

Alchemy 1571

Chapter 1571: Martial Coast City

Alex heard a knock on his door while he cultivated. He had been cultivating for the past 3 days without any disturbance and hadn't expected to get any for the next 2 days.

He opened the door and let the person walk in.

The one who entered was Queen Mao.

She wore a flawless white robe with silver and gold embroidery creating complex patterns on it. Her hair was tied in a bun, a silver hairpin holding it together along with a plethora of other jewelry all over her body.

Her face had a hint of pink and her lips a darker shade of it, all of which accentuated her already incredible beauty even more.

She looked particularly beautiful today, but there was a different aura about her this time around. Instead of being the playful beauty she was before, now she was a cold beauty.

"Your Majesty, I will need to leave for Martial island very soon. What have you planned? Will you leave with me or will you come later after the secret realm has opened up?"

She had the same attitude as the last two times he had met her, once during the alchemy competition between his alchemists and the Eastern Continent, and once in the golden auction.

"Is something urgent?" he asked.

"No, it's not urgent. I just have to be there to look over the logistics side of things and approve of things. It's a once in a 30-year event, so I can't leave things to other people."

"We are also looking at an unusual number of strong individuals participating this time around, so we have to be more careful," the Queen said.

"More powerful people?" Alex asked. "Players?"

The queen shrugged. "Last time the secret realm opened up, they were still quite weak comparatively, but this time around, everyone has become strong enough to compare with the scions of big families and sects," she said.

"Hmm, I never thought how strong a player could have gotten," he said. "That will be quite interesting to see."

"So?" the queen asked. "Will you be leaving?"

"Sure," Alex said. "I'll go. There's no reason for me to stay here anyway."

The queen nodded. "We'll leave in 5 hours. I still have a few things to do here since I'll have to stay on the Martial island for the next 2 years."

Alex nodded.

5 hours later, he stood in a teleportation formation with the Queen, her brother, and a few other legionnaires.

They arrived at a city in the west known as the Martial Coast city. It was one of the cities closest to Martial island.

"I'll be away for a few hours, Your Majesty," the Queen said as soon as they were teleported. Yingkong, take care of His Majesty."

"Don't worry, sister," the young man next to Alex said with a bow.

The Queen left them, with a majority of the legionaries leaving with her. Only a few remained behind to escort Alex.

"Do you wish to go somewhere, Your Majesty? Or should we head directly to the place that has been prepared for you?" the young man asked.

"Hmm, I would love to tour this city. I just came out of a 3-day long intense cultivation session, so I want to walk around," he said. "Are there any interesting places here?"

"In the Martial Coast island, the only interesting places would be Martial houses," the young man said. "Dueling arenas. They call it a Martial house here."

"Are they fun?" Alex asked.

"I cannot guarantee that it will be fun, but if you do not like it, we can leave anytime," the young man said.

"That's not a bad idea then," Alex said. "Let us head on over to one."

The young man nodded and together they started walking. Their bodyguards remained far behind them, hidden from the two of them, so no one gave much thought to the two of them once they left the teleportation house.

The newsboard didn't even show that Alex had arrived in the city, which meant that they had no idea at all. Barely a few people even looked in his direction and even then nobody could say with a guarantee that it was him.

So, Alex found this little walk quite free and calming.

"Oh right, I meant to ask. Is something wrong? Your sister didn't seem her cheerful self," Alex said.

"No, no, she's alright. That's just her. She's cheerful one minute and serious the other. She is unpredictable like that," the young man said.

"Oh, so nothing is wrong?" Alex asked.

"No, everything is alright," the young man said. "You will get used to it if you spend some more time with my sister."

"I see, that is good to hear," Alex said before wondering if the Queen's brother was implying something at the end there. He chose to ignore it even if he was.

"How would you rank yourself in terms of strength, by the way?" Alex asked. "In the upcoming secret realm opening."

The young man had a Saint Soul 7th realm cultivation base, making him quite strong. But Alex wasn't sure where he ranked him.

"I will be stronger than a vast majority for sure," he said. "But... I don't believe I will even be one of the 100 strongest in there."

That surprised Alex a little bit.

"Even before the Saint Transformation realm cultivators, which there will be quite a few of, there will be many in the same cultivation base as me, and the remaining two Saint Soul realms."

"Players especially are hard to predict as some have weird techniques that let them bring out attacks far stronger than others in their same cultivation base," the young man said. "With so many players taking part, it will be hard to determine just how many there are that are stronger than me."

Alex looked at him. "How many months do you think you will remain in there?" he asked.

"Hopefully all of it," the young man said with a bit of a chuckle. "But realistically, I will be happy if I can remain longer than a year without having to resort to cheap tricks."

"I see," he said. "You have entered there before right?"

"Past 3 times in a row," the young man said. "I managed to last just 8 months the first time around, 11 the second time around, and 13 months the third time around."

"And 30 years later, you believe it will be good if you survive for just 12 months?" Alex asked.

"The strong players force me to evaluate my potential as such," the young man said with a shrug. "Don't worry, Your Majesty. You'll last for 8 to 10 months certainly. Your cultivation base should let you remain that long easily."

Alex smiled. He didn't tell the young man just what he had been planning, or else the young man would've most likely had a worse reaction than his sister.

Alex looked around at the coastal city, enjoying the warm breeze as they arrived at one of the Martial Houses some time later.

The Queen's brother helped him enter the place discreetly so nobody learned that he was there. After that, he was ready to enjoy whatever this place had to offer.

Chapter 1572: Martial House

A young adult woman with a cultivation base in the Saint Core realm fought a young man with a similar cultivation base.

She used a spear to strike him in close combat, while the young man fought with no weapons and tried to make some space. He crossed his arms, creating an illusory turtle shell around him to block the attack.

Then, he pushed out the turtle shell, sending the woman flying backward, before continuing to keep the distance by attacking her relentlessly.

The area they fought in was a massive arena with barriers all around them, and a few referees inside to judge when a battle was getting too serious and had to be stopped.

"Not bad," Alex said from a room that was separate from most of the open spaces where the audience watched. There were not many separate rooms, and the Queen's brother had managed to get access to one of them quite easily.

"What do you think?" the young man asked. "Who is going to win?"

Alex looked at the match for a few seconds longer and mused on it. "I think the young man is going to win," he said.

"Why?" the young man asked. He had formed his own judgment and wanted to see if Alex had come to the conclusion the same way as him.

"You mentioned betting is a thing here, right?" he asked.

The young man nodded. "You can bet through that," he pointed at a formation at the corner.

Alex shrugged. "That's why I think the young man is going to win," he said. "He has been fighting purely defensively this whole time while trying to let the girl come close to him."

"He acts like he wants distance, but he doesn't fight for it," he said. "From what I can tell, he is trying his best to make it seem like the fight is close while delaying it for more people to place their bets against him."

"After some time, he will most likely use a strong skill to defeat her at once," he said.

Mao Yingkong's eyes flashed with understanding and nodded. "I had assumed you weren't so interested in battles as an Alchemist, but it seems you have a fighter's mind too," he said.

"I would be fine if I didn't have to fight as a cultivator and could live as an alchemist alone," Alex said. "But being a cultivator, we live at the edge of life and death, so being able to save our own hide, it's important to know how to fight."

