

Alchemy 1531

Chapter 1531: Once Again

A year passed since the Realm of Trials had closed, and any event remotely as big as that wouldn't take place for another 2 years.

The Endless Shadow Abyss opened every year, but no one truly considered it to be something to look forward to as one did the Golden Auction or the Realm of Trials.

The one taking place in 3 years was the Cave of Frost's opening to the public, but that was still undecided as even after a year and a half, the barrier around the Ivory Kingdom hadn't disappeared.

So, the next big thing to look forward to was the opening of the Transcendent Martial Ground, which was another 6 years later. Without the Cave of Frost, one would consider that there might be a lack of events to bring some excitement to everyone's heart, but something had come that had brought quite a bit of excitement.

The players were returning home.

Alex stood in front of the giant Intercontinental Teleportation formation that was not far away from the Dragon Palace. He looked at the hundreds of thousands of people gathered, ready to return home.

He sought Hao Ya, who had been working night and day to make it happen. "We're ready?" he asked. "Did you succeed?"

"Yes," Hao Ya said. "We tried it last night and it worked perfectly."

"Great," Alex said excitedly.

Hao Ya looked at him curiously. "You're more excited about returning than I am, aren't you?" she asked. "Why haven't you told me why?"

"It's a secret," Alex said and turned toward the formation. At the same time, he looked inside his Soul Space at the two seeds that continued to grow, absorbing everything he threw at them.

Every day, he worried that he would look inside and find it wilted. He wanted to get to the senior as soon as he could.

"I do wish your aunt was here," Hao Ya said. "If little sister Liz was here, we could have completed it in just a month, if that." There wasn't much Hao Ya could do in terms of saving time except try it over and over.

"At least you did it," Alex said. "So we will get to return now."

Hao Ya nodded. "Let's get them all ready to go."

Alex left for a while, going to meet the Crown Prince. With such a massive number of people waiting to be sent back to their homes, he needed to be here to look after everyone.

On top of that, the Dragon Emperor had said that they be allowed to send their soldiers to the Central Continent to see how it was, and why it produced such strong individuals.

Alex thought of not agreeing at first, but he needed people who would look after the central continent for the entire year when so many cultivators would be there.

He most definitely needed all the help he could get to create a peaceful time for the mortals who still lived in the Central continent. It had been 8 years since they had to deal with this, so they wouldn't be exactly ready either.

"Are we starting?" the Crown Prince asked.

After a bit of consideration, Alex nodded. "We can start," he said.

He stood by and watched as the ones in the military created a strict environment and let people make a file to bring everyone to the teleportation formation.

Alex watched them move excitedly and nervously as after over 50 years, they were finally going home. And yet, not a single one of them would ever know what it had cost him to make this happen.

It might have happened on its own in a few years, but no one could take just exactly how long that would take. To make this happen, Alex had to make a bit of sacrifices.

Although, he wasn't sure if he could call it a sacrifice exactly. After all, he was also benefitting from it quite a bit. He was going to go back as he wanted to.

Once everyone gathered, Hao Ya gave the usual lecture she gave to everyone who was about to go home. She explained how the situation back home would be and how they likely wouldn't have a place to stay as their friends and families would be long gone.

Still, the nearly million people gathered there were all looking forward to returning as soon as possible. So, without making them wait any further, Hao Ya let the teleportation begin.

About 20 thousand people disappeared at a time, with Hao Ya going along with them on the very first one to make sure everything on the other side was handled properly.

Alex looked at the many who were excited to be next. He recognized a few faces amongst the ones that were leaving.

Wu Shun, Talia, the golden fox girl he had gone on a date a month ago, and many other somewhat familiar faces were leaving for the Central continent. Alex hadn't been aware so many of them were players.

As the people left one by one, Alex turned to his elders. "You two should head on over to the Enlightenment Domain once I'm gone," he said. "Spend your time learning what you can to improve yourself. I will return in exactly a year," he said.

"As you say, Your Majesty," the two of them replied. Both of them had been ready to say goodbye to their King for some time now.

Alex turned to the Crown Prince. "I'll leave then, prince," he said. "Hopefully the problem with the Ivory Kingdom will have ended by the time I return. I truly don't want to miss the Cave of Frost's opening."

"Don't you have to return to complete the trade with my father?" the Crown Prince asked.

Alex chuckled a bit. "Yeah, that too," he said. "But you can see why I'm excited for one more than the other."

"I suppose," the Crown prince said. "Anyway, we'll see you in a year, Your Majesty."

Alex nodded. "See you then." And he walked away.

He arrived on the teleportation platform with one of the groups. The people there were surprised to see him in the mix and were more than curious about what he was doing there.

However, before anyone could muster up some confidence to speak with him, they felt the tug of something on their body, and at the next moment they teleported away.

Alex arrived in the familiar field that he had always come back to the last 3 times he had returned to the Central continent from various continents.

While others were disoriented, he quickly flew over to Hao Ya, who was handling what she could for the people here. Alex sat by her and looked around at the city and buildings. It had only been 8 years since he had left this place and yet it seemed like many things had changed or upgraded already.

Mortals made such quick advancements that it felt unnatural to him. He waited for another 2 hours for the people to arrive. Once they were all there, Hao Ya gave them the final instruction they all needed.

Then, once that was done, she finally was free to do what she wanted to do. "Let's go meet up with my master."

Chapter 1532: I Will Kill Him

"I was surprised when little Hao told me you wanted to meet me again," senior Yang said. "I did not expect you to want to meet me this early."

Alex had just arrived in the backyard of the mansion when Senior Yang spoke to him all of a sudden.

"Greetings, senior," Alex said with a respectful bow. "I hope you don't mind me returning so early. Something important came up."

"I understand," the senior said in a warm tone.

"Young Alex," the snake walked out of the lake, turning into his human form with a slender body and long black hair with blue robes. His slit eyes tried to be as human-like as they could, but they failed.

"Senior Xuan," Alex bowed toward the heavenly beast. He called out Pearl and Whisker, both of whom respectfully greeted the two.

Senior Yang's eyes widened ever so slightly. "I had heard that he had become a White Tiger, but I didn't expect him to still have a White Cat's features," he said. "Did you see yourself as a cat more than a tiger when you evolved?"

"Umm... I don't know, senior," Pearl said with a hesitating look. He barely remembered thinking about anything when he was going through the pain of evolution. Thinking was the least of what he did.

"Does it matter what he views himself as during his evolution?" Alex asked the senior.

"Oh yes," senior Yang said. "How you view yourself goes into your Intent in keeping yourself one way, and Intent is a very powerful thing you'll find."

"OH!" Alex said in surprise. That made sense. "I have come to notice that Intent are truly quite strong."

"If you have learned some Dao, you will start noticing it in the Saint realm. Most end up noticing it in the Immortal realm," the senior said.

"Congratulations, junior," the snake from the side. "You are one of us now."

Pearl gave a wide smile.

The snake walked close to check on Pearl when his eyes perked up in surprise toward Alex's direction. "Saint Soul realm?" he asked in surprise. "Were you not only in Saint Core 5th realm less than a decade ago?"

"I have made good progress in my time in the Eastern Continent," he said. "That place is truly quite amazing."

"It has stronger Qi than all the other continents combined," Hao Ya said from the back. "They should have already had a good amount of Saint Spirit Vein, but their raid in the Western Continent must have given them more."

