrival.

"What took you so long?" she asked.

"I used an artifact to train my body for the last 2 days," Alex said. "How have you guys been? Did you like the auction?"

"It was amazing, Your Majesty," Jai Heiyun said excitedly. "So many different items for sale. So many things that I didn't even know existed."

"Yeah? You should have seen the ones that were being sold on mine," he said. "Look at these?"

He showed off a few of the things he had bought, letting the two girls handle them. He didn't have the Mirror and the Mountain Crushing artifact on him, but everything else he did.

The girls were mostly fascinated by the Nine Clouds Wind Fan due to its ability to teach them Wind Dao. They gave little interest in the gauntlet and didn't even bother to look at the flask.

Jai Heiyun was interested in artifacts and talismans, so she showed interest in the Frostfire Inkbrush, but she didn't show more enthusiasm than that.

"What did you guys get?" Alex asked.

The girls showed off their own items that they had bought, and Alex's eyes fell on a Black Fan that sent off wisps of black smoke as it moved.

"Is this the fan that you guys asked me money to buy?" Alex asked.

"Yes, that's it," Hao Ya said. "Ended up costing us 77,000 Saint Spirit stones. So expensive. I'll find a way to pay it back, don't worry."

"No, no," Alex said. "Don't worry about the money. Consider it a gift from me for my daughter's senior sister. Whose is it anyway?"

"For now, we decided that I would keep it, but any one of us could use it if need be," Hao Ya said.

Alex took the fan, leaving behind a trail of black smoke and suddenly opened it. The opened fan let off more smoke, and Alex could see a hint of a demonic face painting onto the black body of the fan.

"Shadow," Alex said, sending the aura that the fan gave off. "... and Space?"

"Here, let me show you," Hao Ya said and took the fan from Alex's hands before quickly moving over to a corner of the room. She flicked open the fan and swung it toward Alex, sending out a long trail of black smoke at him.

Alex prepared himself, but the black smoke simply moved past him without doing anything to him.

However, a moment later, he felt space warp a little. The next moment, Hao Ya was standing behind him.

"It's a teleportation fan, that uses shadow aura," she said. "It's called the Silent Shadow Fan."

Alex turned around and looked behind her. "And it cost you 77 thousand Saint spirit stones?" he asked.

"Yes," Hao Ya said.

"This... this is just the Flickering Shadows technique, but slower," Alex asked.

"I can't use your Flickering Shadows technique," Hao Ya said. "I don't have Yin spiritual root."

"Oh, right," Alex said. "You have it, right?" He turned to ask Jai Heiyun.

"I do," Jai Heiyun said. "But I haven't been able to learn that technique yet. Haven't really given it much time." She gave a slightly awkward smile.

"That's alright," Alex said. "You find alchemy-related techniques to be of more importance, I understand that. But since you can use the technique, let Sister Hao take the fan."

Jai Heiyun nodded. "I've been of the same mind as well." She turned around to Hao Ya. "You really should take it."

"Are you sure? It's... It's so expensive though," Hao Ya said.

"You don't understand how rich I can be, sister Hao," Jai Heiyun said. "I can make pills for just a few days and I will have enough money to buy that fan all over again."

"Are you sure?" Hao Ya asked.

"She will have to make quite a few pills, but I'm sure she can do it," Alex said. "Take it."

Hao Ya hesitated no longer and kept the fan for herself.

Alex conversed with the girls for a while longer. He hadn't met up with the alchemists for the past half a year with how much time he had been spending by himself.

There was nothing new for him to learn, except for the fact that the young man named Wu Shun whom he had taught a few months ago had started showing some rapid improvements.

Alex was very glad to hear that.

"By the way, do you have any news on the Ivory Kingdom?" Hao Ya asked. "I heard something happened there, but everyone is so tight-lipped."

"There's a barrier around the place," Alex said. "Some Immortals came down, set it up, and... I think they left."

"Immortals?" Both of the girls got curious.

