

## Alchemy 201

### Chapter 201: Unfair?

"Uhh... don't mind her, she is known to be cold around here," Kong Yuhan tried to make Alex feel better, but he couldn't think of anything proper to say in response to what had just happened. In fact, if what she said about him getting everything for free was true, even Kong himself felt that the situation was really unfair.

But, he didn't want to say anything about that until he got more information.

"It's okay brother Kong. She wasn't wrong about it being unfair," Alex said.

Kong was stunned. "So, it's true?" Kong asked in a stupefied voice. He couldn't accept what he was hearing.

"About it being unfair? Yes. But what can I do about it? I got lucky. I can't just throw away my luck in search of fairness for others, now can I? It's not like I deliberately went out looking to create problems for others by getting what I got. I took what I was handed and used it to the best I could. If that is unfair, then I am the least of its offender," Alex said.

"But still, If you truly got everything with 0 contributions, then it is wrong. It makes us who actually try and contribute feel like we are looked down on by the sect, never give anything," Kong Yuhan said.

"I never said I didn't contribute at all," Alex said. "I did a lot of things to contribute to the sect. While it is true what I got back might or might not measure up to what I contributed, it is still wrong to ignore my contribution and only look at what I got."

Kong Yuhan's eye brightened up. "So you did contribute. Even if it's a little, it makes me feel better. It no longer sounds like you got everything for free," he said.

Alex simply smiled. He turned around to look back at the house he was going to leave empty for who knew how long. He then looked back to the house two sister's house.

"Zhou Mei's house should be further away, right?" Alex asked.

"Yes, but she says she wants to spend a few days with her sister now, so she is staying here," Kong said.

"I see," he said as he looked around the place with the lined-up houses. "By the way, which one is your brother Kong?" he asked.

"Mine? It's that one. The one after that one," Kong said as he pointed to a house that was two houses over Zhou Mi's house.

"Oh right, I recall saying you were the only passing inner sect disciple from last test right? So the house in between yours and sister Zhou Mi's must be that guy from this morning," Alex asked.

"Yeah. He already brought all of his stuff over and is down at the sect valley, I think," Kong replied with a dejected voice.

"What's wrong? You sound depressed right now," Alex asked.

"Remember when I told you I would ask him to switch houses with me? Well, I did and he refused. He had already brought in all of his furniture by the time I got to ask him, and he didn't want to go through the hassle all over again."

"I even offered to do it myself, but the man said he didn't want to live in a house that was already inhabited by someone else," Kong said as he sighed.

Alex thought for a moment and asked, "So... correct me if I'm wrong, but you don't really want his house, right?"

"No, I do want it," Kong replied with a weird look. He wondered why Alex would ask something he had already explained beforehand.

"No, what I meant to say is, you only want a house that is next to sister Zhou Mi's right?" Alex asked.

Hearing this, Kong Yuhan's cheeks started getting red as he blushed. "Ye-Yes," he answered. Alex smiled and asked, "Why don't you take mine then?"

Kong Yuhan froze for a moment after hearing Alex's proposition. Then, he immediately facepalmed himself, screaming to himself, "Idiot. Why did I not think of that? Brother Alex, would you really be willing to swap house with me?" Kong asked, desperately.

Alex chuckled. "Didn't I just say you can take mine?"

Kong Yuhan's eyes started shining. "Thank you, brother Yu. You are a lifesaver. Let me go get my stuff from my house and we can swap the keys," he said. He immediately ran to his house to get all of his stuff.

It seemed he was waiting for this moment for quite a while and took less than 5 minutes to store everything into his storage bag. He came running back out.

"Let's swap the key, Brother Yu," he said. Alex nodded and handed over his nameplate. Kong Yuhan took no time to swap the key and handed Alex's nameplate back to him.

Alex checked the nameplate, nodded, and kept it in his bag. "I have the stuff to do tomorrow, so I will leave, brother Kong," he said.

"Huh, you are not going to look at your new home?" Kong asked. "Is it because I used to live there? Cuz I can promise you, it's only been a week since I got it and I haven't touched anything in there aside from the alchemy room."

"That's not it, Brother Kong. Remember, I have a home in the sect leader's mountain as well? Well, it's actually better than this house and it's closer to my master's so I like staying there. I might actually just ask master to give away the key to this house to someone else if I get the chance," Alex said.

"Ah, I see. That makes sense," Kong Yuhan said.

"Anyway, it was good seeing you, Brother Kong. See you later," Alex said and started walking away. While returning, he passed along the sect valley to check if there were any Yang Jade, but there weren't any.

Disappointed, he returned back to the sect leader's mountain and went back to his house.

## Chapter 202: Calling Parents

Alex made a few more pills before the end of the day. They turned out to be pretty fine, although none of them reached Heaven grade. One did come very close though.

Afterward, he logged out of the game.

"I haven't talked with my parents for a while. I should let them know about the money at least," he thought. Until now, he had been scared that they would scold him for not studying properly when they specifically sent him here just to study.

But now that he was making a lot of money from the game, he didn't fear anything they would say. In fact, he hoped to change their views.

His mother picked up the phone after only 2 rings.

"Hello? Alex? How are you doing son?" she asked.

"I'm fine, Mom. How are you? How is dad?" he asked.

"Oh, we are perfectly fine, did you eat your dinner?" she asked.

"No, I was just about to go eat it and I thought I should call you first," Alex said.

"Awww, Did you hear that? Our son has grown up so well," Alex's mom said.

"Of course I didn't hear it. You don't have the phone on loudspeaker," his dad's voice came from the back.

"Yeah, yeah, I'm putting it on. So, how is the new place, and don't lie to me. You've lived for 3 days now, you must have some ideas, right?" his mom asked.

"It's actually one of the best places to live in the city, I think. It's really high in the building and it is very fancy. Let me show you my room," he said and quickly turned on the camera.