"I would've assumed you wouldn't need one as a King and an Alchemist," the young man said. "Many should flock to your side to guard you, without you ever having to be a fighter."

"Would you rather fight against every enemy an alchemist makes and protect him? Or would you rather just imprison him and force him to make pills for you as you demand?" Alex asked.

The young man was a little taken aback. He understood what Alex said, and could see his reasoning. "But you're a King. Surely no one would dare try and capture you to forcefully make pills for them."

"I wasn't always a king," Alex said. "But I was always an Alchemist. People would use me if I allowed them the chance to."

The young man said nothing.

"Besides, some ingredients usually end up being in treacherous locations, guarded by strong beasts and whatnot. If you want to be a proficient alchemist, then you need to be strong enough to get them in the first place."

"Oh," the young man said. "I guess I never thought of it like that. I have always only known great Alchemists who walk around with strong defenders. Due to my sister's influence, my social circle doesn't let me deal with lower-level alchemists and their problems."

"That alright," Alex said. His focus quickly changed to the fight below just in time to see the young man throw out a punch with a powerful blast that followed it. Snake-like tendrils shot out in a flash of golden light from the blast.

The woman couldn't cut through them all in time and had a few of them hit her, getting her off her balance. Then the young man sent out a stronger attack, blasting her right onto the barrier, making her lose the fight.

Alex shrugged watching the fight. "Thought so," he said.

The young man next to him nodded as well. He had the same thinking as Alex. "Do you wish to fight as well, Your Majesty?" he asked.

Alex thought for a bit before nodding. "I haven't fought in a long time, so I'm getting a little rusty," he said. "It might be better to shake off some of it before the secret realm opens up."

The young man nodded. "I'll have them find someone that matches your cultivation base," he said and proceeded to call for someone.

"No," Alex stopped him. "Have them find someone weaker, maybe mid-Saint Core realm."

The young man looked a little puzzled. "Saint Core realm? Isn't that too weak for you?" he asked.

Alex shrugged. "I'm planning on holding back a little," he said. "If I fight someone strong, I'll end up losing right away."

The young man looked at him for a bit before shrugging. "Sure," he said and made the arrangements as Alex asked.

The duel was set for after the next battle, so Alex stayed vigilant. Once the battle ended, he left with someone from the Martial house and arrived at the arena.

The woman who took him there explained all the rules that he had to follow. Alex nodded and wore a mask as he appeared on the stage. Opposite him was a young man with Saint Core 8th realm cultivation base.

Alex couldn't help but grimace a little at the sight of his opponent. It was a middle-aged man with thin and long black hair that he had to fight. And he held a sword in his right hand.

'How appropriate,' Alex thought with a sigh. He had asked the Queen's brother for a weaker opponent, but he had ended up finding someone so strong. Alex wasn't sure if he could beat him or not.

He heard no sound from the crown, and the barriers seemed opaque from inside as well so he couldn't see their expressions. Whatever the case, they were most certainly confused right now as to what was going on.

'Whatever, I'll lose anyway,' Alex thought, bringing out Midnight and holding him in front of him. Then, he took a deep breath and did something that surprised the middle-aged man in front of him.

Alex withdrew his cultivation base entirely. He didn't just hide it but rather took it all away, making him appear as a mortal.

"What are you doing?" the man asked him.

"Don't mind me," Alex answered him. "I'm doing my own thing."

The man felt disrespected. "Are you going to fight me without your cultivation base?" he asked.

"Yes," Alex said as he held his sword up. "But that doesn't mean I won't be a problem."

His sword glowed white and Sword Qi streamed out of it, flowing around him, surprising the man.

"Sword Aura?" he asked in surprise.

Alex nodded. "Can we begin now?"

Chapter 1573: Sword Match

Alex's Sword Intent had been one of his greatest strengths for a while. Aside from his Qi, which could leap realms to catch up to others at a higher cultivation base, his Sword Intent had been the only thing he had that had been stronger.

Then he had received the Blood God's Manual, and that had brought along another strength that dwarfed both his Qi and Sword Intent.

After that, with how busy he was being a king and trying to come up with pill recipes and learn Daos, he hadn't had the chance to improve it much.

When he first came to the Eastern Continent, his Sword Intent had been somewhere around Saint Core 4th realm. Nearly a decade and a half had passed since then and he hadn't improved at all.

Not that he didn't want to; he simply hadn't had the time to improve his Sword Intent. He couldn't do it without having a somewhat serious fight to improve it at least.

He had improved his Intent at least and that would reflect in the Sword Intent with time, but he had to put some work into it. Just as someone with great intent couldn't establish a strong Killing intent because they weren't murderous by nature, Alex had to train to convert his regular intent to slowly fuel his Sword Intent.

And that was what Alex was intending to start doing right away.

He held his sword up, his Sword Qi flowing out of his sword, covering him, forming Sword Aura.

'Saint Core 5th realm?' he wondered at his own strength. 'Or is it 6th?'

It was somewhere in the middle, and unlike Cultivation bases, it had no clear distinction. As a result, Alex could only guess that it was at the Saint Core 6th realm.

Considering his opponent's strength of Saint Core 8th realm, Alex wasn't sure if he could win or not.

He started the fight with a simple sword slash, sending out Sword Qi. The glowing white blade of energy flew across the arena at the man.

The man's sword glowed on its own, showing his own Sword Intent. He struck away Alex's attack, sending it flying toward the barrier to his right. He couldn't help but be surprised at how weak the attack was.

He had sensed Alex's cultivation base, so that had made him think the attack was going to be stronger. When it turned out to be not as strong, he couldn't help but be even more confused.

'What's going on?' the man wondered.

Alex mused on his attack for a few seconds, judging the strength. 'Let's try a few more,' he thought and sent away a few more strikes, all of which were struck down by the man in front of him.

Each time the man destroyed Alex's attacks, his hope for the match grew more and more. 'I can win this,' he thought and lost his sense of fear that he had at the start when he had seen Alex's Sword Aura.

Now, it was his turn to attack first.

The man lunged his sword forward, a sword-shaped attack flying directly at Alex.

Alex's sword glowed bright white and he struck at the attack before it could come close to him. The two attacks clashed in mid-air, and it was clear who was stronger.

The man's attack that had Qi in it was many times stronger than Alex's attack that was merely Sword Qi alone. The incoming attack tore through its opposition and flew at Alex, who managed to step aside in time, dodging it.

Alex struck back another attack, striking at the man with all of his thoughts focused on just that strike. He wasn't just trying to fight. He was actively trying to move his Sword Intent further along the path to improvement.

This attack was the same as all other attacks, but he hoped the next one would be stronger. Stronger and stronger, that was how he was going to improve it.

There were no shortcuts here.

The man did a sweeping attack next, fire blowing out from him in a large area.

Alex saw the attack coming and swung at it, this time using his Sword Aura instead of Sword Intent. The attack landed on the fire, the clash dispersing the energy in all directions.

However, the ones Alex sent had a very strong Intent to them that he had formed a long time ago. One that had been his life motto forever now.

The spread energy quickly got back in line and attacked the strong fire Qi again, all of them moving forward no matter what.