"Yes," Alex said. "Could even be more than just Immortals. I thought they were here for your Master, but they left without him, so I don't know."

"The barrier is said to stay there for a year or so, so I think we will know what really happened afterward," Alex said.

"Is that so..." Hao Ya said. "I can't contact my master, so I had no way of telling what was happening. I wonder if he is safe."

"I don't think you have to worry about him," Alex said. "They would have to do more than just that to get to him, considering how dangerous the path to the inside of the Central Continent is."

Chapter 1497: Artifact Creation and Testing

Alex returned an hour or two later, not before getting a few materials for an artifact, and found Liang Shufen keeping watch of the artifact as the old Yao Ning used the Mountain Crushing artifact.

"What did you guys use?" Alex asked her.

"We decided to go with normal rocks, like we did with Whisker," Liang Shufen said. "We do not yet know just how strong our bodies are, so we found it better to go with the safe choice."

"Good idea," Alex said. "You guys continue this. I will do something in my own room."

"What are you doing?" Liang Shufen asked.

"Making a simple artifact that I should have made a long time ago," Alex said, leaving the elder behind.

Alex brought out the materials he had bought, which consisted of some leather, some metals, and various other little things.

He started working on it immediately, while Pearl and Whisker were outside with him, looking at his work curiously.

"What are you making?" Pearl couldn't help but ask, seeing him work on the stuff.

"I don't want to tell you right now," Alex said, cutting the leather into thin strips with a sharp blade. "You'll find out if it works in the end."

Pearl shrugged and went to the side to sit and watch.

Whisker sat near Pearl too without asking anything as he watched what Alex was making too. They were both very curious as to what exactly he was doing, but none of it really made sense to them.

To be fair, even Alex didn't find it very easy to understand what he was doing too. He had never made an artifact of this type before, so all he was doing was hoping that he wasn't doing anything wrong.

He had a vision in mind, and he hoped that it was what he was making.

The leather was there just for the sake of holding the actual artifact in place while being a part of it, so Alex put in some Qi lines to make it durable.

Then, he went on to work on the metal.

The metal was going to be more formation than anything, so he brought out his Frostfire Inkbrush. This was the first time he was going to be using it, so he was a little excited.

With a bit of Qi, the bristles on the brush pulled back into the shaft, leaving behind a pen-like nib that was there for him to carve onto a metal. It was a formation carving pen after all.

Alex placed the tip on the metal and drew a circle on it. The smoothness with which the pen moved along the metal surprised him. It was as if he was carving on butter with a hot knife.

He didn't let the surprise throw him off and focused on what he was carving. Once he finished making the circle, he took a break to think of exactly what nodes he was going to draw.

After making sure he knew everything, he continued. 5 minutes later, he had a nearly perfect formation ready for him to use. Alex was satisfied with the formation plate and moved on to the rest of the artifact.

A place to store the spirit stones, a latch at the end of the leather straps, combine it all together with the formation plate... and he was done.

It took him until evening time to finish this, but he did. And he was happy with the result. "Let's test it," Alex said and wore the artifact.

The artifact looked like an octopus with a metal head where the formation plate remained and 8 leather arms that came out of it. Alex put the main body in front of him and latched on the 8 arms of the artifact behind him so that the metal plate remained tightly on his chest.

He checked any looseness on the straps, and after seeing that everything was alright, he was ready to begin.

"Come, let's test it," Alex said.

"Test what?" Pearl asked. "What is that?"

"It's an artifact to test the strength of your attacks," Alex said. "I didn't have any, so I made it."

"You made a formation plate, didn't you?" Whisker asked. "Why make an entire artifact out of it? Why not just use the formation plate?"

"Well... because it's not that easy to use when it's just a formation," Alex said. "That's why this formation is put on walls or wooden posts or puppets."

Alex just had to activate the formation once and the Qi lines would continuously keep it active, but at a very low rate of energy consumption until someone used it again.

"Whisker, are you healed?" Alex asked.

