

Alchemy 481

Chapter 481: Surprise Guests

The instant the giant sword had fallen on top of Alex, he teleported out of the earth constriction, and behind Trevor where his shadow was. The moment he appeared from the shadow, he immediately made a fist and started punching Trevor.

Mid punch, the golden lights appeared around him that converged onto his hands, causing it to glow the same color as well.

Trevor seemed to have noticed him and turned around to block it with his arms crossed as well.

The first landed perfectly on his bracelet, and Trevor felt the push from Alex's punch. It was way stronger than his slash without any Qi, but that wouldn't be enough to beat him.

However, just then, the golden light exploded as a burst of energy came forth from the punch. What felt like a strong attack at first, now seemed like an unstoppable force.

Trevor couldn't keep his hands crossed anymore and the punch moved forward to land on his body. His entire being was thrown away from the stage as he flew out into the audience.

The entire audience was shocked beyond belief to see someone at Mind Tempering 9th realm being tossed aside like that.

Alex heard Trevor's body dropping onto the ground far away and checked his own knuckles. Where his fist had met the bracers, the skins were split open from the impact.

'I hit too hard,' he thought. If it wasn't for Trevor being unable to keep his hands to himself, he might've broken some bones as well.

The Elder immediately rushed to check Trevor, but his master got there before him. Trevor meekly stood up with only a look of horror on his face and a strong sensation of pain on his arm and chest.

He had lost. And it had been to someone that his master said was in the 5th Mind Tempering realm.

“How...” he asked, failing to understand the cause of his defeat.

The Fifth elder saw that he was okay and simply shook his head before leaving the place. His master did not care for him at all.

Alex didn't stop to see that, however. Once he got his badge, he left the stage.

Luo Mei and the rest were down in the audience, looking at Alex with an awe.

“You... You didn't use True Qi, did you?” Luo Mei asked in surprise.

“True Qi? No that was just common Qi,” Alex said.

“What?” Luo Mei cried in surprise. “Then how were your attacks so strong?”

“Don't you remember how strong my attacks were previously? And I broke through a couple of times, so it's much stronger. Well, there is also the fact that Trevor is weaker than any 9th Mind Tempering realm cultivator, so that's mostly the reason why,” Alex said.

The stunned crowd let him and the others walk away.

Alex shared his victory with his sister and the other 2 for a little while before leaving for his training.

Du Yuhan was waiting for him, but it hadn't been that long. “I heard you challenged Trevor, you won right?” he asked.

“Of course,” Alex said. “It was quite easy.”

"I thought so," Du Yuhan said and the two of them started training. Alex was just a step away from fully learning how to use Sword Intent, and he wanted to learn it soon.

The two of them trained until late at night, and Alex finally returned back to his room. He cultivated for the rest of the night and finally stopped in the morning.

He wondered if it was okay for him to break through once more, but since he had done it just a few days ago, he decided not to.

It was a Friday, and the fighting hall gave unlimited challenges to everyone, but no one challenged Alex at all. Even Yang Ma, who he thought would come to challenge him out of stubbornness didn't do anything at all.

So, he decided to spend the rest of the day learning more about formations. He started carving the newly bought blank formation rods and created new formations.

He had planned on doing it for the entire day. However, his day didn't go as he planned. Around noon, he got a message from his master. Only it wasn't from Wen Cheng, but rather Ma Rong.

It said 'Come to the City lord's manor right now. They want to see you again.'

"Huh? The city lord wants to see me?" Alex thought with surprise. He wouldn't have expected the City lord to give much care to him, but it made sense since he was partly responsible for coming up with the inferior pill that would eventually lead to making a better pill for his mother's treatment.

"Okay," he told his master and left the house. He walked out of the sect and walked his way to the manor. The manor wasn't very far away from the sect, so he reached there in about 10 minutes of walking distance.

Ma Rong was waiting for him outside, so she called him when she saw him.

Alex walked up to her and was a little surprised at how much her cold aura had disappeared. It was like she could fully control her constitution to do what it did as she wished.

“You’re finally here,” she said.

“Yes, master,” he replied. “Do you know why we’re being called?”

“I don’t know, but senior Kang specifically called for both you and me, so I called you,” Ma Rong said.

“Oh, okay,” Alex said.

The gate opened and the old man showed up. “Oh, the young man is here. Are you ready to come in, sect leader Ma?” old man Kang asked.

“Yes, senior,” Ma Rong said and walked in behind the old man. Alex walked in closely too.

They walked through the pathway in between the front lawn and made their way into the house.

Inside were a few people. 4 to be exact. Alex couldn’t see the princess or her guard, but the City lord and lady Mo were there.

Next to them was a middle-aged man with a lean body, sitting comfortably in the lounge area.