The Sword Qi in the Sword Aura kept moving forward and tore through the attack until only a bit of it was remaining. The remaining bit was so minuscule in strength that Alex could blow at it and disperse it.

The man was surprised that his attack was stopped so easily. He had rarely seen Sword Aura and knew that not all were the same. Even then, all that he had seen were always the same type.

It either cut everything down or protected one from everything. It was rare for anyone to have a unique Sword Aura, and it seemed Alex had exactly that. He couldn't help but frown now.

He had thought that he would win if the fight was going to simply remain at the status they were at now, but Alex had proved that even weaker, his attacks packed a punch that his didn't.

He started getting desperate. So, he started sending out more attacks.

Alex sent out his own attack, all of which contained Sword Aura. The Sword Aura always kept the same property, and so until they were destroyed, they fought off the incoming attack.

As such, even when Alex's Sword Qi had Saint Core 6th realm worth of strength, his overall effectiveness became much stronger. It could almost block all of what the man dished out.

Alex couldn't help but imagine what sort of battle it would be if his opponent had Sword Aura as well, but alas, this man didn't even have Sword Qi, let alone Sword Aura.

The battle stagnated at that point.

Alex's attacks were weaker overall, but the clashes never resulted in either of them getting the upper hand in the end. The battle was getting boring and tedious for the man.

Alex was fine with it. He was focused on improving his Sword Intent, so it didn't matter if he was winning or not. But it did to his enemy.

So, the man took an action that changed the status quo of the match. An action that was a very stupid choice for him.

He went into close combat with Alex.

His thought process was simple. As Alex was essentially a mortal at this point, he could win if he could get close and hit him. Alas, that was the most unfortunate mistake he had made during the entire match.

Alex easily blocked the attack, surprising the man with the strength he carried even when he didn't have a cultivation base. He shook his head at the man, showing his disappointment.

He tossed the man hard, smashing him into the barrier at once, and won the match.

Even so, he was a little disappointed in learning that he would have to spend a lot longer than a single 10-minute match if he wanted to significantly improve his Sword Intent.

Chapter 1574: Martial Island

"No one from the other kingdoms come to this island?" Alex asked the Queen's brother in surprise when he learned about the fact.

"No," the young man said. "It's kind of a thing that has been going on for a long time. People don't want to have to reveal themselves to others from their kingdom, so they usually stay away."

"If you didn't already know, there is a competitive aspect to kingdoms as well in the competition."

Alex nodded. "I knew that," he said. "I just didn't expect them to go so far as they stay in different cities before entering the secret realm."

"If you think that is too much, wait until you find out there are 6 different entrances to the Marital Ground on the Martial Island," the young man said. "Each one for participants from one continent alone to enter."

"That is surprising," Alex said. "So everyone I see here is from the Silver Kingdom, huh? No wonder I haven't seen any familiar faces around. I would've expected to see a few by now."

The man nodded.

They arrived at a courtyard that had been prepared for Alex beforehand. There he waited for the Queen to do what she had to and come back to him when the time for the secret realm's opening was at hand.

The Queen arrived 4 days later, tired from all the work. She met with Alex for a bit before retreating to rest a bit herself. The next day, she came to meet Alex again.

"Your Majesty, are you ready to leave?" the Queen asked with a wide smile on her face. Her happy personality was back once more.

A few large ships had been prepared at the shore of the town, to carry many people to the Martial island where the secret realm was. Alex found that most of the ships had already been filled with thousands of individuals, of which a large portion were going to enter the secret realm.

The rest of them were elders or friends to keep them company.

Alex met with a few important figures with cultivation bases in the Early Saint Transformation realm.

Immortal Saint Pavilion, the Huang Family, and many other big figures from sects and families with bigger names arrived to converse with Alex.

Alex gave them a few minutes to talk about things they were interested in. Most of them invited Alex to visit them if he ever went around to their hometowns, and a large number of them even insisted on buying pills from him directly.

Alex gave some false promises and outright refused where he felt he should. After the people left for their own ships, the ship finally started flying.

"Just 10 more hours until the secret realm opens up, Your Majesty," the Queen said with a giddy expression. "Are you excited?"

Alex couldn't help but nod. "It is quite exciting," he said. "I've been in a lot of secret realms before, but this is the only one where I will have to remain inside for 2 entire years."

Alex didn't count the Demon realm where he had been stuck for 3 years. That was entirely something else.

"I've been to one that takes half a dozen months or more, but even that never reaches a year," he said. "So I'm looking forward to what sort of experiences I'll get."

"I'm sure you will find it all fun, Your Majesty," the Queen said. "I remember the first time I entered. I was merely a young girl with a Saint Foundation realm cultivation base. I got eliminated in just 2 months, hehe."

"It was that difficult?" Alex asked.

"I was just that weak," the Queen said. "Oh right, don't forget about our bet."

"I won't," Alex said. "I hope you didn't forget your side either."

"100 thousand Saint Spirit stones is a lot, but so is surviving 10 months of Transcendent Martial Ground. I hope you're not going to lose too early," she said.

"Wouldn't you actually hope that I lose?" Alex asked.

"Haha, I might want to win, but I also want you to keep your reputation, Your Majesty," the Queen said.

Alex simply grinned and changed topics. "Why don't you join in?" he asked. "Surely there are enough competent men and women outside that you won't have to stay."

The Queen shook her head. "I don't really have any interest in it. As I've mentioned, I used to enter this a long time ago, and I've entered at least 10 times by now throughout the many years," she said. "There's no point for me to enter anymore."

Alex was a little surprised. "You aren't blocked from entering, right?" he asked.

"No, but we will have an unfair advantage, just because we are monarchs of our kingdom," the Queen shrugged. "Besides, I can't join even if I wanted to."

"Why?" Alex asked curiously.

"Responsibility," the Queen said. "After everyone here enters the secret realm, I have to rush to the Golden Auction this time around. It starts in 2 days and people won't stop entering for another week."

"That sounds like an intense week," Alex said. He enjoyed the view of the ocean he hadn't seen in a long time and watched as the island arrived and went away on his journey.

After 2 hours, the ship arrived at a small, but densely populated city in the middle of nowhere in the ocean. The island was surprisingly tiny, with only a small forest at the center, and a few scattered buildings around the side that made it look like it had human influence.

That and the tens of thousands of people that gathered in and around the island.

The ship landed outside the shore of the island, and everyone had to float away from there.

"Yingkong, take care of His Majesty," the Queen said. "I will go make the final preparation."

The younger brother of the Queen nodded and showed Alex the way to a building in the distance, that seemed particularly larger than many that were surrounding it.

The two of them flashed past many people. Most of them were ordinary cultivators, but Alex noticed quite a few of the military individuals as well.

He couldn't help if they were part of the Body Legion or the Tail Legion.

When he landed at the large building, Alex was surprised to see many figures that he hadn't seen for a long time.

"Your Majesty!" Jin Xiaojian, the Emerald King spoke out loud with a boisterous laugh. "Haha! I'm so happy to see you again."

"King Jin," Alex said with a wide smile. "It has been a while, hasn't it?"

"A decade, Your Majesty," the man said. "You just don't come to the Emerald Kingdom anymore."