"That place is teeming with Saint realms like you wouldn't expect," she finished.

"And yet not a single one is close to breaking through to the Immortal realms," the senior said with a sigh.

"The Dragon Emperor is," Alex said. "He can break through any time he wants. I'm not sure of his chances of succeeding in his breakthrough, but he is ready to begin it at any time. He is at the peak of Saint realm and has been there for many years now."

The senior looked surprised. "I... wasn't aware of that," he said. "Are you certain?"

"Yes," Alex said. "His cultivation base is strong and deep. I have sensed people with cultivation bases up to Saint Transformation 7th realm, and none of them are nearly as strong as the Dragon Emperor's

cultivation base. The only ones I've sensed with stronger cultivation bases than him are probably the Immortal beasts I've met with."

"Hmm," the Senior frowned for a second. "Are you confident? Why did he not break through yet?"

"He's a coward," Alex said straightforwardly.

Everyone around him looked at him in surprise. "A coward?" the senior asked.

Alex paused for a moment, thinking through what he just said. "He won't break through because he won't be in control once he leaves. He likes being in power, and he doesn't want to go to a world where he will become the weakest. So for the longest, he has been doing whatever he can to become the strongest he can before he leaves."

"So... he's been preparing all this time, huh?" the senior said with a contemplative look. "Hao Ya, did you meet with him?"

"No, he never showed himself to me," Hao Ya said. "He remained in closed cultivation for a long time, due to a trade he did." She pointed to Alex as she said so.

The senior turned toward Alex. "You made a trade of some sort?" he asked.

"I did," Alex said. "He wanted to learn how to make pills that could create Pill clouds, so I traded him the knowledge for whatever I could get in return."

"Really?" the senior said with a hint of surprise. "I didn't see you as the type to pass along your knowledge to strangers. May I ask why?"

"So I could live and leave," Alex said with a self deprecating look on his face.

The senior frowned a bit. "Live?" he asked.

"He's the damn Emperor of the strongest continent in the realm, and so long as he stays in that place, no one can touch him. If I were to refuse him, I feared what would become of me while I stayed there. I can never be too safe in a place where someone else rules."

"I see," the senior said. "Still, Hao Ya, I want you to go talk to him when you can. See if you can persuade him to break through. You'll have to tell him I'm willing to take him to the Sky God's Palace and make sure he is safe and won't have to—"

"No!" Alex spoke, cutting off the man. Everyone around him was surprised to see him speak over the man. That was a very disrespectful thing to do.

The man slowly turned his head towards Alex and looked at him with narrowed eyes. "No?" he asked without any inflection in his tone.

"No," Alex said with a straight back. "I'm sorry, but I cannot let that happen. I cannot let that man leave this realm this early."

The senior's eyes narrowed this time around. "What do you mean?" he asked.

"The Dragon Emperor, if not responsible, is most likely directly involved in Pearl's parent's death. His grandparents died while the Dragon Emperor ruled, so we cannot let him leave until we know for certain what the truth is," Alex said seriously.

Senior Yang didn't say anything for a while, contemplating those words, and only spoke after some time had passed. "What if he did it? What if he was responsible? What would you do then?"

"Kill him," Alex said as a matter of fact.

The senior gave a surprised look. "Do you think you can do it?" he asked. "You did just say he's the strongest under Immortals."

Alex nodded. "And I will still kill him," he said. "I made that promise to Bai Jingshen, to Pearl. It will take some time for me to get strong enough to be able to contend with him on equal footing. He's very strong right now but he won't grow any stronger. I'm willing to give it my all to reach that point myself."

"If he is in fact responsible for all the harm he's caused Pearl, I will find a way to kill him, one way or another."

Chapter 1533: Important

"I... suppose that option has left me then," Senior Yang said as he looked at Alex and Pearl. He thought of something else to say when the snake spoke up.

"Are you sure he is involved?" he asked. "Make sure to understand thoroughly what you are dealing with before you make assumptions. Heck, don't make assumptions at all. Have proper proof and evidence."

"I don't have evidence yet that he is responsible for anything," Alex said. "Which is why I say he's most likely involved in the things. Still, I have evidence that suggests this notion."

"Well, the most important evidence is the fact that a sword that belongs to his family was found dug into Pearl's mother," Alex said. "He also attacked the Western Continent, so I don't think he's a good person altogether. I do still plan on finding proper evidence before I do anything. If I learn that he isn't responsible for anything then you can use his help to leave, senior."

"I can see that you are not aiming for an answer, which is nice. Having a preconceived notion of what you want as an answer can sometimes hamper your search for proof more than the parties involved themselves," the snake said.

"I will let you deal with the Dragon Emperor as you please," senior Yang took over. "I owe the White Tiger this much for all the help he's provided me."

Alex nodded in thanks. "Sorry for being disrespectful for a moment there senior. This thing is just too important for me," he said.

Senior Yang shook his hands, gesturing to forget about it. "Forget about it," he said. "Let's move on. You were the one that initiated us coming back I hear. Do you require something?"

Alex nodded. "I need guidance on what to do," he said.

The senior frowned a little. "On your cultivation base? On your dao?" he asked. "Surely you didn't come back for just that."

Alex shook his head. "Although I wouldn't mind hearing your opinions on that, what I really want help with is something else," he said.

He took out a talisman, surprising senior Yang. "Your Soul Space!" he said in surprise. "You can access it now?"

"Yes," Alex said. "I became able to a year ago. I've been practicing using it every— no, that's not of importance right now. Please take a look at this."

The man took the talisman Alex provided and looked at it superficially. His eyes narrowed when he realized that it was a vision-recording talisman. He could only wonder what it was that Alex was trying to have him see.

He closed his eyes and used his spiritual sense to read it.

Hao Ya and the snake looked at him for a moment, trying to discern any reaction. Seeing nothing, Hao Ya turned toward Alex. "What are you showing master?" she asked.

Alex simply put up his palm for her to wait.

A few more moments later, the man put down the talisman, his eyes unfocused, his mind in a daze. He tried to speak multiple times, but his words didn't exit his mouth. His mind worked too much for his mouth to catch up to.

Finally, he managed to string together a few words and speak them out. "Is this real?" he asked.

Alex nodded. "It's very much real," he said.

"Where did you find this?" the man asked.

"My Soul Space," Alex said.

"I thought so," the man said in a low voice, not focused on Alex and the others at all. He tugged on his long long, twisting a lock in his fingers as he lost to thought once more.

Hao Ya couldn't hold back her curiosity anymore. "Master, what is going on? What is it that you saw?" she asked.

Senior Yang tossed the talisman toward her, not even paying any attention, letting her look at it. Hao Ya quickly looked at it and gave a confused look. "What is this? I don't understand," she said. She had no way of knowing what she was looking at.

"What is it? Let me see," the snake walked up close and looked through the talisman. He put down the talisman with a slightly questioning look. "I'm not good with plants. Which ones were those?"

"It—"

"No, don't answer," Senior Yang quickly said, stopping Alex in his tracks. He quickly looked at him. "How many more know of this?"

"Everyone in this backyard," Alex said. "I did not dare show any of it to anyone else."

"Good," the man said. "Have your beasts speak an oath to never tell anyone else about this."

"No," Alex refused.