Whisker nodded. "All healed," he said. "Do you need me to test?"

"Yes," Alex said. "I need to tune this thing, and unfortunately, neither Pearl nor I have a normal cultivation base and instead need your help."

"Ah, okay," Whisker said and got down from where he was. "So... what do I do?"

"Just attack me," Alex said. "Your Saint Condensation 2nd realm should be enough."

Whisker nodded and did as told. He used a technique to send out a fiery attack that slammed into Alex.

Alex used moderate strength to balance himself so that he wasn't completely protecting the artifact. The formation took the hit while in calibration mode and Alex quickly put in what strength the current attack was.

After a few more tries, Alex was able to calibrate the whole thing. "Finally, it's done," he said. "Pearl, can you hit me? Just with your physical strength."

Pearl nodded and jammed his paw onto Alex. Alex was pushed back a little, but he managed to stop himself after just that. The formation on his chest lit up and showed a few words.

Saint Foundation 3rd Realm

"Haha, it works," Alex said. "Now attack me with all your strength."

Pearl blitzed the moment he heard that. His entire body glowed golden as he slammed his entire body onto Alex.

Alex barely managed to put up a defense at the last moment when he realized that without his defense up, he might actually be thrown off.

When Pearl slammed into him, Alex found that defending had been the right choice after all. While he wouldn't have been hurt from the attack, he would've still caused damage to the room.

Alex held off Pearl's attack and saw the glowing name written in front of the artifact.

Saint Core 1st realm

"Ooh, not bad," Alex said excitedly. "You're not exactly crossing the entire realm, but you're nearly there. I wonder if you have to train more or if this is it."

"This might be it," Pearl said. "I don't think I can go any stronger than this."

"7 realms... compared to my 9," Alex thought for a bit. "Honestly, that's still quite strong. Even Ronron can only do 4, although I hear she has yet to make full use of her body constitution."

Pearl nodded. "Anyway, is that how you are going to use that?" he asked, gesturing to the artifact on Alex's chest. "How are you going to test yourself?"

"Using this guy," Alex said and brought out something. "I can test it by putting the thing on him."

Pearl and Whisker realized what he had planned from the start.

"I see," Pearl said. "No wonder you made those straps."

Next to Alex was his Immortal puppet.

Chapter 1498: Leaving

With the Immortal Puppet strapped up with the artifact, Alex tested out his strength. To his surprise, his physical strength had improved just after two days of body cultivation.

His body cultivation had improved by a realm, reaching Saint Core 2nd realm. He hadn't expected it to increase by such a large amount in just 2 days, but it had. That only went on to show just how good of an artifact the Mountain Crushing artifact was.

The next few days went by in a blur as Alex did nothing but train or cultivate all the time. It wasn't just him either. Pearl, Whisker, and the two Elders also cultivated all the time.

Pearl was the only one who didn't cultivate using the artifact.

In a few days, the Elder's body cultivation increased by a not-so-significant portion. They still hadn't gone through Mortal Cleansing, so it wasn't as effective as it was for Whisker.

Whisker had stopped whining after the first two times and now went in without question.

During this period, Jai Heiyun and Hao Ya returned back to the capital. He was going to see them again, however, in just a short few months.

With the Realm of Trials opening up in a few months, almost all of his alchemists were going to go there. Alex was planning to go to it when it opened.

For now, he was undecided about what it was that he wanted to do with the remaining few months. Before arriving in the Gold Kingdom, he had planned to visit the Ice Mist Palace. However, with the situation the Ivory kingdom was in, he couldn't go there right now.

After talking with his elders and even asking the Gold King for his suggestions, he ended up with two possible choices he could go with.

He could go back to the Azure Kingdom and continue trying to learn new Daos. Or, he could go roam the Gold Kingdom, and visit the various towns and cities for the next 5 or 6 months that it was going to take for the Realm of Trials to open up.

Learning new Daos was a good choice and all, but Alex prioritized visiting the different cities and towns. He had more to do than just learn new daos after all.