"I'm sorry. I haven't had the time," Alex said. "I will try to visit when I have the time."

"Greetings, Your Majesty," the Queen of the Ivory region bowed a little.

"It is great to see you after a decade, Your Majesty," the new Gold King spoke as well.

Aside from them, there was another individual there. One that Alex hadn't seen since the first time he had met them all.

The black-robed King of the Ebony Kingdom, Wan Deming. He bowed deeply and greeted Alex.

"I am happy to meet you again, King Alex."

Chapter 1575: Bets

"I heard you received our sect's treasure, Your Majesty," the Ebony King said. "I hope you'll take good care of it."

"Ah! Right, the Mountain Crushing artifact," Alex remembered. "You were from the Mountain Crushing sect."

"We all belonged to some sect or family," the Emerald King said. "It's not that surprising, Your Majesty."

"How were my pills, King Jin?" Alex asked.

"Hahaha!" the Emerald King laughed loudly. "As expected of Your Majesty. They were incredible."

Alex smiled.

"Wait, pill?" the Ivory Queen looked at Alex. "Your Majesty, I received no pills."

"They were in exchange for me lending money during the previous golden auction," the Emerald King said.

"Ah! That's not fair," the Ivory Queen said. "I didn't even get to make it there."

"I heard your pills were quite amazing, Your Majesty," the Ebony King said. "I regretted missing the auction. Are you still selling some?"

"I am selling a new one in the Golden Auction this time around. I'll let you learn what it is on your own," he said.

"Hmm, I suppose I can't miss it this time then," the Ebony King said. He turned to look in the direction of the Gold King. "Are your people handling things well for the auction?"

"I might be new to the task, King Wan, but I assure you I am making no mistake," the Gold King said. At the start, he had felt out of place in between these old monarchs, but as time passed, he was settling in fine.

"Oh, my intention wasn't to doubt your work," the Ebony King quickly said. "I was just inquiring. If you need some help, let us know."

"I am doing fine, but thank you for your consideration," the Gold King said.

As they talked, the Crown Prince arrived as well.

"Your Highness!"

Everyone stood to bow at one.

"Ah, greetings Your Majesties," the Crown Prince bowed a little. "It seems most of you are already here. Has my cousin not made it here yet?"

"King Weiyuan should be arriving at any time," the Emerald King answered.

"Shouldn't Queen Mao be here at least?" he asked.

"She has to make some final preparations before the secret realm opens up," the Ivory Queen said. "Did you arrive with youngsters from the legions, Your Majesty?"

"Yes," the Crown Prince said. "When did you arrive, Your Majesty?"

"It's been about half an hour," Alex said. "They have been here long before me."

"We weren't that much earlier either," the Emerald King said.

"Since Your Majesty is going to enter, I guess you'll miss out on the auction," the Crown Prince said

"My elders will be there, but I will have to miss out on it," Alex said.

"I hope you good luck on the Martial ground then. You can't come out before the 2 years is over," the Crown Prince said.

"If I can help it, I won't," Alex said with a smile. "I have a bet going on with Queen Mao for how long I can last. I intend to last forever."

The Kings gave a surprise look at Alex.

"Ooh, a bet," the Ivory Queen said with a clap. "We should make a bet too."

"What... is on the line?" the Emerald King inquired with Alex.

"I give a lesson on alchemy to the kingdom's alchemists if I lose," Alex said. "If I win, I get 100 thousand Saint Spirit stones."

They all suddenly fell to thought. The amount was quite massive for a simple bet, but with the high risk came a high reward.

"I will make the bet," the Gold King said first. He had enough money to spare. "I will say—"

Alex raised his hands to stop him. "I am all in for a good bet, but you should wait for a bit before you hear more details."

Everyone looked at him curiously. What could the detail even be?

The Azure King arrived some time later and the Silver Queen arrived afterward as well. Once they were all there, the Silver Queen revealed the information that Alex had asked her to broadcast.

The betting became harder at that point.

"I won't make a bet," the Ebony King said quickly. The time frame of how long Alex could last was brought down severely with this one piece of information, and that caused everyone's bet to become similar.

As such, he would have to risk a bit too much for nothing.

The Gold King still wanted to bet. "I'll bet a 100 days. 10 more than the Queen Mao," he said. "I believe King Alex can last that long."

The Silver Queen joined in. "I don't want to go lower, so I'll say 5 months instead. Just last 100 days, Your Majesty. You'll be 100 thousand spirit stones richer."

Alex smiled. "I will accept both of those bets," he said.

"200 days," the Emerald King said. "I trust you can last that long even with so many after you."

Alex thought for a bit. He could refuse the bet if he thought it was too much in the King's favor.

"I'll accept it as well," he said. He didn't find it too bad at all. He knew he was going to be weakening himself to train his sword alone, so it was hard to say how long he could last.

It was all a legitimate bet on his part as well.

"180 days," the Ivory Queen said.

"Bet!" Alex said.

"Will you accept 300 days?" the Azure King asked.

Alex thought for a bit. "That's... a little hard to bet on," he said.

"I'll up the spirit stones to 150 thousand," the man said.

Alex's eyes shined. "That's more like it," he said. "That's a deal."

The Crown prince threw his hands up. "I'm not making any bets."

Alex shrugged. "That's alright," he said.

The Silver Queen stood up. "It is time," she said.

The room suddenly quieted down and everyone stood up. It was time to open the secret realm.

The kings left the building and said goodbye to Alex as they all made their way to the various entry points to the secret realm that was assigned to their kingdom.

The tens of thousands of people who had come to the secret realms also waited outside the secret realm in mass. Many flew in the air as there wasn't much place on the land itself.

Alex went along with the Queen's brother and stood on the section for the Silver Kingdom's entrance. The Queen handed him a piece of thick talisman paper.

"You will be the only one of your group, so take care of yourself inside, Your Majesty," she said before leaving.

Alex looked at her fly away. "She didn't explain to me what this is," he said with a bit of a chuckle.

"It's the talisman that keeps score for you inside the secret realm," the brother explained. "You can look inside."

Alex nodded and looked inside the talisman to find a few information.

There were 5 lines of information stored in the talisman.

Name, Acquired Points, Losses, Out of Bounds, and Origin.

His name was set as King Alex, and the next 3 sections were all set as 0 for now.

Alex looked at the Origin and finally understood what the Queen meant by him being the only one in his group.

His Origin was set as 'Southern Continent'.

Chapter 1576: Information

The Silver Queen explained how things worked in and out of the Transcendent Martial Ground.

The Martial Ground was a competitive place where cultivators fought each other, and used a point system to get ahead of others.

Every day inside the secret realm, one could challenge someone else to a duel, which the challenged person could accept or reject, depending on how many times they were challenged.

Accepting a challenge began a duel between the two that no one else could interfere in. The one who won the duel was awarded points based on the cultivation base of the individual they defeated.

Saint Condensation realm cultivators gave between 1 and 9 points.

Saint Foundation realm cultivators gave between 11 and 19 points.

Saint Core realm cultivators gave between 21 and 29 points.

Saint Soul realm cultivators gave between 31 and 39 points.

Saint Transformation realm cultivators gave between 41 and 49 points.