He showed around his room and started describing everything he thought his parents would not recognize.

"Wait, go back, go back, go back," his mother said.

"Where?" he asked.

"To your bed," she said. He quickly turned his camera to show his bed, and only then realized why she had done that. 'She is really sharp,' he thought.

"What is that? Is that game thing?" she asked.

"Yes mother," he said.

"Who gave you that? Give it back immediately. It is so harmful to you," his mother said. This quite surprised Alex. He hadn't seen her go this angry ever since one of the neighbor's cows escaped the enclosure and ate a lot of the growing plants on their farm.

'Is the severity of the situation the same in her eyes?' he wondered.

"Nobody gave it to me, Mom. I bought it myself," he said.

"What? With what money?" she exclaimed. "Dear, did you send money to our son without telling me?" she asked his father.

"What? No. Don't accuse me of such a thing willy nilly. I don't even have the money to pay for the new tractor's installment this month. I will have to ask John for some. Why would I be sending him money?" he said.

"You guys are lacking money?" he asked. His parents never talked to him about the finances other than the occasional stuff he would hear about accidents. He only knew that his parents didn't have a lot of money, but still did their best.

"That is not the topic of discussion we are having right now. I asked what money you bought that harmful thing with," she asked.

"Harmful? It's not harmful, mom. It's for playing games. It just makes you see and hear different things; it makes you feel like you are in a different place. That's all. There is nothing harmful there," Alex said.

'No, I know it's harmful. I heard what it does to your body. John's sons both started to get lazy and stupid after using that thing. He bought it for them a few weeks ago and now he regrets it, saying that his children are all lethargic all the time, never there when he needs them and worst of all, they can't even work in the fields properly anymore. So, he had to make them get used to it all over again."

"He already sold back those things, and is now starting to rehabilitate his children, making them get used to the work again," his mother said.

"Anyway, give that back to who you got it from. Was it Hannah?" she asked.

"What? No. I got it myself," Alex said.

"With whose money?" she asked again.

"With mine. I earned money from the game," he said.

"What? Who do you think you are lying to? You think I will believe something as stupid as someone earning money from those childing video games?" she said.

"I did, mom. I actually earned a lot more than just a little," he said. He then switched the subject. "Do you know how much this apartment costs, mother?" he asked.

"What? Apartment? I don't know. 300 dollar? 400 dollar? I know it's expensive, but it shouldn't be more than that right?" she asked.

Alex chuckled a little. His parents were just as oblivious about the expensiveness of the city. "It costs about 10,000 dollars a month," he said.

"What?!" both his mother and father shouted at the same time. His father who had been silent for the most part started speaking. "Is that true, son? Why are you staying in such an expensive place? I doubt my sister and brother-in-law can pay for that much every month," his father said.

"That's the thing, father. They don't. Sister Hannah pays for it all herself. She too earns money from the game," he said.

"But... 10,000 dollars is a lot son. That's what we make in a year before counting the profits," his father said. Out of nowhere, his voice grew solemn, "are you really making that much son? Are you really making that much money son?" he asked.

Alex tried to nod and say yes again but instead decided to do something else. He quickly went onto the internet to access his account and took a screenshot of the money.

"I have something coming for you," he said and then sent the screenshot to his parents.

### Chapter 203: Transferring Money

"Hmm... what is this?" his parents didn't realize what was sent to them so they opened it up on their old smartphone. "Why is the text so small? Wait for a second, let me get my glasses," his father said and left the room, leaving his mother with the phone.

She didn't know how to zoom the picture either, so she just waited for her husband to come back with his glasses. He returned in less than a minute with a large, string-tied spectacle on his face.

"Let's see then, what is this?" he looked at the text, but the only thing that he immediately saw was a number around 380,000. "What is this number?" he asked.

"Look carefully, father," Alex said.

"Alright," his father said as he looked at the picture a bit more. It didn't take him more than a second to realize he had missed a crucial symbol from the number when he read it beforehand. He had missed the \$ sign.

"This— This can't be true," he said as his hands started shaking and he nearly dropped the phone. Alex's mother hurriedly grabbed the phone and started scolding, "stop acting like an old man and hold the phone properly.? What are you doing shaking like that suddenly?"

"But honey... L-look at that. Look at what our son just sent us," Alex's father said in a shaky voice and handed her his glasses.

"What? What did he send us?" she said as she took the glasses and put them on. It didn't take long before she started shaking too.

"A-Alex. What is this?" she asked.

"That is what I earned from the game, Mom," he said.

"But..but how? How do games pay so much? You aren't lying, right? You didn't get into any shady business, right son?" she asked.

Alex wholeheartedly chuckled. "No mom, it's all from the game. In fact, sister Hannah makes more than me," he said.



"Oh, lord! These children are going to earn more in a month than we did in our lifetime," his father's voice came from behind.

"So, father. You said something about payment for the tractor or something. How much do you need?" he asked.

"It's an installment system. I need about 600\$ a month for 4 years to pay off for the new tractor," his father said.

"Hmm... so, about 30 thousand? How about I send you guys 50 thousand today. I will wire it into your guy's bank. Buy yourself something good with the remaining money," Alex said.

"No, son. You earned that money. You keep it yourself. So, you keep it for yourself. We will manage on our own. Just seeing our son grow so much is more than enough for us," his father said.

"Don't say that father. I wouldn't be here if not for you. I will send you the money today. I don't have much need for it. You guys might as well put it to good use," he said. "Besides, I can earn more if I needed to."

"I-is that really true, son?" his mother asked. She had tears on her face.

"Yes, mom. You can finally buy that solar-powered water heater you have wanted for so long," he said.

"Oh," his mother chuckled. "You know about that too? I thought I kept that to myself quite well," she said.

"Yes mom," Alex said.