His cultivation had slowed down a little after going through Qi Deviation and it would take him a few more months to reach the peak of the Saint Core 9th realm.

And then... then he wasn't sure if he could break through or not. He had tried his best to prepare this time around, but that didn't mean much in the world of cultivation.

So, he chose to slow down his cultivation this time around. As long as he had ample time to prepare, he believed he could do it. He needed that amount of time to believe the things that he didn't want to believe in.

He needed to come to terms with the fact that he would most likely never know the true culprit behind Pearl's mother's murder, and the fact that his sister was most likely dead.

He had no other choice.

"Another tour it is then," Alex said. "Will be fun. Same as the Emerald Kingdom. I can continue practicing my painting skills in the other places as well."

3 days later, they were ready to leave.

"Please visit when you can, Your Majesty," the Gold King said. "I will hopefully be here at that time."

"Good luck on your thing too," Alex said. "I'm sure the Emperor will leave his closed cultivation at any moment now."

The Gold King nodded.

Now that the Golden Auction was over, he couldn't wait for the day when he would relinquish his title as the King of the Gold Kingdom.

Alex and the group left through the eastern gate of the city. Aside from his people, there was General Fan of the Tail legion and a few soldiers of his.

They took flight on a ship and made their way to the next city which was a few hours of air travel away.

The next city was called the Gildedreach. It was another city that grew big thanks to the Golden Mountain range being right next to it.

Just like Goldheart City, it too had cities that were full of gold in every location. However, this city was more so for actually mining gold than anything.

Unlike Goldheart City where gold mining was made to pass the time, this one was where people labored for it. As such, it wasn't a place most people would want to visit.

Alex and the rest wanted to just to see how they fared.

They were excited to visit the cities past that point too, ones where the Golden Mountain range didn't reach and were instead unique cities on their own having nothing to do with the gold.

Alex wanted that. He was a little fed up with the gold already.

As they flew, Yao Ning quickly looked to the side of the ship in a direction. "Something is wrong," she said.

Alex looked at her as well. "What do you mean?" he asked.

They were only halfway to the next city, and everything in between was either a desolate cold land or small towns and settlements near an active volcano.

"I think I sensed something from that side," Yao Ning said. "Maybe a beast? It showed its aura for a second before disappearing."

Alex's eyes changed, turning a deeper shade of purple. He looked in the direction Yao Ning mentioned and saw a multitude of colors that did not match the surroundings at all.

"There is something there," he said, looking at the aura. He could not sense the aura in the least, but the colors proved its existence. The colors remained unmoving and mostly hidden.

"I think there's a formation there," Alex said. "Someone must be hiding."

"An ambush?" Liang Shufen asked from the side.

"I don't know," Alex said. "They aren't moving at all. Maybe someone is cultivating there. That's most likely—"

Something slammed onto the ship from the side, sending them all hurdling to one part of the ship. At the same time, three individuals arrived on the ship and set up a formation that immediately captured Alex and only him.

Alex felt his cultivation base suppressed in an instant, becoming much weaker than it was.

The three men were inside with him as well, but they didn't seem affected at all. Alex looked at them and sensed that their cultivation base was in the mid-Saint Transformation realm.

The only one that could fight them here was Yao Ning and she was outside, striking at the barrier that had captured Alex.

One man moved forward with a blinding speed as soon as they were in and attacked Alex.

Alex tried to teleport away, but the space around him was constrained a little as well. He was too slow at teleporting away and the man got to him.

He instantly cut off Alex's right arm and grabbed it. "Got it," he shouted.

Alex looked in horror and confusion as his arm was tossed back to one of the people behind the man. He didn't understand what was happening until he saw the man take his ring from the cut-off arm.

'My ring!' he realized.

Alex forced his Intent and pushed away the constricting space around him. Then, he teleported right next to the man and reached for his ring. He used Heaven's Impact at the same time.

However, an artifact on the man's neck gave a slight ringing sound as it blocked the spiritual attack.