If anyone interfered in another person's duel, they would lose 50 points at once, and the fight between the other two would be considered a draw with neither gaining points.

One could challenge up to 3 times a day for points alone, and any points they won would be added to the 'Acquired Points' section on their talisman.

The second section was 'Losses', and it was what would count as the result of one's duel. If the cultivator won, there would be no change, but if they lost, a single point would be added to it.

The first battle of the day that someone accepted was always considered to be what determined whether the point was added to 'Losses' or not.

Even if one won their first battle of the day, but lost the next 10 in a row, it wouldn't matter. There would be no points added to the Losses section.

A person could only reject upto 3 duels a day, and if they fought no battle by the end of it, they would receive a loss as well.

Even if they weren't being challenged, they were required to go out and challenge others, or else they would receive a loss.

30 Losses in total meant a complete loss for the person. After 30 losses, they were sent out of the Secret realm and could no longer return.

A Loss in the duel was considered when one of the people gave up, or when they were unable to return to battle after some time. However, if they were attacked too harshly, a defensive measure inside the talisman would activate, sending the person in a random direction away from the Duel.

That would cause a person to receive a loss as well as a point in the third category, Out of Bounds.

Once one went outside a certain range during a duel, either by the talisman, or some defensive techniques, or was even sent flying by the enemy, they would be out of bounds of the set dueling area and would thus receive a point to Out of Bounds as well as a Loss.

5 Out of Bounds in total caused the person to lose overall. It was the same as getting 30 Losses.

All of this was made so people would stand their ground and fight others in a duel. The Transcendent Martial Ground was focused on helping people grow as a fighter, so these rules were set in place for a long ago, refined over time.

The Queen went on to explain a few more things regarding how the points system worked, how one could find opponents, and how everyone outside could view their data publicly.

The ones with the top numbers would be shown on a ranking board as well, so if people wanted to impress someone, they would have to make it there.

"The final rankings that appear on the board will be considered for direct seeding in the Continental Tournament, depending on the age limit of 2000 years. So, do your best." the Silver Queen's voice roared through the sky for everyone to hear.

Everyone looked nervous and excited at the same time.

Alex couldn't see all that many people, but there were a few strong ones that he couldn't recognize at all. One of those was even a woman in the Saint Transformation realm, which was very surprising for Alex.

He hadn't expected someone so old to take part. But then again, age meant little for cultivators. He focused on the gate that would open up soon for them to enter, but there was one more thing for the Queen to announce.

"One last thing," the Queen spoke. "This has nothing to do with the Transcendent Martial Ground itself, but we believe you will want to know this."

"The King of the Southern Continent, his Majesty Alex Benton will be taking part, and he has asked me to pass along a message to every single person entering the secret realm," she said.

The crowd whispered with each other and gossiped while Yingkong looked at Alex curiously. He wondered what message he was passing along.

"Whoever wins a match against his Majesty, even if he rejects the match, he will hand over one of these 5 pills to the person," the Queen said.

"A pill for improving your cultivation speed, a pill for healing, a pill for surviving poisons, a pill to improve your spiritual energy, and a pill of temporarily empowering your current cultivation base," she said.

She paused for a moment for the ones below to go over the things. They all were quite shocked at the information and talked amongst themselves.

"For your information, King Alex is a cultivator that his Majesty the Emperor acknowledges as his superior, and you will never find a single person in life or in history that can make a pill better than him."

"Win against King Alex, and you can ask him for one of the 5 pills."

She let the information run through the crowd.

Yingkong quickly turned toward Alex. "Your Majesty, this is absurd. They will hound you like animals. They will all seek you out as soon as we enter."

"That's alright with me," Alex said. "There's a reason I made your sister say all those things."

He looked around at the people who were eyeing him back. They were all looking at him like hungry dogs who had finally found something to eat.

Alex had just become target number 1 inside the secret realm and he couldn't wait for the pressure to forge him in there. 'It will be interesting to see how long I can survive on the sword alone,' he thought.

He had no doubts he would lose most of those matches to a certain degree.

"Now that you have learned this, get ready," the Silver Queen said, catching everyone's attention. "The secret realm is opening."

The entrance that was a large arch shined a silver bright with a swirling aura on it. Experienced fighters entered one by one, and everyone moved to it as well.

Alex could sense the teleportation aura on it and knew what would happen next. He stepped onto the swirling energy and a bunch of teleportation aura caught around him.

"See you later, Your Majesty," Yingkong said and disappeared before Alex.

A second later, Alex was teleported as well, into the Transcendent Martial Ground.

Chapter 1577: Transcendent Martial Ground

When the teleportation energy disappeared and the white light mellowed out, Alex found himself standing alone on top of a giant rock.

In front of him was a vast expanse of sparse trees that went on forever. The place he was on itself was filled with thigh-high grass, that Alex stepped on as he stepped down from the rock.

To his right was a grassland that extended forever, and to his left was the same. There were a lot of rocks along the way, and not a single section of the land he saw seemed even at all.

Everything looked so uneven.

He saw glints of light in the distance as people started appearing far away from him. There was only so much land for so many tens of thousands of people to teleport to without coming across someone else.

"Every one of us has been teleported randomly, huh?" he thought, looking around. He turned around when he felt someone's spiritual sense pass through.

Behind him was a woman in a gray robe, with her hair tied in a ponytail. The moment she saw him, she pulled out a spear, holding it out in front of her with a deep look on her face.

She looked at Alex for a long second before speaking. "You are the King, right?" she asked in a rather roguish tone.

Alex looked at her carefully, seeing no jewelry or expensive artifacts around her. She was what he thought she was. A rogue cultivator who was trying her best.

"I am the king you're thinking of," Alex told her.

"That thing they said outside, is it true?" she asked. "A pill for beating you in a fight."

"That is true," Alex said. "Are you sure you want to fight me though? You won't win and you will only acquire a loss instead. This isn't a fair fight for you."

The girl's cultivation base was only at Saint Foundation's 2nd realm.

"Shut up! When has anything been fair," she said. "If I win, I want a healing pill. King of Southern Continent, do you accept my challenge?"

Alex felt a slight buzz on the talisman that he had kept inside his robes. They knew that a challenge had been thrown at him, and it was his job to accept or reject.

"Very well," Alex said, taking in all of his Qi so none of it remained on him anymore. "I accept."

The buzz from his talisman disappeared. The fight was determined.

The girl was a little surprised to see Alex taking back all of his Qi for some reason, but the reason didn't matter to her. Only victory did.

She rushed with her spear the moment she understood that Alex had accepted her challenge to a duel. She only got halfway in between them before she used an attack.

A large burst of light flew out from the spear, that nearly grazed Alex's neck as he leaned to one side.

He was about to strike back to end it all in a single attack when he stopped himself and thought for a moment. The pause gave the girl time to attack once again, and this time around Alex saw the slight white light around the girl's spear.

'Spear Qi?' he thought. 'Not fully formed.'

Alex took one step back and struck the side of the spear, pointing the energy away from him, which blasted into the sky. He dashed over 10 meters backward after that and let the girl have a moment to get back to her stance.

The girl took no time to do so and immediately returned to attack. However, this time around, there stood a large black cat in front of her.