"No?" the man looked surprised that Alex had refused him once again. "I don't think you understand the gravity of the situation, boy. If any information about this is leaked in any manner, you will be dead if you're lucky. If not, you'll be a puppet to someone stronger to make use of what you have."

"I'm not going to force either Pearl or Whisker to swear an oath just for my sake," Alex said. "I trust them fully. They will never betray me."

"They don't have to betray you to have the information leaked," the man said.

"And that would put their lives in jeopardy if they have any oaths," Alex said. "So I won't force them to make any. I'll rather deal with the consequences myself."

The man looked at Alex for a long second before smirking a little. "If you understand what this will mean for you, then it's alright. Do what you want," he said.

"Thank you, senior," Alex said.

"Master, are you gonna tell us or not?" Hao Ya asked.

"No, I'm not," senior Yang said. "Luhei, please leave us alone. I'll talk to you later once I'm done thinking through things."

The snake was a little surprised to see such a reaction. The last time he had been this serious was a year and a half ago when someone from the Immortal realm had arrived.

After the snake moved away, Hao Ya left next. Then Alex took back both Pearl and Whisker and in the end, only the two of them remained.

"I'm hoping you know what I should be doing next, senior," Alex said.

"Not yet," the man whispered, almost to himself before saying. "I will need to look at it directly."

Alex remembered the pain the last time the man had looked into his Soul Space. It hadn't been a fun experience.

"Do it, senior," Alex said. "I'm ready."

Senior Yang paused and looked at Alex. "I... don't think you understand what I'm talking about," he said.

Alex paused. "What do you mean? Aren't you gonna look inside my Soul Space?" he asked.

"Yes, but I can't choose where to appear inside your Soul Space," the man said. "And it's so massive that I can't cover everything."

Alex frowned. "Then how are you planning to look at it?" he asked.

"Simple," the man said. "I'm going to go into your Soul Space."

Alex gasped in surprise. "You're going to directly enter my Soul Space?" he asked.

"Yes," the man said. "But you'll have to be ready this time around. It will be very painful, and the pain will all be spiritual. If things go wrong, there is a chance, however minuscule, that you will die."

Chapter 1534: Inside the Soul Space

"I will die?" Alex asked. He found it hard to believe that he could die just because the man in front of him was going to enter his Soul Space. But then again, this was the only man he knew that knew what could happen if one were to enter another person's Soul Space.

As a disciple of a god who dealt with wind and space, he was most likely the only one in this realm who understood this.

"There is a chance," the man said. "If I were to enter you, you will be burdened."

Alex frowned a bit. "But I wasn't burdened when Whisker and Pearl entered," he said. "They've entered many times and I never felt anything."

"That's because they are not foreign entities to your soul," the man said. "Your beasts are already connected to you through your bond. Any burden you would face with them inside is something you already face even when they are outside as well."

"The beast space in your body is proof of that," he said.

"Ah, I see," Alex said. "So it will be different when you enter."

"Yes," the man said. "Your Soul Space is in part connected with your soul and spirit. When another being with their own Soul enters your Soul Space, you have to bear the weight of their Soul with your own. That includes their spirit, their spiritual sense, and even their Intent."

"And your soul will be especially strong," Alex said softly. "Stronger than anything I've sensed. How does it compare to the Weapons God's Intent?"

The man thought for a bit. "I don't think you'll find it to be very different," he said. "The Weapons God is someone that died a long time ago. The Stone Sword he left behind has lost most of its Intent in the thousands of years that he had been dead."

"I would be an ant to him in his hay day, even now my living Intent would be weaker than his dead one, especially when I don't mean to harm you at all," the man said. "However, Intent is not all you're going to have to bear when I enter."

"You'll have to bear my soul and spirit, and as a Divine Cultivator, it has never been stronger."

Alex took a deep breath out of shock and fear. "A greater pain than that time, huh?" he thought, remembering the day when he pulled the stone sword out of the ground and read the contents carved onto it.

"I've grown stronger since then," Alex said. "It might not be a lot, but I'm sure I can handle you."

"Good, you must," the man said. "If you cannot, your soul will break, your spirit will dissipate, and your consciousness will be no longer."

Alex sucked in cold breath once more out of fear. "Then is it safe at all?" he asked.

The man chuckled a bit. "Don't worry, I intend to get out the moment you ask me for it," he said. "Although I will need you to remain conscious of that. If you feel yourself getting weak, you'll have to let me know. Without your intention, the only way for me to come out of your Soul Space is to break through your Soul Space, at which point you would die."

Alex nodded. "I understand," he said. "I'm ready."

"Alright, as long as you are clear," the man said, slowly taking off his storage rings, noticing that Alex was looking at them. "There are items with spirit in here. Those would burden your soul too."

"Oh," Alex said with a hint of surprise.

"Anyway, get ready," the man said. "Send me in."

Alex nodded and at the next moment the man vanished from in front of his eyes.

The moment the man vanished, Alex felt it, a deep pain in his mind. The pain emanated through his chest and his dantian too. He, the Nascent Soul, was the one feeling most of the pain.

Alex balled his hand into a fist, his fingernails digging into his palm, as he tried his best to handle the pain. It felt as if someone placed a large rock on his spiritual sea and he needed to carry it.

The man hadn't been lying. This was most certainly more painful than when he tried to read the Spiritual Providence skill carved onto the Stone Sword.

After a few seconds, he got used to the pain and looked inside his Soul Space where he found the man staring directly at something in the complete opposite direction of where he should have been looking at.

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The man surnamed Yang entered the Soul Space without any fanfare. One moment he was outside and the next he was here, surrounded by darkness that he felt would fit the title of Void far better than the colorful silver and purple world.

He had been inside a Soul Space before, multiple times even. But the ones he entered belonged to his master, the Sky God, and hers was not empty like this, devoid of most things.

He wondered if this was how her Soul Space used to be before he ever met her, before she ever became the Sky God, before the event that was now forbidden to even be talked about.

The Massacre of Gods.

'Stop getting distracted,' he told himself. This was not the time to reminisce. He needed to find the two seeds and learn as much as he could about them in the short time frame he had.

However, he wasn't sure where that was. He couldn't use his Divine sense to check where it was unless he wanted to destroy Alex's Nascent Soul at once. This entire world would crumble if he did so.

He needed to wait for Alex to show him the way. And it was taking him a few more seconds than he had expected him to.

'It should be around here,' he thought. 'The kid wouldn't send me far away.' He tried to sense what he could with just his cultivation base, without bringing out his Divine sense.

Something caught his attention in a certain direction. He tried to look at what it was, but there was no light there. However, it was something that felt both strong and familiar. He couldn't tell why.

'What is there?' he wondered curiously. Was it perhaps the Blood God's Manual?

"Senior!" Alex spoke to him through his spiritual sense. "Please hurry, I can't hold much longer."

"Oh, sorry," the man said quickly, returning to his senses. "I got distracted. Where are the seeds?"

"In that direction."

Alex led the man through the void. As he got closer, he saw a sliver of a golden light peeking through something large. He could see roots that were coming out of the bulbs that were still the seeds, even though there was already a sprout coming above.

"You should stop there, senior," Alex said with a pained voice. "Any further and the roots will try to absorb whatever you have."

"I see," the man said. "The Nine Yang Divine Tree is said to be a creation of the Sun God. It is understandable if it wishes to destroy everything and anything it comes in contact with."