Before Alex could grab his ring, the man grabbed his hand. Alex could feel the strength in the man's fist and realized just how strong he was.

The man looked at Alex and his arm. A look of surprise spread through his face when he saw that he was grabbing the exact same arm that he had just dropped.

In mere seconds after being cut off, Alex's arm had grown back. That was the most fascinating thing that the man had ever seen.

"Interesting," the man couldn't help but say. "Is this a use of one of your pills too, Your Majesty?"

The two other men arrived by Alex's side as well. "We need to hurry. That woman will most likely break the formation soon," one of the men said.

"Don't worry," the man who had grabbed onto Alex said. "I used my Immortal Qi to activate the formation. It will take more than just a couple of hits from her to break through this. Unless she is willing to use Immortal Qi and risk her young king's life, she will stick to regular attacks."

It didn't take Alex long to realize that the situation was dire. Were they here to kill him? Or were they here for something else?

They were also way beyond his own strength, so he couldn't even fight back right now. The only thing that could possibly fight them was the Immortal Puppet, and that was inside the ring that they had just stolen.

"Don't worry about your ring, Your Majesty," the leader said. "You won't be far away from it. You are coming with us."

The man pulled out something from his own storage bag. The other two men brought it out as well.

Talismans.

Without hesitation, they crushed the talisman, and immediately space warped around them.

Alex felt the aura of Teleportation cover him. He tried to fight back, but if he did so, his ring would get taken away.

He couldn't allow that. As unfortunate as it was, he had to let it take him away.

A second later, the 3 men and Alex were teleported away.

Chapter 1499: Not Bandits

About 1300 Kilometers, northeast.

Alex knew exactly how far they had traveled and in what direction before he even arrived at the new destination. When he arrived, he looked around and saw that he was standing on top of a Teleportation formation.

'A receiving formation that can accept a teleportation through talisman,' Alex thought. That was some incredibly complex stuff that would take him years to learn how to make.

It was difficult to coordinate two completely different systems into working together. Whoever made this was extremely talented for sure.

They had arrived in a dark cave with cold floors and ceilings. The walls glowed with scripts and formations, that were of such number that it would take Alex some time to tell what their purpose was.

"I suggest you don't try to fight, Your Majesty," the leader said. "You'll find us not very receptive to bad manners."

Alex turned to look at the man and saw him smiling back at him.

He was a tall, muscular man with a squarish face and a roughly shaved patch of beard. His hair was unkempt for the most part, but it was short.

He wore a black dress with no feature about his dress at all. The other two men who followed him wore similar clothes as well.

One of them was a shorter man with a thin face and gray hair in a ponytail. The other man was just as tall as the leader, but very thin and with a long beard and mustache.

Alex looked at the leader's hand and the ring he held there. "You're too strong to be simply bandits, and you know who I am. I assume you were planning to kidnap me from the start?"

"That was the intention, yes," the man said. "We were after you, or at the very least your pills."

Alex said nothing. There was some confusion he had about the man that just didn't stick right with him.

First of all, they knew their flight path. The only person who would have known their flight path was either the Gold King or the Imperial Army.

Alex doubted the Gold King would have anything to do with this, so it could be that this was the Imperial army that had done this. But then... There was little need for them to set up such an elaborate ruse.

Alex was already on the ship. Many of the army members were there as well. Couldn't they have just attacked him?

'Are they trying to not make the rest of the army look bad?' Alex wondered. 'Or maybe they are a secret group of the army that was sent here to steal his recipes.'

"How did you know where I was headed?" Alex asked.

"We had people follow you around," the man said simply. "We had people waiting on all sides. As long as you didn't teleport away, we would have caught you."

The man answered Alex's question rather freely. He seemed so nonchalant about it that Alex found it hard to believe that he was telling the truth. For all he knew, he could have been lied to.

'Are they from the army or just a random bunch of strong people who are trying to take advantage of me?' Alex felt either possibility had a high chance of being true.