The parents-son talked for a little longer before ending their talk. Alex then opened his account once more to transfer 50 thousand of his money to his parents for their needs. He felt no hesitation there whatsoever.

In fact, he felt proud of himself. Pride in what he had done to help his parents further. Proud of what he had become.

He looked at the time and realized that it was almost 8 pm, so he quickly walked out to go to the kitchen.

"Oh, hey sister. You are done with your food?" he asked.

"Yeah," Hannah said as she looked back from the sink. She was just done washing her plates. "What took you so long? I even waited for you for almost half an hour."

"Oh, I called my parents and we talked for a lot longer than I had expected to," he said.

"What? You called Aunt and Uncle and didn't let me talk to them? What kind of stupid little brother are you?" she said.

Alex laughed and said, "I told them about the money I earned. I doubt they would be interested in anything else after that."

"Oh, so they know you make 25 thousand dollars now? I haven't told my parents yet," she said.

"You probably should. Also, it's not 25 thousand anymore sisters. I made an additional 360 thousand dollars yesterday," he said.

"Wait, you did what?" Hannah was surprised. "I thought you didn't have that high of cultivation base. How did you earn so much? Did you follow me and got married to someone too?" she asked.

"Haha, no. I got lucky and found a very special flower called Spirit Cleansing Lily that allows you to unlock Spiritual Sense before even entering Saint realm," he said.

"What? There is a flower-like that? What do you do with it? Eat it? Make a pill with it? Some sort of soup? Or use it in a formation?" she asked many questions.

"No, you just cultivate with it," Alex said. "As long as you hold it with you while you cultivate, you will unlock spiritual sense," he said.

"Oh, I don't know if such a thing will even work for me," Hannah said.

"Why not? You just have to cultiva— Oh, that's right. You don't have a cultivation method. Well, I don't know what to do about that. Maybe it works? Who knows. Either way, if you ever get your hands on them, use them. That is if you haven't already reached Saint realm by then," Alex said.

Hannah left Alex behind and went back to her room, while Alex finished eating what was prepared today. After washing the dishes, he too went back to his room and logged into the game once more.

Chapter 204: Just before

Alex logged back into the game at around 9 pm and decided to make some more pills for now. During the next 3 hours, he made the pills, he managed to make exactly 2 pills in heaven grade.

One of them was a metal-aligned pill, so it was not a surprise when it came out with 53% harmony. However, he was pleasantly surprised that the wood-aligned pill also turned out to be 50% harmony.

He was quite happy with himself with this result.

"Once again, I can't cultivate, can I?" he thought. He needed to wake up at 6 tomorrow morning as well, so he just didn't cultivate once more. He didn't want to fall asleep and not wake up in time.

So, he called out Pearl once more. "Meow," Pearl said as it came out. He walked up to Alex and started licking his arms. Alex slowly rubbed his back and said, "We are going to cultivate once more, buddy. You alright with that?" he asked.

"Meow," Pearl screamed in confirmation.

Pearl's body started glowing once more. Going from white to yellow to golden light when numerous small cuts appeared all over Alex's body. However, he was easily enduring these.

"Sigh, ever since the pain has disappeared, my body cultivation speed has dropped significantly as well," he said. "Do I feed pearl some monster core so he can get ahead of my body cultivation and I have to catch up once again?" he wondered.

There were numerous theories in his head as to what was going on, however, none of them made sense due to the sheer lack of information available to him. He still had yet to find anything about Evolution in the game itself.

"Do I really have to go and check the internet? But I don't want to spoil myself." He was falling into a dilemma. For now, he decided to ignore the possibilities and concentrated on the ongoing circumstances.

Pearl cultivated in peace over the course of the entire night, while Alex just sat there bearing the pain that barely got him any stronger than he already was. Still, he was sure that this small amount of increase would soon gather up and be substantial enough.

Early morning, at 6 PM, he finally stopped Pearl from cultivating anymore. Once he was done, he sent Pearl back into his tattoo space and got ready to leave.

"Martial uncle is supposed to get the food for me, right?" he thought back to what his master said, and hoped she remembered.

Suddenly, a string of information appeared on his communication talisman which he took out to read.

-Lang Shun is waiting for you at the Right Alchemy garden-

-Take your food from him-

-Stick to the safe parts and return in 3 days-

"The safe part?" he wondered what that meant. 'Wasn't all part supposed to be dangerous, yet not?' He thought. He assumed he would know what she meant after entering the forbidden fields and went out of his house.

He went down the sect leader's mountain and quickly reached the Alchemy garden on the right side.

"Oh, there you are martial nephew Yu." Lang Shun was a bit further away when he noticed him.

"Good morning, Martial uncle Lang. I will have to rely on you this morning," he said.

"That is no problem. Congratulations on becoming a core disciple, finally. I knew you could do it," Lang Shun said. Alex thanked him with a big smile.

"I heard you said you wanted to go to the Forbidden fields. Why?" he asked.

"I ... have my reason," Alex decided to not speak about his plans.

"Whatever. If my senior sister couldn't make you stop, then I'm not even going to try," Lang Shun said.

"Alright, come with me," he said and took Alex towards the crevice between the sect leader's mountain and the alchemy garden. There, Alex finally saw a small opening.

"Is this what leads to the forbidden fields?" Alex asked.

"Yes. You have to go through here and only then will you reach the forbidden fields. Now, I must warn you about a few different things," Lang Shun said.

Alex started to listen attentively.

"First of all, since you will lose all of your cultivation temporarily once you enter there, you will start to get hungry very soon. So, Senior sister asked me to prepare these foods for you," Lang Shun said as he took out a small pack of food.

"Don't put these in your storage bags, or you won't be able to take it out anymore," he said.

"Yes, martial uncle," Alex said as he took the food.