Alex was taken aback. He hadn't been aware of that, but he didn't have it in him to show his surprise at this very moment.

Chapter 1535: Life

Senior Yang remained silent throughout his time in Alex's Soul Space, his face contemplative the entire time, while Alex did his best to survive.

He could feel his spiritual energy depleting with each passing minute, but he could do nothing to stop it. He just had to bear the burden of the senior being inside of him while making sure it didn't deplete to the point that he ended up unconscious.

Thankfully, there was someone frantically crying out in his spiritual sea, after having just woke up from a nap, not realizing what was happening.

Alex should have alerted Godslayer on what was happening, but he had forgotten. But, now that he was awake, he was relying on him to tell him when his spiritual sense was getting too low.

He struggled for a good few minutes, bearing the heaviness on his soul, and couldn't continue any longer. "Senior, you'll have to leave," he said. "I'm reaching my limits."

"Just a bit... fine," the man reluctantly said. He needed more time here, he wasn't nearly done, but he had to leave. It was that or let the young man outside die. And if he wasn't wrong about what he had noticed, he couldn't let that happen. Not now.

"Pull me out," the man said and Alex followed his words, instinctively bringing him out from his Soul Space.

The moment the man arrived outside, Alex felt as if the shackles on his soul had been removed as if he had been allowed to breathe after being underwater for a long time.

He heaved a long sigh of relief and closed his eyes for a while to catch his breath. The relief from his soul unburdening was almost ecstatic.

After a few more minutes, once he had more or less become calm again, he looked toward the man who was deep in thought. He waited for a minute longer, but couldn't contain himself after that.

"Did you find something, senior?" he asked.

"Hmm?" the man got out of his muse. "Oh right!" He thought for a moment longer on what exactly to say and then spoke.

"I think I understand, at least superficially what has happened," he said. "I will need to enter your Soul Space a few more times when you are ready, but for now these are the truths I've found."

"I am not aware if you've noticed or not, but your Soul Space is full of Yang," the man said.

Alex's eyes narrowed. "Yang? I did not sense any at all, and neither did my beasts mention it," he said.

"Hmm," the man paused. "Calling it Yang alone would be wrong. It's not yang, but Yang in an aura that is still Yang and yet a variant."

"I... do not understand what you are saying at all, senior," Alex said. All of those words made sense individually, but together they felt like gibberish.

"Life aura," the man said. "You are aware of this, correct?"

"To an extent," Alex said before his eyes widened. "Are you saying my Soul Space is filled with Life Aura?" He knew Life aura was something that had in part to do with Yang, just as Death aura had to do with Yin. Was this what the man meant?

"I won't say filled, more so that it just exists there. It's very minute and spread out. I would doubt you would be able to feel it even if you want to," the man said.

"How strong would you say it is?" Alex asked.

The man reached into the grassy meadow and tore out a few blades of the grass. He let it fall from his hand. "Barely good enough to grow this much in any particular area," he said.

"That's... not very good," Alex said.

"No, it is not," the man said. "But you are not taking into account how vast the soul space inside of you is. Even Life aura that thin, when put together from all corners of your Soul Space, would be very rich."

"I was once told the Sage of Ten Thousand Treasures took away a Space Stone of a size that could create a Soul Space enough to devour the sun. Yours was smaller than that, but it might still be enough to devour this realm."

Alex's breathing hastened with those words, his eyes gleaming with excitement. The man saw this but said nothing to caution him about how he felt. He didn't have to. Alex calmed himself and asked another question.

"Why is there life aura in my Soul Space?" he asked. "I don't remember owning any treasures that had life aura. Or was I just blind to the aura?"

"No," the man said. "I doubt the Life aura originated anywhere other than your body."

"My body?" Alex asked. "It's a result of the Sun God's body?"

"That's what I believe," the man said. "Otherwise, the aura shouldn't have permeated so evenly. Any object with Life Aura should be heavily concentrated around the aura."

Alex nodded. Still, the words were hard for him to believe. "Does the fact that I have learned the Dao of Death not affect it in any way?" he asked.

"Death is something you learned, Life is something you were born with, it's part of your constitution as the owner of the Sun God's body," the man said. "Throughout history, we have learned that Sun God's body affects one's aspects in certain ways."

"Their body is capable of turning anything to Qi from Space stones and Pill to Beast cores. Their minds are capable of withstanding assault from outside, their spirit capable of devouring other spirits."

"Their Soul Space being filled with vigorous life aura is now just another thing that it is capable of," the man said. "We've never before had one with a body capable of devouring Space stones to form a Soul Space, but that must be another perk of the Sun God's body that none of the previous ones born with that happened to come across."

"So I was just... lucky," Alex said.

"Not lucky," the man said. "Destined. Although one could consider someone destined to be lucky." The man laughed alone.

Alex wasn't of half a mind to laugh. He thought curiously about what he could do with this information. His Soul Space was full of Life aura, so was that why the Yang tree had sprouted roots in there?

"So the Nine Yang Divine tree's seed responded to my Soul Space's life aura and germinated?" he asked the man.

"In a sense," the man said. "Maybe you had a Yang body that helped it feel like at home or something. I cannot tell you the exact reasons why that happened, but yes, it grew. And I can confidently say that it grew before the World Tree."

The man sighed in somewhat disbelief. "The Yang seed much had been looking for more sources of energy, which was why its roots shoot out to grab onto anything," he said. "And in its search, it came across the World Tree seed. Unfortunately for it, the World Tree seed is not a minor thing."

"It is something said to have survived frigid landscape, to devour energy from magma itself to grow," the man said. "The Nine Yang Divine Tree simply activated the World Tree's survival instinct, and most likely forced it to sprout to protect itself when it should have not."

Chapter 1536: Another Possibility

"So... it was all a coincidence?" Alex asked.

"Destiny, maybe?" the man said before laughing a little. "No, I don't know if it was a coincidence. If it was, it is a hell of a coincidence. It could be that it grew thanks to your Life aura too, but I have doubts in that regard. Most likely, the Nine Yang Divine tree's roots threatened the existence of the World Tree, forcing it out of its shell."

"Maybe that was how it was supposed to grow in the first place," the man said, musing to himself. "Those gods should have just tried tossing the seed into hot magma and see what happened. Alas, they were too scared to hurt it and didn't dare. I can't blame them, I would've been the same."

Forced to mature in a harsh environment, was that what it was? Was that how a World Tree seed was supposed to find life? Somehow he didn't think that was correct.

Somehow, he didn't think that was the right set of circumstances. Surely the Nine Yang Divine Tree's roots feeding on its seed could have forced it to sprout, to protect itself, but to naturally grow out, it would need something more.

Alex didn't have much knowledge of World Tree aside from what Senior Yang had told him. His knowledge lacked the trees that were blessed by the true gods.

The World Defying mushroom in parts was a distant descendant of the World Tree. It was so far off the main line that it wasn't even a plant anymore, and yet it had in part a property of the World Tree, albeit twisted to work differently.

The World Defying mushroom changed their energy as per what they came in direct contact with. They changed what they had into something else almost unnaturally.

The World Tree, on the other hand, took all the energy it could come across and turned it into pure Qi. In a way, they were the complete opposites of one another, yet one came from the other.

'That is how she blessed them,' Alex thought before pausing for a moment. 'She?' he questioned himself as a thought grew in his head.