The man started walking and one of the other men pointed a sword behind Alex's back, pushing him forward. Alex stepped down from the formation platform and followed him.

"I'm going to guess that you will not give me your name, will you?" Alex asked. "So, I might as well ask what pill you are hoping to find."

"My name? I do not mind giving it, but my colleagues fear repercussions of our name leaking, so I won't be telling you it for now," the man said. "As for the pills, we are interested in any that can help us."

The man turned around. "Can you tell us what pills you have?" he asked.

Alex stared at the man for a second and said, "Why do I have a feeling that you already know some of the pills I have?"

"Haha, no, no," the man laughed a little. "We saw the list of what was being sold on the auction and knew that the pills sold at the end were yours. "We were just hoping to get you to make some for us."

Alex continued walking with them. "Do you want me to make pills that aid you spiritually and protect you from poison?" he asked.

"And helps us learn new dao, improves our spiritual roots, maybe even makes us a pill that can help us reach straight for immortality," the man said with a grin. "No? That's alright. We'll settle with what we can get."

"You were at the auction then," Alex said.

"No, we just had the list of what was being sold," the man said. "Seeing the list of pills and everything, we knew we had to get you. We needed you to help us."

They arrived in front of a massive door.

"And why do you think I will be making pills for the three of you?" Alex asked.

The sword in his back poked him a little harder before stopping. The leader didn't turn around, and Alex could only hear the slightest hint of laughter in his breath.

"The three of us, you say?" the man asked and pushed open the door. "You will be making pills for all of us."

Behind the door was a large balcony, looking down into a massive hall down below. Alex walked up to the balcony and looked at the hall.

Tall pillars carved from the mountain itself rose to the top of the hall. White marble filled the floor to the edges of the hall. The hall barely had any furniture and had no decorations either.

However, it did not look barren at all. What it lacked in furniture and decorations, it made in the people that gathered there.

Dozens of people sat around the hall or walked past each other, each minding their own business. Alex felt their cultivation bases and a look of shock appeared on his face.

Every single person down there was a Saint and not just any saint. They all had a cultivation base of Saint Core or higher. This sort of strength was not something Alex had ever seen in such concentration.

This felt like a meeting of high-level cultivators, and not a normal one at that.

The men and women in the hall looked up dozens of meters high to see the four of them arrive. A few of them murmured when they saw the group and some even pointed at them.

Alex looked down with an array of confusing thoughts going around in his mind.

"You really aren't a group of random bandits," he said softly. "Just... just who are you people?"

"To say who we are would be to betray our purpose of existence," the man said. "We are a force that this empire needs right now, a change that it deserves."

"We are the ones who will free it from the shackles that have been put onto it, and we will do anything to make that happen."

Chapter 1500: Change

The words the leader had said struck a tone that he did not expect from his kidnappers. It sounded proud, and weirdly patriotic. As if he truly meant what he said.

They were here to free the empire from the shackles that it had at the moment. But then... what were those shackles?

"Let's get you to a place where you can get settled," the man said and slowly flew down.

Alex sighed inwardly and flew down, with the other 2 following behind him. He could sense all of their spiritual senses on him and knew that he had no way to run away at the moment.

Not that he wanted to. With the man holding his ring, he couldn't leave right now.

There were too many things of value in that ring that he could not just leave it be. Aside from the various pills, artifacts, and spirit stones, the ring held Midnight and Memory, two things he couldn't let be.

It also held the black sword with the Azure Imperium's insignia. If that thing got out, it would be terrible for him. If these people were somehow part of the military that the Emperor had sent out to steal his recipes, then that sword would most likely doom him.

For now, he had to remain behind so that he could get the ring.

As Alex and the rest landed, the man spoke up. "Greet the king folks. We got him," he said to the dozens of people on the floor who had stopped to look at them.

"Great work, brother."

"Are you guys hurt?"

"Someone check the formations. See that they work properly."

"We should send out scouts to see if anyone comes."

Various people spoke at once, all of whom sounded same-minded. They were all working in tandem with each other, for the same goal.