"Secondly," Lang Shun continued, "If you do end up finishing your food too early, there are cliffs along the side of the field with food growing on top of them. Try to hit them with stones to drop them. Absolutely do not try to climb them."

"You sometimes end up forgetting that you are nothing but a mortal in there and try to get up there when you are really hungry. Try not to do that. Go against your instincts. However, I hope it doesn't come to that, since you will have plenty of food for now."

Alex was still listening.

"Oh yeah, if anyone asks what you were punished for, just say something generic like you stole some ingredients from your neighbor. Although..." Lang Shun looked at Alex's cloth and said, "You might want to change to less attracting clothes."

"Less attracting?" Alex looked down on himself and realized his Martial Uncle was talking about the Core sect's robe. He swiftly changed his clothes to the ones from outer sect one that he had kept.

"This should be fine, right?" Alex asked.

"Yes, That is enough," Lang Shun said.

"Now, the third and most important thing you have to remember. A few kilometers past where you enter, you will find a river with clean flowing water. Most people in their punishments stay around here for the water source, and that is how far the forbidden fields under our control actually goes to."

"Beyond that live dangerous beasts. Not very dangerous to cultivators, but to mortals, any attacks of theirs are lethal. Make sure you never cross the river,"

## Chapter 205: The Forbidden Fields

Alex was a little shocked. He had not heard about this danger from his master or anyone before.

"But I thought that the Forbidden fields were a bunch of grasslands with nothing in it. Was that false?" he asked.

"Oh no, it is what you have heard for the most part. The part we call Forbidden Fields is actually just a small part of the otherwise huge land where one's cultivation is stifled. Forbidden Fields just last until the river, after that is the desert where the monsters live," Lang Shun said.

'Desert?' he was shocked. 'A land of sand, like the southern continent? Aren't I in the western continent according to sister?' he thought.

"Are these monsters in the desert of high cultivation?" he asked.

"Cultivation? No. As I said, the forbidden fields and beyond don't have Qi. These monsters just grew up with a strong body after adapting to that environment," Lang Shun said.

"So, do we know how strong they are?" Alex asked.

"Not really. From the speed and strength they show, it is assumed that they are around the Muscle tempering realm in terms of strength, but who knows. There could be stronger ones inside the desert. No one who has ever entered the desert has ever come back to give us information."

"So, just try to stay away from the desert. Be careful when you drink the river water too. Although the monsters stay on the other side of the river, they might come to this side if they see you. There has been only a few cases so far, but it's okay to be careful."

Alex fell into contemplation. Assuming the lack of Qi did not stop his body from being as strong as it is, he should have no problem in the forbidden fields. However...

'What will I do if I have to leave the grassland and enter this desert,' he thought.

Soon, Lang Shun and he came across light at the end of the tunnel. After coming out of the tunnel, he finally saw it.

A vast land of green grass far away into the distance. Beyond that was a slight color of reddish-yellow. Alex looked directly in front of him and saw the steep slope all the way down to the grassland.

There were two elders standing guard on either side of the openings of the cave he had just exited, probably looking after the 'prisoners' in this open prison.

"Another disciple, Eighteenth Elder? We weren't notified about this," the elder on the left asked.

The elder on the right just looked at him and asked, "Isn't he the sect leader's disciple? It can't be that he did something worthy of this punishment, right Eighteenth Elder?"

"Don't mind me and my martial nephew elders. He requested to enter the forbidden field himself," Lang Shun said.

"Requested himself? Does he not know how troublesome the forbidden field is?" the elder on the left asked.

"It's alright, Elders. I requested this despite knowing the problems," Alex said.

"Alright then. Since you are going in on your own and are not being punished, you can come back here whenever you want," the elder said.

"Thank you, Elders," he then turned to Lang Shun and said, "Alright, Martial Uncle, I will leave now."



Alex thanked Lang Shun and left the cliff. The road downhill was steeper than he realized. Thankfully the rough terrain had plenty for his sole to grip. Now that he was coming down, he looked at the side of the cliffs.

Numerous trees were growing on it horizontally. 'Is that where the fruit grows?' he wondered. Below the cliffs were tiny, nearly dust-sized specs of something moving. 'Are those the disciples being punished?' he thought.

Judging by the number, there were a lot. 'I wonder what they did to deserve their punishment and how long they've been here. From the Elder's explanation, any time over a week would be a torture,' he thought.

Finally, after a few minutes, he reached the bottom of the path and was in the grassland.

Suddenly, a force surrounded his body, forcing his Qi to stop showing out. He tried to fight it back, but the force was too strong. Slowly, all of his Qi was pushed to inside his meridians and his body was now a mortal.

At least, it was mortal from the perspective of Qi cultivation. 'Is my body cultivation fine?' he wondered. He tried jumping high and was happy to find that his body wasn't changed at all.

However, he realized that his Spiritual sense was suppressed as well.

'Welp, at least that is there. Still, this force... feels so familiar, and yet so distant. What is this?' he wondered. Either way, he needed to look for Yang jades now, so he moved along.

The grassland was truly vast. It was only from the top of the cliff that it looked like he could see it all. From the bottom, it looked like it was endless. He didn't know where he should start looking for the jades, so he starts with wherever was closest and moved out.

The problem he had now was that he would soon have to log out to go to his classes and due to the lack of Qi, he couldn't hide his body. 'That is going to be a problem,' he thought.

Still, there were around 2 hours before he had to leave, so he was fine for now. Searching for the Yang jade should have been easy for him. All he had to do was be in the vicinity and his body would locate the yang jade itself.

And yet, no matter where he went, he couldn't find a single one. 'Damn, can I even roam it all in 3 days?' he started to worry. The flat plain was so vast that Alex couldn't even see a single disciple.

After 2 hours, he got unnaturally hungry. 'Is this because I haven't eaten in ages?' he thought as he brought out the food his martial uncle had given him and ate some of it.