"The World Tree," Alex said. "It was blessed by one of the true gods."

The man looked back sharply when he heard Alex speaking again.

"It was the Moon Goddess, wasn't it?" he asked.

The man looked confused as to why Alex seemed so surprised by his own statement. "Yes, it was," he said. "At least, that is what we believe."

"Then... could the World Tree have properly sprouted when coming into contact with her?" he asked. "Just as the Nine Yang Divine Tree, which was a Sun God's creation, came into contact with me."

"Young man, the True gods are no more," the man said. "All that remains are—"

"Imitations, yes. I understand," Alex said. "I was talking about the Mood Goddess's imitation."

The man paused at that. "Why are you talking about that?" he asked.

"Because I might have met with the current holder of the Moon Goddess's body."

The man gasped. "You met her? Are you absolutely certain?" he asked.

"To be honest, no," Alex said. "I do not know what you know senior, so I cannot tell you if the girl I met had the body you talk about or not, but I can tell you that when I touched the girl to help with her Yin problem, I felt a connection that I instinctively knew belonged to my body and not me."

"It was an ancient connection, which I felt with my master as well, who I think might have been the previous holder of the Moon Goddess' body."

Alex's words surprised the man and at the same time confused him. "Explain to me in detail what happened. What girl? What master?" he asked.

Alex did as the man asked. He explained what he knew regarding his master and the white-haired girl's body. After a minute or two, the man's eyes widened.

"That... that must be the Moon Goddess," he said, remembering some ancient words he had read a long time ago. He was about to say them, but he realized he couldn't. He couldn't tell Alex those prophecies. He couldn't influence his future here. He had too much to do.

He couldn't tell him that throughout the hundreds of thousands if not millions of years since the True Sun God and Moon Goddess had disappeared, the ones that were born with an imitation of their body were always attracted to each other, as if by fate.

And in the hundreds of thousands of years, of the ones that met each other, every single time, one of them was to die, as if by fate.

The day the two met and one didn't die... what would happen then? The man was curious and excited for such a day in the future. At the same time, scared that either Alex or the girl he mentioned would die.

One had already passed away, how many times could he be the survivor of the two?

"If you can," the man spoke. "Try to stay away from her."

Alex frowned a little. "I can't meet her?" he asked. "I was hoping to see if she was my master's reincarnated soul."

The man hesitated a bit. "I do not have the ability to tell whether she is what you think she is or not. I do not even know how real reincarnation is. But still, listen to me, and try to stay away where you can. Or at least, take things slow."

Alex didn't understand, but he nodded. "So... could the World Tree have grown out of her presence or her Yin?" he asked.

"There's a good chance," the man said. "Much better than what I thought the seed did to protect itself."

"I thought so," Alex said. He thought for a bit and asked, "But if the sea isn't protecting itself, then won't it die soon enough? I fear the Yang tree might suck it all away."

"That you don't have to worry," the senior said. "I think the Tree is handling it just fine. From what I see, the two of them are in perfect harmony as of yet."

"Perfect harmony?" Alex asked. "How do you mean?"

"They are giving and taking energy to help each other right now."

"The Yang tree glows with heat, all of which is absorbed by the World Tree to create Qi. The Qi is then absorbed by the Yang tree to turn it to heat. The roots also take and give resources as they need from each other, all of which return back to the cycle in the end, helping themselves."

Alex was slightly surprised. "So... it's a perpetual transfer of energy?" he asked. "They don't need anyone else to grow?"

"No, they do need help to grow," the man said. "Their seeds have enough nutrients for them to grow, for now, there's still food inside there. The seeds are also absorbing the Life aura your body produces."

"While minuscule, they are growing. And if you continue this for long enough, give them additional nutrients, they will certainly mature into the Nine Yang Divine Tree and the World Tree."

"Together at that. That would be a sight to see."

Chapter 1537: Spirit Water

"So, will you take it?" Alex asked the man. "Should I take it out of my Soul Space?" He didn't like the idea of parting with the two seeds, especially the Yang Tree as it was meant to be his.

However, if he had to, he would.

The man thought for a moment, going through everything he had learned.

"No," he said in the end. "There is a chance that both of them will die if I bring them out. I would have to sow them in the ground to let them live and I cannot do that here. I cannot take plants in my storage ring either, they would die."

"But you said they are surviving as they are," Alex said. "That they don't need anything as long as they have each other."

"Maybe," the man said. "I will have to check it all some more, but we don't have to do that. You're the one most likely to enter the Immortal realm next, so you can take the two of them with you."

Alex nodded. That was good enough.

He asked a few more questions to the man. He asked about his Nascent Soul, about his Daos, about swords, about the ones that came from the heavens, and anything else he could imagine.

The man answered all questions easily, without any hesitation.

His Nascent soul would grow along with his cultivation base until it was big enough that it would break free from the dantian and start joining with his body, merging with it, transforming it.

Learning more Daos would make it harder for him to ascend certainly, but the man didn't know if the lightning ever got too strong for one to handle. At best, they would be at the peak of what a person could handle during their tribulation. Only, that would happen multiple times, which was the problematic part.

To improve his sword, he would have to improve his Intent. Alex had learned that, but he was surprised to learn that just improving his Intent wouldn't improve his Sword Intent. One had to train in the sword with the Intent to hone it. A sharp wooden blade could cut far better than a dull wooden blade could.

The man did not know about the ones that came from the heavens. He had assumed they had been for him, but they weren't. And now, he wasn't even sure if they had left or not. Alex had only sensed them leaving for certain because he was close, and he had learned Space aura.

The man congratulated him for learning how to paint, and for being able to produce masterpieces as well as improve his Intent through it.

He explained that the level of artifacts in this realm was not very high and that they were constrained by the mindset of mortals.

The man did not know anything about the Gold and Green aura and why that would be a result of what he did. None of the other continents had that happen to them.

He couldn't guess why the beasts would close their borders. The man assumed it would have been to protect themselves. One of their leaders had died, and they may have done it to defend themselves. Or they did it to not leak the news outside. The man couldn't make up his mind.

He was sorry that Alex couldn't find his cousin.

"I cannot keep my Defensive technique on you," the man said. "The Tiger has made a pact to not harm anyone in this world, so the world is more lax when he uses his Qi. I, however, do not have that luxury. The most I can do is create artifacts that do what I want them to do."

"Even then, I need to be careful," the man said. "I don't think the snake can help you either. He isn't ready to fight the Heavenly Judgment yet, which he will bring down on himself if he uses his Qi. Don't worry, though, I will send a message to the tiger. He will come here some time in the future when he has to."

Alex nodded. The tiger's defensive technique on his body had been destroyed when he fought the Golden Lion back in the Beast Paradise, so he could only wait to replace it on him.

He needed something to protect him while he was in the midst of monsters that could level mountains in a single strike and evaporate a storm for a dozen miles just because of a clash between the two.

A few days passed in which every time Alex was fully rested, he would have to send senior Yang into his Soul Space to learn about the plants as much as he could.

About a month later, they finally stopped.

At that time, the man had learned one crucial thing. The growth of the plants had stagnated and anything they gave to them would only amount to little help. It needed more nutrients.

"For starters, we need spirit water," the man said with a thoughtful look on his face. "Spirit water, and then spirit dews. Although, I'm not sure if the latter can be found or not in this realm."

"What is spirit water?" Alex asked the man.