The girl paused at the last second, before moving backward herself.

"What's this?" she asked.

"My beast," Alex said, petting Pearl's black fur. He crouched on one knee and said something to Pearl, before looking away from the fight to look around at various other things.

He could feel the aura in the air fluctuate every second as numerous duels broke out all around the secret realm. People hadn't even finished coming into the secret realm and so many were about to get handed their first loss.

29 more and they would lose.

In a way, Alex was lucky that this weak girl had been his first opponent of the day. As he had accepted the battle, winning it would mean that his duel of the day where he could gain a 'loss' was gone.

For the next however many hours it took for the duel to reset, he would not get a single loss even if he lost every single one of the next battles.

And from what he could see, he was going to have to fight many of them.

People from all around him who had noticed him had started streaming toward him. Even kilometers away, people were making their way to Alex. Win or lose, they did not care. Everyone just wanted a piece of the pie that was him.

Pearl's cultivation base was low, especially when considering the average cultivation base of the ones that came to this place was in the mid to high Saint Core realm.

At Saint Foundation 8th realm, which he had only just reached 2 months prior, he was considered weaker than most. Still, that was higher than the girl he was currently fighting.

That just went to show just how out of place the girl was.

He brought out Whisker and placed him on his shoulder. "Do you want to fight her? She's only just a little stronger than you," he said.

The little mouse quickly shook his head, frantically refusing to fight at all. Alex just chuckled a little in response. He sat on the grass and watched Pearl fight as people closed in on him.

The girl tried her best to get around Pearl, to use her spear to damage him in any way, but it became quickly apparent to her that she wasn't gonna win. Pearl was just too strong for her.

Just as she was thinking of what to do, Pearl stopped and stepped away from her, giving her some space. At the same time, the girl felt something appear around her stomach.

She reached inside and at the same time, Alex's voice entered her head.

"I admire your courage, but it was stupid to fight me from the start," his voice rang in her head. "Those are some healing pills that I do not need. Give up and take them. You will want to leave this place very soon."

The girl clutched the thing in her robe and realized that it was a pill bottle. Her spiritual sense looked into it and noticed a bunch of pills. Since she had never seen pills Alex made, she didn't understand the distinct lack of pill veins the pills had.

All pills were pills for the girl, and these were the best she had ever received.

She looked up at him, unsure of what to say. She should have been thanking him, but something else came out of her first.

"Why?" she asked.

Alex shrugged. "I don't know," he said. "I guess I felt bad for you. Life hasn't been easy for you clearly, so I would like to make it a bit better if I can."

The girl's eyes widened a little. For the first time in a long time, she felt seen. Someone could see that she had been working hard.

"Thank you," she finally said. "I will never forget this."

Alex simply smiled. "You should get away now," he said, looking around at the people who had stopped to watch the two of them.

Pearl was ready to fight too.

The girl's hand clutched around her pills. She couldn't let anyone else get it, so she turned around and ran away, going up the mountain.

Alex felt his talisman buzz a little and he brought it out. Looking at it, he had received 12 points. And since he had won the first match of the day, he had no reason to worry about losses.

Pearl got excited as well. It had been a while since he had got the chance to fight to the best of his capability.

Alex saw a green glint from his right side, as someone rushed toward Alex faster than anyone else. "Your Majesty! I, Kang Bouxian of the Hidden Cloud sect, challenge you to a duel," the man shouted.

A few more people arrived, but everyone regretted being after the man. They feared that after one fight, they wouldn't get the chance to ask him for another fight.

Alex saw the people's disappointment and spoke up. "Please wait around, or maybe consider dueling amongst yourselves. I will get to everyone when I can."

Midnight flew out from his storage ring and he held it in front of him. The man who had challenged him had a cultivation base of Saint Core's 7th realm.

That was just the right cultivation base he wanted from someone to start training his sword. As Sword Intent filled his sword, he looked at the man who had already prepared a saber of his own.

People moved away from the fight, giving space for Alex and his opponent to battle. At the same time, many started finding their opponents to duel with.

Alex took a deep breath and spoke. "I accept."

The moment those words left his mouth, the man showed off his own Saber Intent, giving a white outline to his saber. Then he began attacking.

Sabers were single-edged swords, usually curved, and not as heavy. As such, they forced the fighters to develop an entirely different fighting style than if they were to fight with swords.

Alex wasn't used to fighting against Sabers given how rare they were. So, he wanted to use the opportunity to see what it was like.

A fiery saber strike flew toward him like a crescent blade, the power of Saber intent within it.

Alex was restricting himself to use only Sword Intent, as such he couldn't send out a Sword slash of his own and had to directly strike down the incoming attack instead.

On impact, the saber slash exploded in front of Alex, fortunately doing nothing to him. His body was just too strong to be damaged.

The man in front of him looked surprised and didn't immediately send out another hit. He was wary. Since he couldn't sense Alex's cultivation base, he had no way of telling just how strong he was. As such, he had to test him before deciding on how to approach this fight.

Alex had only one thought at the moment aside from learning how to fight against Sabers. Improve Sword Intent.

It was something he had learned a long time ago and realized once again only just recently.

Long ago, he had created Sword Qi which acted as if they were Sword Aura. That had been due to him not understanding how they worked, and how he had skipped through the levels due to a wrong piece of advice.

It was only later he had learned how to do it correctly.

To create sword Intent, one had to train with the sword to a stage where they could channel their Intent through the sword.

To create Sword Qi, one had to improve Sword Intent to a sufficient level.

To create Sword Aura, one had to improve their Sword Qi, which in turn meant one had to improve their Sword Intent all that more.

So, if Alex could improve Sword Intent to a higher degree, then use that to improve his Sword Qi, and then use that to improve his Sword Aura... Wouldn't he reach the next stage with this sword?

Alex shook his head, shaking away the thoughts. 'Don't set expectations. They only lead to disappointment,' he thought to himself and focused back on the battle at hand.

The man with the saber attacked back, sending out a fiery serpent this time around. Alex struck the serpent, destroying it. And then he did nothing again.

"That's not very fun," he spoke softly. If he was to just use Sword Intent, he could only use it when attacking directly or when channeling it through another Qi-based Sword attack.

If he wanted to use just Sword Intent, he would need to use Sword Qi, which he didn't want to use as he was focusing on just Sword Intent.

"It seems I will need your help, Pearl," Alex said with a smile.

Pearl nodded and rushed forward, attacking the man. The man saw him coming and struck at him, but Alex appeared in between, blocking the attack, and allowing Pearl to land the hit.

He managed to hit the man squarely in the chest, but as he used no Qi, only his physical strength was what hit him. That didn't hurt the man, but that was what Alex wanted.

There was no point in ending the fight too quickly.

The man swung his saber, sending out another attack, and Alex stepped in again, blocking it. Pearl took the opportunity to attack again.

Back and forth, the duo attacked and defended as they saw fit. The man they fought was completely overwhelmed by the two of them, surprised by how ineffective his attacks were becoming.

Not a single attack he made, no matter how large or wide, never hit the beast he wanted to hit. Alex would always come in at the last second and defend him.

The man despaired, and after a few minutes of fighting, he couldn't go on for much longer.

"I give up!" he shouted.