The middle-aged man had short hair that was parted on the left and had a clean-shaven face. His face had a fair complexion that stood out to his black robes.

‘Someone from the Royal Fu Academy?’ Alex wondered and finally laid his eyes on the young man that was sitting beside him.

The young man was a little on the chubbier side, but not very much, and his height made it look even less obvious.

He was wearing the same black robe as the other man, meaning that he was from the Royal Fu Academy as well.

However, when Alex saw the face, he was surprised to see that he recognized him. Even Ma Rong showed a hint of surprise when she saw him.

“Brother Huang?” Alex called out.

“Oh, brother Yu? Good to see you again,” Huang Fu said with a face of surprise. He hadn’t expected to see Alex there.

“Ah, it’s good to see you t—”

“Greetings, senior Lai. I hope you’re doing good,” Ma Rong said with a respectful bow, cutting into Alex’s conversation with the young man.

“Oh, hey Little Ma, you’re finally here,” the middle-aged man said with a jovial tone to his voice that did not suit his age at all.

‘Senior... Lai?’ Alex’s brain immediately churned out an answer and he also bowed quickly.

“Greetings, senior,” he said.

The middle-aged man looked at him with a hint of curiosity. “Hmm, I have seen you before, haven’t I?” he said with a tilt of his head.

“Master, he is Yu Ming. The one who beat me in the competition,” Huang Fu said with a hint of embarrassment on his face.

“OH! It’s you. You were the one that I met in the Alchemy hall in the capital, weren’t you?” the middle-aged man asked.

“Yes senior,” Alex said. “I’m happy that you remembered me.”

“Nonsense, there’s no way I would forget someone as talented as you,” the middle-aged man said. “Yu... Ming... so, you were the one who created the recipe for the sweating pill I got. Not bad.”

“I can’t be said to have created the pill senior, I more so stumbled onto it,” Alex said.

“All alchemy is just people stumbling on to things. If the first people didn’t stumble onto learning different plants and animals did different things, we wouldn’t have alchemy.”

“Besides, if it were so easy to stumble onto, people would’ve already stumbled onto that recipe. You deserve credit where credit is due, boy,” the middle-aged man said.

“Thank you, senior,” Alex said.

“Anyway, little Ma, come sit. I haven’t spoken to you in such a long time. It feels like I’m meeting an old friend right now,” the middle-aged man said.

“I had expected to see you in the capital 2 months ago, but you must’ve been very busy then,” Ma Rong said.

“Sigh, that’s true. Along with teaching this young disciple of mine, I also had to look into ways to cure little Wen’s mother.”

“If it weren’t for your disciple finding that pill, I would’ve no idea where to look into to do what. I was trying everything I learned from that— anyway, it’s good that your disciple got the recipe for that pill, even if he ‘stumbled’ on it,” the middle-aged man said with a smile.

Alex felt a bit bashful, seeing the Royal Alchemist tease him. He saw that the Royal Alchemist had started talking with Ma Rong, and she sat down to speak with him too.

So, he sat down beside her and started speaking with Huang Fu. He didn't know if there was more to this for his visit today, but Alex didn't care much for now.

Chapter 482: Questions Unanswered

"By the way, young man, how did you come up with the recipe? Did you have any information that helped you in finding that pill?" the Royal alchemist asked.

"No, senior. As I had said earlier, I really did stumble upon the pill. I was trying to make pills using the knowledge of ingredients I previously had and how they interacted with each other," Alex said.

"I had a lot of time in my hands, so I tried every single combination I could find before I made one that didn't threaten to blow up my cauldron. That one ended up being the pill and I made a recipe from there."

"I tried to improve the recipe a bit, but the most I could do was a few tries to improve the process to no avail. I was throwing rocks in the dark and hoping to hit something."

"Hmm," the Royal Alchemist said. "What's the best harmony you made?" he asked.

"Um, I believe it was around 28%," Alex said.

"28... that was the same thing I got. Meaning, you were definitely giving your best when improving the pill. Only you didn't have proper knowledge," the Royal alchemist said.

Alex remembered something and felt like this was the time to ask that. However, he wasn't sure if asking the question was rude or not, but he tried to go a different route.

"I did try my best. I even tried to use different combinations of rotations, speed, and temperature to change the structure and composition of the powder, but I was too naive to think I would learn anything about them by trying a few tests," Alex said.

Huang Fu's eyes went wide with shock, while the Royal Alchemist's eyes went wide in surprise and a glee appeared on his face.

“You know about Structure and Composition?” he asked. “Did you master already start teaching you this?”

Ma Rong who was sitting next to the royal alchemist shook her head. “I taught him nothing about it. I myself don’t know anything about it to explain it to you,” Ma Rong said.