"Water that is filled with Qi," the man answered. "It should be easy to find."

"Ocean water?" Alex asked in surprise, remembering the city he visited in the Emerald Kingdom where they flooded land with water from the ocean after removing salt and other aspects that would harm a plant.

"Ocean water is too diluted," the man said. "Spirit water is usually found above a spirit vein in a small pond. Although it depends there too."

Alex thought for a moment and his eyes widened in slight surprise. "Wait, I might have something like that," he said, bringing out something.

He presented it to the man, a green flask with liquid inside that amounted to a total of a million liters. "This is Bottomless Jade Flask," Alex said. "It—"

"Collects Qi," the man said curiously. "A flask made out of a Qi Swallowing Jade, how peculiar."

Alex hadn't known that it was a type of jade that had the property to drag in Qi from the surroundings. He had been wondering how it functioned for a long time and had assumed it had to do with some Qi lines he could not see.

The man looked inside to see the water. "How long did you keep it inside your Soul Space?" he asked.

"Ever since I could access it," Alex said. "So... about a year."

"Hmm, and before that, it was outside?" he asked.

"In the ring," Alex said. "But I did occasionally bring it outside just in case it wasn't working inside the ring."

"It wasn't," the man said. "You should have left it out for longer, maybe it would take in more Qi then."

Alex felt a little saddened. He knew he had done something wrong.

"But, placing it in your Soul Space was a brilliant idea," he said. "While it has been there, it has absorbed a lot of the Life aura from its surroundings. While there isn't a lot of it, it's certainly way better than any regular water."

"This should speed up the growth of these seeds by at least half of its current growth rate."

Chapter 1538: Side Effect

Half of the Nine Yang Divine Tree and World Tree's current growth rate. That wasn't half bad.

When the Bottomless Jade Flask arrived in the auction, it was meant for Spirit wines. However, he had seen its usage in growing plants, so he bought it.

He could have never imagined at that time that it would be used to help the Nine Yang Dive Tree and the World Tree grow. That possibility had simply never existed in his mind.

"Actually," Alex quickly said. "I have something else I bought to grow plants." He quickly brought out a few dozen formation flags of various sizes. "This is the Enriching Mist Formation, meant to gather Qi into a small area. What if I used this around the trees?"

The man looked at the rods in front of him, his Divine sense passing through them all. He closed his eyes to see what they really did and nodded. "Not bad, it's quite an amazing creation for this realm. It will do

quite well for now. I'll also help make you another one to concentrate Life aura around them. With those two, we won't have to be concerned much longer."

Alex nodded and was about to say something when the man spoke again. "I don't think we can let the two trees remain as they are. They need much more to grow. They need to lay their roots on the ground."

Alex didn't disagree. "So we should plant them on some land?" he asked.

The man nodded. "More than that, we should separate them as well," he said. "Slowly untangle their roots and separate them."

Alex frowned a bit when he heard that. "But they are relying on each other to survive aren't they?" he asked. "That would kill them."

"Not immediately," the man said. "And they have sprouted already either because of you, or each other, or both. Now, they can be taken away if we plan to let them grow."

"What's wrong with letting them as they are?" Alex asked.

The man scoffed a little when he heard that. "The World Tree would devour the Nine Yang Divine tree in no time if we let them stay close," he said.

"While growing, it won't seem like much, but the World Tree is supposed to be large, so large that it is said that one could see the tree before they saw the realm."

"It is said that there were cities built around the world tree in between the corner of its roots, back when they hadn't yet abandoned the place before the war. Each root is as tall as a hills. Mountains at their peak were said to have never come half the size of its height."

"In front of it, the Nine Yang Divine tree would appear as large as an ant to a human. The Yang tree might have been blessed by the Sun God, but it wasn't nearly at the level at which the World Tree was blessed by the Moon Goddess."

Alex couldn't help but be scared thinking of a tree that dwarfed mountains. He had seen large trees, but this was just monstrous if the words were true. And looking at the size of its seed itself, Alex could tell that it was true.

He had to agree that they should separate the two. "How do we do it? How do we separate them?" he asked.

"Don't worry, I will help you," he said. "We have plenty of time."

Over the next month or two, Alex struggled with the man inside his Soul Space from time to time, trying his best to separate the roots by hand.

Each time he did so, he would have to be gentle with the roots slowly pulling them apart from each other. Each time, he failed to complete the task as Alex couldn't handle it any longer and the man had to go back out.

There had been times when he wanted to stay a bit longer, do a bit more, but that would risk Alex's life. He didn't want to do that. There would be problems after his death that the man could not hope to deal with himself.

So, each time, he would leave the task unfinished. The problem that came with that was that every time he left, the roots would go back to grabbing each other again.

Leaving without completing the task meant complete failure and he would have to start it from the beginning.

Thankfully, he had noticed that Alex was able to handle him inside his Soul Space a bit longer each time. He hadn't intended for it, but his presence in Alex's Soul Space had been one of the major training for his Intent and Spiritual Sense. It was a nice little side effect.

The man feared that Alex would end up with such advanced Intent by the end of it all that he would do things that should not yet be possible by Saints.

If he was to be honest, he was looking forward to it.

On the 5th month of being there, Bai Jingshen finally arrived, the behemoth of a white tiger hadn't changed to a human form.

"How are you two here?" he asked when he saw Pearl and Alex in the mansion's backyard.

"Brother Shen, greetings," Alex said.

"Grandpa!" Pearl said enthusiastically.

Bai Jingshen landed by Pearl and stroked his back. "You've grown stronger. Is the Eastern Continent that good to you?" he asked.

"It's mostly Brother's pills," the young White Tiger said.

"Surely," the older White Tiger replied before turning to Alex. "So, what are you doing here? Have you found out anything?"

"We came because of something unexpected I found after opening my Soul Space," Alex said. "My apologies, but we haven't learned all that much about Pearl's mother's death as you might've hoped."

The White Tiger frowned but said nothing in regard to what he thought. "That's okay. There's still some time, right?"

"Yes, there's still 14 more years after I return," Alex said.

"Good," he said. "Take that time to find out whatever you can. However minuscule, find me something. Please."

Alex could hear the desperation in the last word.

"Actually, we did find something, Grandpa," Pearl said. "It's not about mother's death, but something different, another bad news."

"Hmm, what?" the beast asked.

Pearl relayed everything they had learned, however minuscule.

Bai Jingshen was shocked. "My daughter... is dead?" the beast asked, his expression shocked.

Alex could see the hope disappear in the beast's eyes. 'He knew,' he thought. 'He knew this was most likely the possibility, but he had hoped it wouldn't be true.'

That was how Alex had felt about Hannah's survival until he had to give up on that hope for his own sake. He understood.

"Those... bastard," the beast growled with a low rumble.

Alex could feel his skin prick with fear at that voice.

"I will kill those little shits," he said in a low voice. "Screw the oaths. I'll kill them before heaven kills me."

"White Tiger, calm down," Senior Yang spoke. "I know you are mad, but don't lose yourself to it."

"Why not?" Bai Jingshen asked. "Why should I not just carve the flesh of the one that claims himself a dragon and feast upon his entrails? I know he must be the one that did it. I deserve his death."

Chapter 1539: Purpose

The tiger's anger scared Alex. He had seen him angry before, but not this angry. This was killing Intent in his anger that didn't come naturally.