Finally, once his stomach was full, he found a batch of tall grass and laid down on it. He didn't know if this was the correct thing to do or not, but given that both his master and martial uncle said there was no danger in the grassland itself, he logged out.

#### Chapter 206: Zheng Min

Alex logged out of the game and woke up from his bed. He had woken up on time today. He freshened up and decided to check his school works for a bit before going to the kitchen for dinner.

Hannah was out already and had cooked the food.

When she saw Alex walk in she asked, "Don't you want breakfast? Why didn't you log out earlier?"

"Ah, I had things to do in the game," he said.

"This early in the morning?" Hannah asked.

"Yes," he replied.

Hannah stopped asking any further questions and got the food ready. "Sorry about not helping you sister. I will try to log out to at least help with the vegetables," he said.

"No need, I can do it myself. Besides, I don't like eating potatoes with blood all over them," Hannah teased him.

Alex sighed as he looked at the finger he had cut. 'Mom was somewhat right about us losing our abilities to function normally, wasn't she?' he thought.

He quickly got ready for his classes and walked out of the house with Hannah. Sarah and Emily 'happened' to be outside their door when they arrived at the bottom of their buildings.

"Oh, you guys are finally down. We waited for nearly 10 minutes," Sarah said. It seemed Hannah was now good friends with Sarah after their last meetings and Hannah had asked Sarah to take them with her in her car.

Alex was still somewhat shy around Emily but did his best to not show it. Soon, they arrived at the University and walked towards their own classes.

While returning, however, Alex was stuck walking back with Emily. It seemed Sarah had more classes even after 3 pm, while Hannah's classes were done more than an hour ago.

So they walked back together, talking about different things. Alex came to know a few more things about Emily, while she learned a few more things about Alex. Both giggled their way back home.

Alex wanted to bring her to their apartment to serve her some snacks while she waited for Sarah's classes to be over, but he remembered that he left his body alone back in the game. So he hurriedly said his goodbyes and went up the elevator.

Thankfully, Hannah had the lunch prepared which he hastily ate and went back to his room. Then, he logged in.

Alex realized that he was right where he had left his body, his food right next to him as well.

GRRR

He felt himself go a little hungry and was surprised. "Just how hungry can I get? I only ate this morning," he thought. But then he remembered that what he ate this morning was nowhere near what a mortal would eat in a day, so he just shook his head and ate a bit more.

He hung the bag in front of him and looked at the size of it. Only half a day had passed, and he was already done with more than a third of the food his Martial uncle had sent him.

"Urghh... martial uncle miscalculated how much food a mortal needed to eat," he thought. He was disappointed, but he didn't have time for that. He needed to search for the yang jades.

He put his food inside his robes and walked around the land waiting for his body to tell him anything. 'I hope I don't need to have Qi for my body to find the yang jades. That would be tragic,' he thought.

He didn't believe that to be the case, however, since it had to do with the Body and not cultivation at all. He walked around for hours searching the yang jades but found nothing. "Damn, just how rare is it?" he thought.

Suddenly, Alex heard some groaning nearby. He looked back and saw someone lying down on the floor, trying to move around, but unable to. He couldn't tell what was happening, but he immediately ran towards the person.

The person was on the floor, with chapped lips and sunken cheeks. "What's wrong?" Alex asked seeing the dastardly look on the person's face.

"Wa— wat—er," the man said, unable to form a single sentence. Alex was shocked to see someone like that. He didn't have any water on him, so he decided to carry him to the river source a few kilometers ahead.

He picked the man upon his back and started walking in the direction of the river. It didn't take him long to arrive at the river source where he put the man down and walked forward to the river to get him some water.

"What do I gather water with?" he thought for a second. He didn't want to bring the dying man here due to the dangers his Martial Uncle told him about. He decided to gather water in his two palms.

By the first time he walked back to the man, he realized how ineffective that was. He needed to find another way. Suddenly, an idea struck him. He took off his robe and dropped it in the river, waiting for it to absorb the water.

He then brought it back to the man and put it over the man's mouth, letting the water drip on his face. Within a few minutes, the man started to show signs of recovering and by 10 minutes, he was back to walking and talking.

The man still had chapped lips and sunken cheeks but his complexion was healthier than before. He looked at Alex with his hollow eyes and said, "Thank you brother. You saved me. If you weren't here, I would've died of thirst in this treacherous place," he said.

"It's okay brother. It is my duty to save a fellow disciple from my own sect," he said. Alex only now looked at the man's robe and realized that he was actually an inner sect disciple.

"My name is Zheng Min, what is your name, brother?" he asked.

"Yu Ming,"? Alex replied, giving him his in-game name.

#### Chapter 207: Trust

"Once again, Brother Yu, thank you for saving me." Zheng Min nearly got on his knees to thank Alex for saving him. "As I said, Brother Zheng, don't worry about it," Alex said.

Zheng Min stood up and walked to the river to drink some more water. By the time he returned to Alex, he was breathing very heavily. "Are you okay, Brother Zheng?" Alex asked.

"Huff huff, My body is still not fully ready for me to walk so much," Zheng Min said as he laid back down on the ground, breathing rather heavily. Alex was going to ask him about Yang jades but decided to wait until he was ready to talk.

Zheng min looked around and looked at Alex. He noticed something black on Alex and asked, "Brother Yu, what is that black thing?"

Alex didn't know what he was talking about at first, but then he saw the little black bag where he kept his food, and answered him, "Oh, this? This is my portion of food."

Zheng Min's eyes perked up. "That's food, brother Yu?" he asked. "I am really hungry right now, brother Yu. I haven't eaten in days, can I ask you to give me some food?"

Alex didn't want to waste any more food, but seeing the sorry state of Zheng Min, he decided to hand him some. He took out some food and gave it to him. Zheng Min finished the given food in less than a minute.