Alex felt the stare of the people surrounding him and looked back at them. This close, he could tell all of their cultivation bases much more clearly.

Each one of them was strong enough that they could easily defeat Pearl as he was right now. He could take on about three-fourths of them if he fought them individually, but there were more than enough fighters that could beat him single-handedly.

He counted the number of people he had to worry about, but then he remembered that others were waiting for him on other sides of the city and knew that there was more to this group than just these people.

'How big is their operation?' Alex wondered.

"This way, Your Majesty," the man said taking Alex in a direction to the side.

Alex followed the man, going away from the group of people. He looked around in the direction of the window to the side. Unfortunately, he couldn't see anything beyond a white haze.

The outside was covered in a barrier as well, which blocked all sight and aura. They were using it to hide their location.

The man brought out a talisman and handed it to Alex. Alex looked at the empty talisman and frowned. "What do you want me to do with this?" he asked.

"Write what you need here, and we will try to get it to you," the man said.

Alex stared at the man for a second and quickly wrote something before handing it over to him.

The man took the talisman and read it before chuckling a little. "I'm not giving you your ring back. Please write seriously. Cauldrons, ingredients, whatever you need."

"Are you expecting me to make pills?" Alex asked. "You should know better than to expect such things from a hostage of yours."

"I wasn't expecting you to," the man said. "I was simply hoping you would. Alas, if you don't then it doesn't hurt us. I just have to spend a few weeks or months and I will have all the pills you have in your ring."

"I expect you to have a lot of it," he said.

Alex said nothing. He was more surprised that this man knew about storage rings. That wasn't such an easy information to come around.

"What about after you get through my ring?" Alex asked. "What if you don't find anything?"

"We'll think about that when we get there," the man said. "But I don't think we'll have to." He gave Alex a knowing grin.

"And what if you do find something you want? Then what? What will you do with me when you no longer need me?" Alex asked.

"That we will think about when we get there as well. As long as you cooperate, you won't have anything to worry about," the man said. "As you said, we aren't bandits. We aren't in it to kill people."

"Well, I would hope you guys are prepared for when the Phoenix comes looking for me," he said. "You should know that she cares a lot about me."

"Oh, I'm sure that we don't have to worry about that," the man said and completely turned around to face Alex. "After all, she can't come to the Eastern Continent, can she?"

Alex hid every single emotion from showing up on his face, but it was hard to hide the shock he felt when he realized that the man knew about the oath. The man knew that the other Heavenly Beasts couldn't come to this continent.

This man knew about the death of the Azure Dragon.

"Who are you people?" he couldn't help but ask.

"We do not have a name as of yet," the man said. "I'll make sure to let you know if we ever do end up with any."

Alex could only stare at the man, hoping he would say something more. But the man simply turned around and walked into the hallway.

Alex followed him with a million thoughts going around in his mind. A strong man such as him kidnapping him was already a confusing turn of events, and now Alex realized that he knew about the Azure Dragon's death as well as the Heavenly Pact.

This was no simple situation at all.

"Here you go," the man said, opening a room for Alex to get in. "This is a room that our alchemists use infrequently. You can use it as well."

Alex was made to walk in and look around.

There wasn't much in the room aside from a simple bed and some alchemy formations. He sighed a little and went to go sit on the bed.

While not as good as the ones he had been in recently, it wasn't bad at all. It was not a bed made for prisoners.

The room itself wasn't made for prisoners. These people had just made one of him for his pills.

"What now?" Alex asked.

"Well? Now you stay here. We'll get you a cauldron and whatnot to help you spend your time. It would be better if you could make pills for us, but I have a feeling you will refuse, so I will just take what I can from your ring for now."

"Why do you need the pills so much?" Alex asked.

"I told you, it's for a change—"

"Yes," Alex said. "What change? What will you do once you gain the strength you want?"

The man gave a nasty grin.

"Once we are strong, we are going to kill the Dragon Emperor."