Alex had to step aside in fear of what would happen to him.

Bai Jingshen's fury rose to new heights. His daughter was dead. His son-in-law was dead. His granddaughter was dead. This was an attack on his family and he couldn't stand it.

He burned with anger, the air around him rippling with his Qi that rose from him. He couldn't calm himself. He needed blood. The blood of his enemies was the only thing that could calm him.

That was what his primal instincts demanded.

And with his anger formed something in his forehead. Something that glimmered in golden light, something that flickered so fast that the distracted couldn't notice in time.

Bai Jingshen hadn't realized that he had nearly revealed a very deep secret that he had hidden about himself for the longest time.

"I'm going," he said and turned to leave.

"Brother Shen!" Alex spoke out, but the White Tiger didn't listen to him.

"Bai!" the snake spoke, but he didn't speak to him either.

"White Tiger!" Senior Yang called for him as well, but the White Tiger didn't wait for his words. He flew and ran.

"Grandpa!" Pearl teleported in front of Bai Jingshen, stopping him momentarily. Bai Jingshen looked at him for a moment and shook his head.

"Don't stop me, Pearl. I'll do it. I won't stop for anyone," he said.

"Please don't do this," Pearl said. "You'll die."

"And I'll die have avenged my family," the White Tiger said. "I should have done this from the start, but I let my fear of death stop me."

"And it should," Pearl said in desperation. "Stop, please. I don't want you to die."

"It's too late, my mind is made," Bai Jingshen said, not looking at Pearl anymore. He flew past him, a determined look filling what had been anger a moment ago. He was going to do this.

It was time to end this.

"Stop, Grandpa!" Pearl shouted from the distance even as Bai Jingshen flew to the edges of the mansion, ready to walk out of the formation. "I don't want to lose you too."

Bai Jingshen stopped. The words cut him deep. The final word was too heavy for him to hear from his great-grandson.

I don't want to lose you... too.

He turned around to see Pearl flying toward him desperately, tears filling his face, rolling down his cheek.

"Please don't go," Pearl said again. "I don't want to lose you too. I lost my grandfather and grandmother before I could even meet them. I lost my mother before I got to know her at all. My father is most likely dead too."

"You and Grandmas are my only blood relatives remaining," he said with an ugly cry. "I don't want to lose you. I can't lose someone else again. I'm not strong enough for that."

Bai Jingshen's determination shattered like glass hit by a rock, his anger vanishing like water on a hot stove. Tears filled his face as well, some his own pain, some Pearl's.

He slowly flew toward Pearl who had stopped as he sobbed in the sky. The large White Tiger came next to him placed his right paw on Pearl's shoulder and met his forehead with his own.

"I'm sorry, Pearl," he said slowly. "I was too angry. I didn't think what the rest of you would feel if I died. Forgive me."

The Great-grandfather and Great grandson stayed in the air, silently sobbing as they shared the moment. Alex and the rest arrived moments later and stopped when they saw that he wasn't leaving.

Bai Jingshen looked up from Pearl and saw the others. His eyes fell on Alex beside the other two. He couldn't help but silently curse himself when he saw him.

'Stupid!' he thought to himself. 'How could I have thought about dying? How could I have thought about killing myself just for revenge?'

His purpose in life was much more than this. His was a mission on which balanced the fate of the entire universe. If Alex was the man that his master was waiting for, his purpose, his mission was to bring Alex to the truth so that he may do what no one else could.

That was his purpose. He could not die before he had served his purpose.

'I must take him to the truth,' Bai Jingshen thought to himself. "We cannot die this soon. I'm sorry, let's go back."

Everyone sighed in relief as things calmed down once again.

Alex and the rest left Bai Jingshen to talk with Pearl for a while before he arrived to talk with them.

"I heard Pearl's Uncle tore away the protection I left on you," the White Tiger asked.

"Yes," Alex said. "Would you mind replacing it?"

"Sure," Bai Jingshen said. "But later. For now, surely you didn't call me just because of this."

"That is why we called you," Senior Yang said. "That was the only reason. At least back then."

Bai Jingshen's eyes narrowed. "Something's changed?" he asked.

The man surnamed Yang explained everything to Bai Jingshen, who couldn't help but widen his eyes in surprise. "You have the bloody World Tree and the Nine Yang Divine Tree in your Soul Space? How does that even happen?" he asked.

"I can give you a written document on what happened later," the man said.

Bai Jingshen gave him a glare when he heard that. "Fine. I don't really care why," he said. "But this is big. Does the snake know?"

"He's a nobody. He doesn't deserve to know," the senior said.

Alex was surprised to hear the snake being referred to in this fashion.

"But I do?" Bai Jingshen asked.

"If the Godkiller's disciple doesn't deserve to know, I don't know who does," the man said.

Bai Jingshen could only smile. "So, what do we do?" he asked.

"At first I had thought of taking just his daughter and Hao Ya with me, but as things stand, I might have to take him to the Sky God's palace myself," he said.

"Okay," Bai Jingshen said. "As long as it doesn't reignite the war, I don't have any problem with that. What does that have to do with me though? Why tell me the secret?"

"Because I wish to ask you to relieve the burden you've set upon them," the man said, gesturing to Alex and Pearl.

"The burden?" Bai Jingshen asked, eyeing the two of them.

"You've made them seek vengeance on your behalf," the man said. "You've set them on a path which has a high chance of leading them to their death. Can you let them not vie for such a future?"

Bai Jingshen thought for a moment and said, "I think their fate is much stronger than that given what I believe they are going to accomplish. Still, I will let them decide."

The White Tiger turned to Alex and Pearl.

"After hearing all of this. What is it that you two think is the right thing to do?" Bai Jingshen asked. "Speak your mind openly, and I will let you do whatever it is that you wish to do henceforth."

Alex thought for a moment and then looked toward Pearl who simply nodded. No words needed to be spoken between them for them to share their answer.

"We'll continue," Alex said. "There's nothing else to do. I've already given up so much. It's too late to back out now. The only way this ends is with us bringing justice to Pearl and Brother Shen."

"There you go," Bai Jingshen beamed as he spoke. "I have nothing else to say."

The senior sighed. He worried still, but he couldn't say anything. "You will have to be extremely careful then."

"I know," Alex said. "We're doing it slowly and silently. They won't know what's coming for them until it's too late."

"I like the bombastic approach, but this isn't bad either," Bai Jingshen roared in laughter.

Senior Yang gave up in the end and walked away, letting the three talk amongst themselves. Alex told Bai Jingshen about his adventures in the Beast Paradise. His recount was much more elaborate than Pearl's as he had been the one to witness it mostly.

Still, Pearl had remained with the lion for long enough that he might have known more history, which he relayed.

"How are you dealing with the Yin problem? Is it alright here?" Bai Jingshen asked.

"It's fine," Alex said. "I made sure to have a plethora of Yang treasures before I came here, so I can absorb them if I need to. The Yin isn't something we have to worry about yet."

"You are only treating the symptoms, right? Do you know how to get rid of it altogether?" Bai Jingshen asked.

"Senior said that when I reach the Immortal realm, the problem should subside. If it doesn't, I will have two ways to deal with it," Alex said.

"What ways?" Bai Jingshen asked.

"First is to get rid of the Yin bead in my body. If I do that, the problem disappears," Alex said.