"Ah, that was good," he said in satisfaction. "Where did you get such food, Brother Yu?" he asked.

"I brought it along with myself," Alex said.

"You brought it yourself? They allowed you to?" he asked, but then noticed the wet robe Alex was holding and said, "Is your cultivation base really not that high that the sect decided to let you carry your food? Hehehe.?" He started laughing and didn't stop for a while.

"Anyway, what crime did you do to come in here, Brother Yu?" he asked.

"I... uh stole some ingredient from my neighbor while he was sleeping," Alex lied through his teeth. However, Zheng Min thought nothing of it. "Same here brother. I've been here for nearly a month now. I hope yours is not that long, or you won't last with that little food," Zheng Min said.

"I should be fine," Alex said. They stood up and walked back away from the river. It was dangerous and they didn't want to stay there that long. Along the way, Alex asked Zheng Min about the yang jades but turned out Zheng Min didn't even know what Alex was talking about.

Disappointed, he dropped the subject. Soon, Zheng Min started to huff and puff again. Learning that the time was nearly 8 pm, he decided to log out for now.

"Why don't you rest, for now, Brother Zheng? I will rest too," Alex said.

"Really? Thank you, brother Yu," Zheng Min said as he fell down to the ground and started taking deep breaths again. Before Alex could even say anything, he fell asleep.

'He must've been really tired,' Alex thought and he sat down near and got into a meditating lotus position. After that, he logged out.

He had gotten into the game without changing his clothes, so he quickly changed his clothes before going to the kitchen for dinner. Hannah was already there waiting for him, so he had a proper dinner with his sister.

After helping her with the dishes, he went back to the game half an hour later.

He logged back into the game and opened his eyes. In front of him was Zheng Min, standing a little further away. His eyes were wide open. On the right hand, he held a pointed stone with a red tip, dripping something.

On the left hand, he had a lump of something black.

Due to not being a cultivator anymore, Alex couldn't see everything as clearly as he could when he was a cultivator, but thanks to body cultivation, it was still much better than normal humans.

"What is that?" he asked, a little disoriented as to what was happening. Suddenly, a sharp pain appeared in his chest. Alex looked to his left chest to see that his robe was in tatters and there was a large cut on his skin.

The cut was a little deeper than his skin, but that still hurt him quite a bit. He quickly tore off his robes and put them on the wound. The wound itself wasn't bleeding a lot, but he still decided to do it.

Once the robe was torn, he realized that there was nothing inside. His ration of food had disappeared. His eyes turned wide and he immediately looked at Zheng Min who was still in shock. It was then Alex realized that the black lump on his hand, was his food.

It didn't take much after that to realize that he had been attacked by Zheng Min.

"Wh-Why?" Zheng Min asked. "Why won't you die? How are you still alive?" he asked.

"You— You attacked me?" Alex asked in shock. He had helped the guy so much, even saved him from near death, and yet, he had attacked his heart with a sharp rock. If it wasn't for the fact that he cultivated body, he probably would've successfully plunged the rock into his heart.

"I saved you— why would you attack me?" he asked.

"Ha— Haha— haahaha," Zheng Min started to laugh. "Can't you see? I want your food. I nearly died due to the lack of food. I'm not letting that happen again," he said.

"But I saved you?" Alex asked.

"So? As a criminal, you must know that trust is as fickle as the snow in summer. Still, as a thank you, I wanted to kill you while you were in your sleep. Why wouldn't you die? What kind of treasure are you wearing over your body?" he started asking.

"You... betrayed me because you wanted my food and tried to kill me in my sleep as thanks?" Alex asked in shock. He was starting to feel something he had never felt before.

Chapter 208: Hurt

Betrayal. Alex had heard about that before. Seen them in many movies and television series. He even made sure to remember not to get tricked when his master had taught him different things.

Yet he never understood what it felt like to be betrayed. Well... now he had.

Multitudes of emotions were running across Alex. Shock, surprise, pain, anger, and disbelief. He couldn't believe that the person he saved today had not only tried to steal his food, but also tried to kill him.



"A criminal, huh?" Alex said. "I should have known about this. You guys aren't good people. Some, maybe... but definitely not all of you. Haha"

Alex laughed at himself. " I was too gullible to have helped you in such an environment. Not only did I helped you, but I also did more than I needed to do, and for that I got back-stabbed. Well, that is a good learning lesson. Thank you for that," Alex said as he stood up which still holding the cloth to his chest.

"Now, if you would be so kind as to return my food back to me, I might consider letting you go with simple bruises for what you did to me," Alex said.

"Wha-What? Do you think you can take this from me? Keep dreaming," Zheng Min said as he turned around and ran as fast as he could.

Alex simply shook his head and dashed forward. With his incredible strength, he crossed a great distance in an instance. In less than 3 instances, he reached Zheng Min and tried to grab him.

Zheng Min blocked with his left hand, and Alex accidentally grabbed the black bag of food. Alex decided to pull the bag out of Zheng Min's hands, but he had a surprisingly good grip.

Unfortunately, the bag wasn't as strong as either of their grips. Right through the middle of the bag, a tear opened up that slowly traveled all over the bag, and before either of them could do anything, the contents of the bag got thrown all over the grasslands.

Alex was scared to see the food get thrown all over the place. This was his only food for the next 2 days and he had now wasted it.

"No, the food," Zheng Min cried out in shock. He was more horrified at the sight of the foot getting thrown away than Alex was. After all, Zheng Min had to stay here until his punishment was complete, while Alex could leave anytime he wanted.

Alex got angry at the situation. "You not only betrayed me and tried to kill me, and now you ruin my only supply of food too," he said angrily through his gnashing teeth. He immediately jumped forward and dropped Zheng Min to the ground.

"You are here for punishment for some crime you committed, right? Let me punish you then," he said as he stepped on Zheng Min's arm.