Pearl stopped and Alex appeared in front of him. Before he could even say anything, he felt his talisman buzz softly inside his robes.

Checking it, Alex saw that he had now received another 26 points. 'Huh? That's not bad,' he thought. Since there was no way of losing points unless you interfered in someone else's duel or rejected a duel proposed by someone else, Alex believed he would never lose any points.

This method of point systems not only discouraged one from rejecting a duel, it also encouraged one to go out looking for new ones.

Alex heard many people shout out their challenge to him at once, and his talisman buzzed again. He brought it out to check who it was and noticed one man who raised his talisman happily.

"My challenge went through!" he shouted out loud. The others could only move back in disappointment.

Alex looked at the man and his cultivation base of Saint Soul's 1st realm. It would be a slightly challenging fight, but he doubted he would lose.

The fight began and they went on for a while. The man was strong, his power exceeding the Saint Soul 1st realm that Alex sensed he had. However, due to how strong Alex's body cultivation was, he could match that strength just barely.

Pearl fought as well, using both Qi and body this time around as even both of them would not hurt the man at all.

The man fought to the best of his ability, and multiple times he could find himself getting close catching Alex off guard when he wasn't ready to defend himself. But somehow Alex kept not taking any damage.

On the contrary, Pearl found almost no openings to attack this man. He was only in the Saint Foundation realm, and the man he was up against was in the Saint Soul realm. The difference was too big for him to keep up.

As the fight went on, it devolved into being just Alex defending against the man with little place for Pearl to step in, and so he just stayed out of it entirely.

It was apparent it was going to take him weeks if not months to improve even the tiniest amount. He just had to keep on doing the same thing until he was satisfied.

The fight lasted for 15 more minutes, with Alex keeping the fight going on for as long as he could.

His opponent quickly realized that didn't have a chance at winning at all. No matter how much he fought, the fight was never going to end. Alex was going to continue using him to train himself.

The man realized he wasn't going to get anywhere with this fight. In the end, he was forced to give up.

Alex was surprised when the match ended. He only realized it was over because his talisman buzzed and he gained 31 points. "Oh, thanks for fighting with me," he said with a smile.

The man looked pained at the fact that he had to go on for such a long time just to lose. He nodded toward Alex and walked away.

Alex turned around, looking for someone to instantly ask him for a duel when he realized that he wasn't being challenged. He wondered if they were distracted by something else at first, but a moment later he understood what was up.

They were hesitant.

There weren't many around him by that point. Just 7 or so, and each of their cultivation base was lower than the man he had just fought. It wouldn't be easy to get them to fight.

Alex looked at a girl with a cultivation base of Saint Core 5th realm. He pointed to the girl. "Do you want to fight me?" he asked.

To his surprise, the mere act of asking her made the talisman buzz. 'I didn't challenge,' Alex thought, but there was nothing to do. 'I guess I'll have to be careful then.'

He sighed and looked at the girl who seemed surprised by her own talisman buzzing.

The girl looked around at first, confused, then was a little scared. "Umm... I don't think I can win," she said.

"If you can defeat him, I will count that as winning too," Alex said, gesturing to Pearl as he spoke.

The girl looked at Pearl and then back. "Umm..." she gulped. "You won't interfere?"

"If I do, even if I win, I will give you the pill," Alex said.

The numerous people got excited and some even thought of sneaking in to challenge before the girl got to, but didn't.

The girl contemplated on the offer, checking Pearl to see how strong he was, and remembered how he had to step aside when the real battle had taken place earlier.

She saw no reason to refuse.

"I'll do it," she said.

The challenge was accepted.

Alex stepped aside, letting Pearl be the one who fought. Coming to this secret realm hadn't just been for him, but also for Pearl. He had to let Pearl fight his fill.

He needed that at least to grow.

It had been a while since the both of them had the chance to train like this. Alex understood that towards the start, it would only be the weaker ones that would challenge him, and later once the weaker ones left, he would get to fight the stronger ones.

As such, it was okay for him to give Pearl the chance to fight right now.

Alex just sat by the grass and watched as the fight went on.

Chapter 1579: Loss

Of the next 5 battles that Alex let Pearl fight, only one person manages to give Pearl enough trouble that he has to take the loss. The person who did so was a girl, who Alex had a suspicion was in fact a player.

The movement skill she used was something even better than anything Alex had. Not that Alex would've had trouble catching her if he had to.

He gave the girl a pill of her choice and decided to let Pearl have a breather. He had been fighting for the past hour straight, so he needed that.

"I'll be the one that fights next, so come at me accordingly," he said to the group.

A few more people had come to him during the time Pearl fought and the group had increased again. Newer folks were more than happy to fight him, not knowing just how strong he was.

So they did.

Half an hour and 5 matches later, Alex won a total of 112 more points. It quickly became apparent to him that keeping track of the points was not going to matter much under the circumstances he had put himself in.

Instead of having to go out looking for points, people came to him to hand it to him.

"Who next?" he asked, looking at the surrounding group that hesitated a lot now. They had seen the sort of fights he won. Even Saint Soul's 2nd realm hadn't been a problem to him.

Alex was a little surprised to see a lack of answers. "No one?" he asked.

Just then, someone flew from far away, arriving at their location with a little grace. He slammed onto the ground, creating a bit of a crater, before walking out of it.

"Haha, greetings Your Majesty." The man bowed a little in respect. "I hope I haven't been late."

"There is no early or late here," Alex said.

The man wore a black robe with azure linings on the inside and had his hair in a ponytail, tied high above him. His face was somewhat handsome, but what people noticed even before that was his muscular build.

Alex was slightly curious as to who the man was. With Saint Soul's 6th realm cultivation, he was clearly no joke.

"Ah, great!" he shouted. "My name is Teng Roukang, and I am the heir of the great Teng family. Certainly, Your Majesty has heard of our family."

Alex nodded. "I have," he said. He had heard of the Teng family of the Emerald Kingdom, but it wasn't to the same degree as the young man might have hoped.

Still, the young man gave a wide grin, knowing that he had been recognized in a way.

"Of course," he said. "Then would it be alright if I request you to a duel?"

Alex said nothing, letting the question linger in his mind for a bit. He saw a problem with accepting the next fight. He would lose.

Losing by itself didn't worry Alex. It wasn't like he was going to lose points or get a Loss. He didn't even care that he would have to give out pills. The problem here was that his loss would be a quick one.

With how strong the man in front of him was, there was little doubt in his mind that he would get anything out of that fight.

'No, I can't judge which fights I can fight and which fights I can't,' he thought to himself. 'I'm here to train. Losing is a part of training, even if I get nothing.'

In the end, Alex nodded.

"I accept your challenge," he said.

The man opposite him smiled and brought out a metal staff with no sharp edges to it. "Let's have a good one, Your Majesty."

Alex said nothing and coated his sword with his Sword Intent, outlining it in bright white. His opponent did the same, coating his in Staff Intent, something Alex had known existed, but had never seen before.

The battle started with the man throwing a casual strike at Alex, which Alex dodged easily by striking it to the side. He dashed in, holding nothing back in sword and body, and struck at the man.