"But that brings back your Yang problem, doesn't it?" Bai Jingshen asked. "You never truly treated it."

"Yes," Alex said. "Which is why I'll most likely go for the second solution. I'll absorb a strong Yang energy to improve the Yang source that is balancing the Yin."

"If I am able to bring the two to balance once again, I will have nothing to worry about."

Chapter 1540: A Gift

Alex sat in a somewhat busy diner, with a cup of coffee and some waffles in front of him. He had a newspaper in front of him and something large and rectangular to the side.

He drank his coffee and read the newspaper, watching the lives that the mortals lived around him. A life that should have been his but had been taken away from him without his choice.

He remembered being angry about it back then, but that anger remained no more.

Half a year passed by since Bai Jingshen went back to the Western continent. Alex had asked him to take Pearl with him so he could be with his family in the meantime, but he couldn't do so.

Only his body was strong enough to bear the force of the Qi that barred this world from the outside.

Now, the day of everyone's return to the Eastern Continent was coming closer and closer. Less than a month from now.

The arrival of new people had been something people had expected for half a year before it happened, so they were able to handle the influx of a million new people without much worry.

Especially given the fact that people with cultivation bases rarely ate anything at all. There was no famine or resource problem.

In fact, they brought back resources for everyone to use. However, most of what was brought back was useless and Qi that wasn't under the control of someone's intent was stripped away from everything as the Godkiller's Intent sent it flying to the edges of the continent, only adding to the size of the great destructive qi wall.

A bulky woman with an apron came by him with a clear coffee jar in her hand, half filled with the black liquid.

"More coffee?" she asked.

"Yes, please," Alex said, moving his cup closer to the woman.

The woman sighed and refilled his cup. "You know, this is your 8th cup in the last 2 hours you've been here. That's quite a lot of coffee," she said.

Alex gave her a wide smile and patted his stomach. "Thank you for your worries, but they are misplaced. I can eat anything and not worry," he said.

The woman looked at him with narrowed eyes for a moment. "Cultivator?" she asked.

"Yes," Alex said.

"Came with this lot or the last one?" the woman asked.

"All of them," he replied.

The woman thought for a second. "Aren't all of them supposed to come from different continents? And from what I hear, you cannot move to different continents so easily," she said. "You can't have come from all continents, surely."

"A handful of people did," Alex said. "I'm one of them."

"Is that so?" the woman said. "I suppose you'll be returning then?"

"Yes," Alex said. "The day of departure is coming closer. I do not know when I will next return if I ever will."

"Hmm," the woman mused. "You must be visiting for the last time then."

"Yes," Alex said.

"Did you come with someone?" she asked.

"Uhh... you could say that," Alex said. "Maybe not? I can't really explain."

"Sounds complicated. I wouldn't want to learn," the woman said with a chuckle. "Anyway, I wouldn't want to take your time. And I need to return. Have a lovely evening."

The woman left. The sky started growing somewhat orange as the time rolled around to 5.

The door to the diner opened with a ringing of a bell and a girl walked in and took a seat behind Alex, back turned to him.

"You came late today," the woman from before talked to the girl.

"Yeah, the teachers are taking their longest to let us go. They keep saying if we slack, we won't pass the entrance exam, and make us stay an extra 15 minutes."

The woman chuckled. "The same, then?"

"Yes, please," the girl said.

"Entrance exam for college, huh?" Alex said from the other bench. "I remember when I took mine." He chuckled a bit. "Our home's internet was slow, so the questions took their time loading. I thought I had failed, but fortunately, I did well. I got accepted to Oakleaf University."

The young lady turned around. "You are an alumnus of the of the Oakleaf University?" the girl asked excitedly.

"In a way," Alex said. "I went to the university, but before my semester began, I was taken away."

"Oh, you're from the outside?" the girl asked. "No wonder you look so young."

Alex nodded.

"I was from the outside too," the girl said. "But I must now go meld in the society, I suppose. Learn science and math," she said with an exaggerated gesture.

"You should learn science and math if you want to be big," the woman came back with the young girl's food. "Cultivators have no place in this society where cultivation is impossible." She looked at Alex and his empty cup. "More coffee?"

"Actually, no," Alex said. "I was just about to leave."

He got up and turned toward the young woman. He could finally see the girl fully. She had long black hair with wide eyes that held a blue iris. She wore a white top with a long blue skirt and had a bag held around her body diagonally.

Alex smiled and handed over the rectangular package he had been keeping by his side. The thing was taller and wider than her torso.

"This is my early congratulatory gift to you. I'm sure you'll pass the entrance exam with no problem," he said. "Open this with your father."

The girl looked puzzled, holding the large thing with her two hands. She looked toward Alex, her eyes asking questions her voice could not.

Alex simply rubbed her head. "You've grown to become a fine young lady," he said. "Your sister would be proud to see you."

He turned to walk but stopped midway through before turning around. "Also, I can tell you haven't taken the pill yet. Tell your father that now might be a good time to eat it."

Alex placed some money on the counter and walked away.

The girl stayed there, confused, the same for the older woman. She wanted to see what it was, but she had been told to wait. Given that the order had been from a cultivator, she dared not defy it.

She ate her food quickly and left the place. She took the package in her car and drove back to her home, which was on a farm.

She greeted the workers who were leaving, while hurriedly making her way to the house, searching for her father.

Her father was someone who couldn't be called middle-aged just yet. His face made him look no older than in his late 20s. If he were to walk with his daughter on the streets, they would most likely call the two of them siblings more than anything.

The man looked toward his daughter who came rushing into his room with the package in her hand. "You came back late today," he said. "I was going to call you. Did you go shopping?"

"Huh? No," she said quickly, placing down what he had in her hand on the sofa. "Some weird cultivator guy gave me this earlier at the diner. Told me to open it with you."

The man looked back with a confused look. "A cultivator?" he asked. "What did he want with you?"

The girl shrugged. "His words were cryptic for the most part, but... there was one thing," she said. "He said my sister would be proud of me. I'm wondering how he could know."

The father's face changed. "What?" he asked out loud and looked at the package. "The man that gave you this knew about your sister?"

The girl nodded.

The man couldn't stop himself from opening the package. He quickly undid a small rope that tied most of the paper and took the thing out of the package.

Inside was what anyone could have guessed by the shape of the package. A painting.

On the painting were three people, with a couple standing in the back and a girl sitting on a chair in front of the two.

The male half of the couple was a young man with a striking resemblance to the man who held it now. He wore a simple white cultivator robe with blue outlines and some minor patterns

In front of him was a young girl, resembling the girl that had brought the painting. She too wore a simple robe, but this one with green flowers all over

However, neither of the two were looking at either of their own portrait at all. Instead, they stared at the woman who stood behind the girl, left of the man.

She wore a white robe with a transparent shawl around her. It shined bright with its color, but what shined brighter was her loving smile that seemed to look into one's soul and tell them everything was going to be alright.

The girl gasped as tears flowed down her cheeks. "Is that... mother?" she asked. She had never seen her mother except in old, nearly torn pictures. Her face wasn't clear there as it was in the painting.

Her picture in the painting had a soul that a million others could not hold. This was the most precious thing the girl could ever hope to get in her life.

On the frame of the painting was a single note that she saw afterward and picked it up to read while wiping tears from her eyes. On it was a simple sentence.

To Lilin, so she knows her mother will always be with her - Alex