"ARRRRHHHHH," loud, painful sound came from Zheng Min's mouth as Alex pressed down on his arm. "Stop, please stop. NO. I'm sorry, I won't do it again, stop," he started crying, but Alex didn't lift his leg. Instead, he pressed more.

"AHHHH." A more painful sound came out of Zheng Min's mouth as the pain started to become unbearable.

"Wasn't this the arm you tried to kill me with? Don't worry, I won't kill you for trying to kill me. I'm not as petty as you," Alex said.

"Ahhh, then stop. Stop hurting me," Zheng Min shouted.

Alex, however, just said, "I said I'm not as petty as you. That doesn't mean I'm not petty at all."

CRACK

Suddenly, the sound of a broken bone rang out from Zheng Min's arm after Alex finally crushed it beneath his feet. The sound that left Zheng Min's mouth after that couldn't be put into words.

The sound was so painful and loud that even Alex winced a little. He lifted his leg to look at the nearly flattened arm.

"That is for trying to kill me," Alex said. Zheng Min continued to wail, listening to nothing Alex was saying. "As for betraying me and stealing and ruining my food...", he trailed off as he moved his leg up the arm to his shoulders and placed it there.

"You really deserve to be punished." Without a single ounce of hesitation, he crushed his shoulder too. Audible cracks could be heard even through the wails of Zheng Min as the shoulder plates and collar bones broke in succession.

Even Alex felt a little shiver when he heard that. He decided to leave him there and looked for his dropped food. He found a few, but due to being unable to use spiritual sense, he could not find any others. It didn't matter, he was sure they were dirty now.

He didn't even have anything to carry, as even the robes he was wearing were in tatters. 'Sigh, now all the food is gone and I feel horrible,' he thought.

He left the place soon after there were no more cries in the air as Zheng Min was already unconscious from all the pain. Alex first wanted to destroy both his arm in anger but decided to let him a way to live. He didn't want to get on the level of a criminal like him and kill people.

He ate what food was remaining along the way, while still holding his wounds. He looked at the wound that was still bleeding a little and said, "Dammit, why has it not healed yet? Does healing has to do with Qi too?" he wondered.

All the other times he had healed quickly from the cuts, he had assumed that it was because of his body, but it turned out it was because of his Qi. The pain wasn't unbearable, but it also wasn't something he wanted to stay with.

Soon, he stopped walking. He looked at the dark sky and sat down there. He wanted to do nothing more after how sh\*tty the night had been. So, he decided to search for the Yang Jades tomorrow morning, and for today he simply logged out.

## Chapter 209: Party?

For nearly two hours, Alex couldn't sleep at all. After how horrible the night had been, the feeling of being betrayed still left a bad aftertaste in him. He saw where the problem lied, he knew he was good to others. But he would have never imagined that someone could do such a horrible thing to their own savior.

"He must've lied about how he became a criminal too," Alex thought. Nobody capable of doing such a thing could be a simple thief.

The other thing that had horrified him was the reaction he had shown to betrayal. He had nearly killed the man. Although the man had tried to kill him too and definitely deserved it, he was still shocked that he could even think of doing such a thing.

"At least I didn't kill him. I don't think I am capable of that right now," he thought. His master had said that he would have to kill to survive in this cruel world very soon. He didn't want the very soon to become now.

However, if push came to shove, he wouldn't hesitate to do that either. Just like what he did today, he knew deep down, that he was capable of doing that as well. No, he had to be capable of doing that.

"You can't live a kind soul in a world of cruel ones. You end up getting even more tainted." Alex decided to forget about everything and fell asleep.

Early in the morning at around 7 am, he woke up from his sleep. He quickly freshened up and went to the kitchen for breakfast. Surprisingly, Hannah wasn't up yet. So, he decided to return the favor for her, and make some toast and eggs.

By the time he was done, Hannah had already come out of her room.

"Wow, I thought I smelled something nice. What are you making?" she asked.

Alex served him and his cousin as he put the breakfast on the table and said, "Toast and Eggs. Come sit. You've been preparing me food for so long, so I decided to return the favor."

"Oh, you didn't cut your finger again right?" Hannah teased. It was either this or something about Emily that she always teased him with.

"Oh, right. I need to ask you about something," Hannah said.

"Yeah, go ahead," Alex said inquisitively.

"So, on upcoming Saturday, Sarah has asked me to go shopping with her for the new capsules. It will be us 4 and some of her other friends, I think. Do you think it's a good idea to throw a small celebration party of some sort afterward?" she asked.

"Saturday? I don't know, sister. I have something important going on in the game around that time, and I don't know if I can leave that or not," he said.

"Important?" Hannah was surprised. "How important?" she asked.

Alex thought for a bit and said, "Depending on the time frame, I might have to skip classes that week."

Hannah was a little shocked at his response. "Skip classes? That important? What is happening in the western continent?" she asked.

"It's just in the Crimson Empire. We have an upcoming annual competition for all the sects there. I haven't confirmed how long it will last, but I will leave for the capital city around Friday. So, I may or may not be able to do anything on Saturday," he said.

"Although, the competition should be starting on Sunday, so maybe we might get lucky," he said. "You know what, let me confirm with my master on Friday, that should be enough time for preparation, right?" he asked.

"Yeah, that should be fine. It's just ordering some stuff online," Hannah said. Soon they finished breakfast and Alex helped Hannah prepare their lunch before they left for their classes.

Alex went back to his room and logged in to check on himself.

He was back in the familiar grassland, laying on the ground. The sky was as clear as ever, with no signs of clouds, let alone rain.

"Now that I think about it, has it ever rained since I got in this game?" he thought. He remembered quite a few days with clouds hanging in the sky but it never rained.