“Then how?” the Royal Alchemist asked confusedly.

“Is something wrong, senior Lai?” Fu Wen asked.

“Not wrong, just... odd. He knows something that he shouldn’t know at this point in his career,” the Royal Alchemist said.

“I learned it from the book,” Alex said hurriedly. He didn’t want the Royal Alchemist to misunderstand him. “I learned it from a book from the higher floors from the library in the capital,” he said.

“Book?” the Royal Alchemist said in surprise. “Written by who?”

“Uh...” Alex started thinking of a name he read in those books. ‘Who was it written by again? Think! Think! It was written by... Lai Q—’

“It was written by you,” Alex said. His face had shock written all over it as the realization had surprised him.

“I did?” the Royal Alchemist asked in confusion and suddenly his eyes lit up. He couldn’t help but bring his palm to his face in annoyance.

“Tsk. It was probably during that one time in my youth when I was very young before I got my title from the emperor. The royal ministers approached me and asked me to write a book for Alchemy given how outstanding they saw my knowledge then to be.”

"In my foolishness, I must have written everything I had learned up to that point. It seems I put in there things that shouldn't be so easily public as it would only add a layer of confusion to the new alchemists," the Royal Alchemist said.

"Do you remember what is written in those books exactly?" the Royal Alchemist asked.

"Uh..." Alex remembered the book word for word, but he changed it up a little and explained the writings of the book.

"I see," the Royal Alchemist said. "That does make me relieved that I did not give out the most important thing."

"Which is?" Alex asked curiously.

The Royal alchemist smiled, "I don't fall for those easily now, young man. You can give up," he said.

"Huh?" Alex thought before realizing what had just happened. "I'm sorry senior, I did not mean to pry for answers. I was just curious," he said.

"It's good that you are curious. As for learning about Structure and constitution, you are honestly too new to alchemy as a whole to teach you. Even little Ma who's been making pills forever will have difficulty understanding the exact concept behind the structure and compositions of powders and pills," the Royal Alchemist said.

"So you can forget about them for now." The Royal alchemist seemed hell-bent on not answering anything about it. Alex sighed and got a little dejected learning that the answers were in his grasp, but it slipped right under him.

"However," the Royal alchemist added after seeing Alex's face. "If you still wish to learn about it, find me once you successfully make a Heaven Grade True Pill. At that point, you should be eligible to learn about it."

“Heaven’s grade?” Alex thought with a bit of contemplation. Given how fast he was learning alchemy, it was only a matter of time before he could make Heaven-grade pills.

“I understand, senior,” Alex said. “I will strive to make a Heaven Grade True Pill,” he said.

“Good luck,” the Royal alchemist said. “You will need it, considering how awfully unrefined most True pill recipes are.”

“Eh?” Alex said. “You mean to say that most pills can’t reach 50% harmony just because I have the recipes?”

“Sort of,” Ma Rong said from the side. “If everything from ingredients to pill making went perfectly then you can easily reach the 50% harmony mark with ease. However, it’s hard to do so perfectly, so it doesn’t usually end up reaching 50% harmony.”

“Oh,” Alex said. “Then... can’t we just refine the pills as much as we can ourselves,” Alex asked.

“Yes, you can,” the Royal Alchemist said. “In fact, that is exactly what you do with the recipes you get. If the ingredients are abundant, you go through a period of trial and errors to see if you can improve the pill.”

“Many alchemists do end up improving most publicly released pills, but they don’t share it with the general audience. So, the ones you get will mostly have problems with it,” the Royal Alchemist said.

Alex felt like he was learning a little more about the alchemy world from the Royal alchemist. His master taught him as much as she could, but even she would forget to bring up such topics as they never naturally came up during any learning periods or other such conversations.

“Anyway,” the Royal Alchemist said. “I called you here for something else than just have a good ol’ chat.”

Ma Rong and Alex’s faces grew curious.

The Royal Alchemist smiled and said, "You'll be happy to hear that your little contribution really did work."

"My... contribution..." his eyes went wide. "It worked?" he asked in surprise. "So the sweating pill helped her through the Mortal Cleansing?"

"Yes," the Royal Alchemist did. "All of the outer filth was removed, and her body is back to being well enough for the body itself to do the rest of the work."

"I have given her some pill to help with it, but even without our won help, she will be okay now," the Royal Alchemist said.

"Thank god it worked," Alex said.

"No, thank YOU," the City lord said. "It was all thanks to you that my mother was healed, young man. Please let me know if there is anything I can do for you."

"I don't need anything, City lord. I'm just happy to help," Alex said.

"Well, even if you say that the emperor already knows of what you did and has asked me to give you some compensation," the Royal alchemist said.