The man swung his staff, striking aside Alex's sword, and was surprised to find it quite tougher than he thought. He was still not aware of what Alex's cultivation base was, but he remembered his father's words, mentioning that the King of the Southern Continent wasn't particularly strong, and was simply gifted in Alchemy.

'Just gifted in Alchemy, huh?' the man thought, striking toward Alex. Alex blocked the staff with his sword and was sent flying back. 'He's quite gifted in fighting too.'

Alex rolled on the uneven ground, stopping only when he crashed into a rock, breaking it completely. He walked off the rubble before anyone had the chance to even think he was injured.

'He's talented, but still quite weak,' the man thought. 'He's a player, so he will catch up to me sooner or later. Good thing it's not now.'

He charged forward, sending a flurry of staff lunges at Alex who had to struggle to defend himself. Alex managed to stop about 70% of those attacks, the remaining 30% hitting him at different parts of his body, fortunately, nothing vital.

There were no wounds —if there were, they were healed— but the pain remained. It hurt quite a damn lot. Alex grunted.

"I must say, you're quite the tough one, Your Majesty," the man said, seemingly having stopped himself from attacking while Alex was in pain.

Alex looked at him. "You're not using your skills, why?" he asked.

The man shrugged. "Because you aren't using any," he said. "I thought to keep it fair."

Alex raised an eyebrow. "Fair, huh?" he asked with a chuckle in his voice. "I will have to thank you for your fairness then. It seems I will last a little longer because of that."

"Are you ready to continue, Your Majesty?" the man asked.

Alex took a deep breath and answered with an attack.

The battle between the two continued for 2 more minutes, during which the man managed to attack Alex in 18 different spots across his body. If the staff had been a spear instead, Alex's body would've been dead by now.

'Still, no broken bones? Are his bones extra tough or what?' the man wondered. He could tell he was hurting Alex, but it didn't reflect in his wounds at all.

That was enough battle. He decided to end it here.

He struck Alex's sword to the side and used the rebound energy to strike him across his left arm. He could hear a satisfying crunch before he sent Alex flying over a hundred meters away.

His talisman buzzed and he won.

Alex didn't go any further than a hundred meters thanks to the mountain's side he was slammed into. His talisman buzzed and he lost, but thankfully the distance wasn't too high for it to be an Out of Bounds loss. That would've been a bad one.

"Urgh!" he grunted in pain and waited as his bones restructured themselves, his wounds healing by the second.

He dragged himself out of the rubble, and then he saw the man land in front of him.

Chapter 1580: Some Free Time

"Your Majesty, are you alright?" the man asked, seemingly worried about Alex. His eyes flashed briefly with surprise at the lack of wounds. And where was the broken left arm?

'Did he already eat a pill?' he wondered.

Alex still had blood all over himself, staining his skin and his clothes. He could send it back inside if he wanted to, but his body had already created the amount of blood he had lost.

"Please forgive me, Your Majesty. I didn't hold myself back at the end there," the man said. Alex could hear panic in his voice, but when looking at his face, he didn't seem as panicked.

'Is he faking it?' he thought. Not that it mattered to him.

"Stop," Alex said. "Your name was Teng Roukang, right?"

"Yes, Your Majesty," the man said.

"Alright then, Roukang. You've won against me, and as promised, I will give you a pill. Which one do you want?" he asked.

The man thought for a bit. "Can I get the one that helps you learn a Dao?" he asked.

Alex's face changed slightly. "I will only give from the 5 pills I promised."

"I see," the man said. "Then... I will take the Cultivation improving pill."

Alex nodded. "Do you have a bottle?"

"Yes."

The man excitedly took the pill Alex handed to him and watched in widejawed awe at the marvelous pill veins he had heard so much about.

"5 veins... is that good or bad?" the man asked Alex.

"It's better than average," Alex told him. "That should increase your cultivation base to... somewhere in the early Saint Soul 8th realm after you eat that. It should last about 3 hours, but I should warn you that you will harm your meridians quite a bit after eating this. You won't be able to cultivate for a week or so."

"I see," the man said. "Thank you, Your Majesty."

Alex nodded. "Thanks for the battle," he said.

"Haha!" the man laughed. "Don't thank me just yet, your Majesty. Our battle hasn't ended yet."

"Hmm?" Alex looked up at him in surprise.

"I challenge you to a duel once again, Your Majesty!" he shouted excitedly, a wide grin on his face.

And then his grin vanished. "Hmm? Why isn't it working?" he asked, bringing out his talisman. He looked at the talisman, confused. He had gotten his points, so the match should have been over. So why wasn't the next one starting?

"Oh right?" he smacked his face with his palm. "I got a little too excited. Haha! I forgot you can't challenge someone to a match again until the next day if you are the winner."

Then, he turned toward Alex. "Your Majesty. You should challenge me," he said.

Alex shook his head. "I already lost to you. There is no merit for me to fight you again right away. I'll fight you once I've improved a little more."

The man looked at Alex for a few long seconds before nodding his head. "If that is so, then it shall be so," he said, turning around. "See you tomorrow, Your Majesty."

Then he flew away.

Alex watched the man fly away, a weird feeling emerging in his heart. He wanted to beat him up for some reason, but he needed to focus on training more. 'He's a good fighter and arrogant. He won't immediately beat me. He's a good training partner for him.'

He just had to ignore the person behind the staff.

Alex looked at his palm, clenching it a little. He could still feel the vibrations from the staff each time it struck Midnight.

"So flexible," he thought. He understood the advantages of a staff after the fight. Every part of the staff was a weapon. Unlike a sword, where one had to align the edge with the target, one could just slam the sword in any and all directions.

Even reverse.

"Still, the lack the sharp edges dulls the impact a lot," he thought. "That was a good experience."

He looked down at the people who were hesitant to close on toward him. He decided to go to them.

Everyone seemed somewhat surprised to see him completely fine. They too assumed it was because of his pills. "Your Majesty, are you alright?" someone asked.

"I'm fine," Alex said as he snapped his finger, getting rid of all the blood and dirt on himself with ease, returning himself to his pristine condition. "My apologies. We can continue now."

3 more people fought Alex, but all of them lost. After that, no one challenged Alex and he was finally free to leave.

"Finally, some freedom," he thought, walking through the uneven land, making his way to... anywhere. He didn't care. People would find him anyway.

His freedom wouldn't last for long, he knew that. He just needed some time to unwind from the countless battles before the next one came.

Night fell, but the earth still rumbled from the many fights that happened around the island. With how strong his spiritual sense was, he could most likely see the entirety of this island where the Transcendent Marital Ground was set.

He had heard that the island was massive, but he had doubts as to just how massive it was. Could it be larger than the 300-kilometer diameter his spiritual sense could cover?

'No need to alert the strong ones to my location just yet,' he thought and continued.

Unbeknownst to him, his name and skill level were being spread through the secret realm, mostly between friends for now. They were also letting the others know his location, in return for some favors.

Alex's information was becoming a currency that he could never expect it to become.

'He's still following me?' Alex thought, sensing Teng Roukang's senses on him. 'How many pills before he leaves?'

He sensed a few more people coming toward him, some of them people that he recognized from before, some he had never seen before.

Pearl appeared in a flash of light.

"It's time for more, Pearl."