"Urghh," he grunted as he stood up. His hand was somehow still holding the torn robe to his chest. He tried to pull it off but turned out, the blood had dried up and left the robe stuck to his chest.

He slowly pulled it out, making sure he didn't reopen his closed-off wound. Finally, he sighed in relief once the robe was out. While his physical healing wasn't as good as his Qi one, it still was enough for him to not lose too much blood to such a small wound.

He tried to see if he was hungry, but thankfully he was not. However, given that he would have to get some food for himself later on in the day, he decided to do it now and leave later for finding the yang jades.

He still wasn't getting anywhere close with that thing.

He walked to the cliffs where the fruits were growing high up and reached there in about 15 minutes. "I still have more than an hour before I need to leave," he thought.

There were more than a few people near the cliff. Some trying to climb up the side, some just throwing stones, hoping to hit the fruits. However, neither of them was successful as the fruits were over 50 meters up the cliff.

That was a very high place for all of them to reach. Alex was also stumped for a second. He didn't want to climb the cliff, so he could only throw stones at the fruits. But at such a height, his accuracy would suffer a lot.

The dozens of disciples there were all either outer sect disciples or inner sect disciples. He didn't see a single core disciple.

"That Song Zun guy was sent here too right? For 2 months I think. I wonder where he went," Alex thought, but quickly ignored it. It was time for him to get some food for himself.

Chapter 210: Butterfly Pears

Alex walked up to a relatively free spot and picked up a decent-sized stone.

BAM

A small noise came from right next to him as a stone rolled a few times before stopping. "Sh\*t. I need to be careful of falling stones too, huh?" he thought. With everyone throwing rocks high up in the air, it felt like a rain of rock was falling on them.

Alex looked up at the fruit hanging high up the side of the cliff and threw his rock at a moderate force. He didn't know how strong he could throw the rocks, but given that he could punch dents into trees, it should be quick hard.

The stone flew off of his hands like a professional baseball throwing his perfect pitch. The speed was amazing, however, the accuracy was nowhere near enough to even hit the trees on the side of the fruit.

He missed the entire thing by at least a 3-meter margin. Alex cringed at himself, seeing the bad throw. He looked to his left and shouted, "Oi, dodge. The stone is falling." The man who was about to throw his rock took 3 steps back and Alex's rock fell exactly where he had been standing.

The man nodded to Alex and continued throwing his rock. Alex found it a little funny that he couldn't even reach 30 meters with his throw. 'How are they ever going to eat that food?' he wondered.

Alex tried his own a few more times and got the hang of it. Soon, he was passing by the side of the fruits by a couple of centimeters.

"Ohh, so close," he thought. He threw a few more times and hit the branch holding fruit, and the fruit came floating down. The leaves of the fruit made a sort of parachute for the fruit so that it didn't smash into pieces as it fell to the ground.

Alex caught the fruit and looked at it more carefully. Suddenly, a name popped into his head. [Butterfly Pears]

'It's an alchemy ingredient?' Alex was a little surprised. Still, he didn't bother thinking about it a lot. He rubbed it a bit with his cloth and dug into it.

Juices dripped down the side of his mouth as the sweet nectar slid down his throat. This was the first time he had bothered eating something that was not cooked in the game, and it truly showed just how much he was missing out on.

Before he even realized it, he had finished the entire pear. He could feel his body being revitalized from that single fruit and he couldn't help but be curious just how much better he would feel after eating more.

Suddenly, a notification appeared in front of him

<Sun God's Divine Yang Body disintegrates everything>

<The fruit's element aligns with your spiritual roots>

<You have gained 23,485 Qi>

Qi appeared in his as it passed through his body. He felt the wound on his chest quiver a little as if they were being healed.

That wasn't a lot of Qi. However, he wasn't expecting any, so that was quite a surprise. Suddenly, on his mortal body, he could finally feel where the Qi he acquired went.

The Qi traveled across his entire body until it came down to his naval area and suddenly grew dormant. It was so still that Alex had a hard time knowing whether it was even there or not.

Any other time he ate a Core or pills, or the new Qi he acquired would vanish into his body, never to be used towards his cultivation. They would only show up on the status page and nowhere else.

Alex had started to believe that the Qi that did not belong to his cultivation base were just random numbers that would produce extra Qi for him when he broke through.

But finally, he needed to be a mortal to figure out that the new Qi was actually going to his naval area and hiding.

"But why there?" he wondered. However, there was no answer.



Alex continued throwing a bunch of more rocks and got 3 more fruits. By now, the nearby disciples had already come to ask him for some of the fruits. However, Alex wasn't so naive as to hand over them his own food. Especially to these disciples who were being punished for some crimes they did in the sect.

He told them to get their own and left the place with his fruits. Some tried to follow him, seeing his 3 fruits, but after realized that they would be far away from the cliff, they returned back.

Alex ate the three remaining fruits and searched for the yang jades a little more. In the end, he never found any. So, reluctantly, he logged out.

It was time for lunch, so he went to get some food. Hannah was already there, so they ate together. After washing the dishes, they both went back to their rooms to get ready for their classes and left.

Once again, Sarah and Emily were waiting for them. The 4 of them got in Sarah's car and went to their classes.

"God, I need to learn how to drive a car too. It looks so handy," Hannah said.

"Why don't you? You should have enough money, right?" Sarah asked.

"Yeah, but I don't have the time. I will try to make some soon," Hannah said. "I will need to talk to him about it," she said in a small voice.

"What?" Sarah asked, unable to hear what she was saying.

"Nothing," Hannah changed the subject.

Soon they reached the university and went to their own classes.

After the classes ended, Emily and Alex were once more left together, forced to go home. They didn't complain. They walked back home together, talking the entire way.

After getting back, Alex once more wanted to invite her in, but couldn't. He went back to his apartment, ate some snacks, and jumped back into the game. It was time to seriously hunt for some more Yang Jades.