"We can't really put a price on someone's life, but with how much you've helped, I hope this much is enough."

The Royal Alchemist handed him a bag. Alex didn't know what was inside, so he curiously checked inside.

When he saw what was inside, his eyes went wide. There were only 2 types of things inside, but there were a lot of them.

Alex could see about 4 to 5 thousand different True Spirit stones, as well as hundreds upon hundreds of different alchemy ingredients.

“The Emperor wanted to give you some proper rewards other than just money, but you will have to make do with that. The empire is in a bit of trouble right now, and I don’t think he has enough free time to care much for anything else,” the City lord said.

“No, senior. This is enough. This is more than enough. In fact, I think I’ve been compensated for more than I deserve,” Alex said.

“Nonsense. Do you think that little of my mother’s life? Take it. I added a portion of my own in there to give it to you for saving my mother’s life. Even though senior Lai made the pill, it is you who came up with it, so you deserve a lot of credit,” the City lord said.

“I... I understand,” Alex said. He was still baffled by the amount he saw in the bag and a small bud of happiness grew in him.

The bud of happiness was about to grow some more, but it was stumped on by something else. A feeling, that had appeared out of nowhere.

Every single piece of emotion Alex was feeling at the moment was washed away as a single feeling of dread remained.

The beast horde for the month was coming.

Chapter 483: Get in the Formation, Alex

Alex could sense it once more. The feeling was budding in him and it would take a few hours for it all to actually happen, but the beast horde was in fact coming.

‘Dammit, the timing matches too,’ he thought. His previously happy face was now nowhere to be seen.

The city lord and others saw the change too.

“Do you not like this gift now?” the City Lord asked. “I can get something else for you if you want me to.”

“NO!” Alex shouted. “I mean, no, this is fine. It’s better than fine. It’s just...” he didn’t know what to do. The beast horde was coming and he needed to let the people know, he needed to let the entire empire know.

“I need to leave,” Alex said. “I’m so sorry, but I need to go right now.”

“Did we offend you by any chance?” Lady Mo who hadn’t spoken a lot in the conversations asked.

“Not at all. It was an honor to come here. It was an honor to talk with senior Lai too,” Alex said. “But I really need to go right now.”

“Is everything alright?” Ma Rong asked. She had never seen her disciple this distressed.

“No,” Alex said. “Something is wrong.”

“It seems I will have to take my leave too then. I will come some time again, City Lord,” She said. She then turned to the Royal Alchemist and said, “Senior Lai, please come to the sect once. Let us treat you a bit.”

“Sure, sure,” the Royal Alchemist said.

“Let’s go,” Ma Rong said and walked out. Alex hurriedly walked next to her.

Once they reached outside, Alex immediately started to fly without waiting to be outside of the manor.

Ma Rong also flew behind him.

“Master, it’s—”

“Is the beast horde coming?” she asked.

“Y-yes,” Alex said with surprise. “How did you know?”

“I guessed. It’s about the same time as it always comes, and you are the only one who knows it,” Ma Rong said. “Still, it’s quite weird how only you can know it. Is there something you are hiding from me?”

“Absolutely not,” Alex said.

“Alright, go and tell Wen Cheng. I will go prepare the elders to defend,” Ma Rong said.

“Okay, master,” Alex said and flew to the Tiger sect. He wanted to enter while flying, but a few guards stopped him. They were angry at him for flying in a banned area, but they didn’t immediately do anything to him. After all, they recognized who it was.

“Please complain about this to my master later. There is no time right now,” Alex said and flew back again.

He brought out his talisman and messaged Wen Cheng.

“Master, the beast horde is coming. We need to prepare and caution the other cities too,” Alex said into the talisman.

He kept flying and got near the peak of the Tiger sect’s mountain. Where he was around the 50th ranked house, he dropped to the ground and sprinted up.

‘I need to caution sister too,’ he thought and ran to her house. When he reached her house, he started knocking on it.

“Sister! Open up,” he said.

It took a few seconds for him to hear a ‘wait’ from inside and the door opened up. The one who opened it was Luo Xing.

“Oh, hey little brother. What are you doing here?” she asked.

“I’m looking for you guys. Is sister inside?” he asked.

“Yeah, come on in,” she said and brought him in. “Oh right, here,” she said and handed him something.

Alex took what she had given him and realized that it was a talisman. “What’s this?” he asked.

“That’s the formation you wanted to make. I tried my best and came up with that. Try and see if it works,” she said.

“Later,” Alex said and put it in his storage bag

“Yu Ming, what’s going on? It sounded like you were in a hurry,” Luo Mei said.

“Sister, another beast horde is coming. You guys need to get ready,” Alex said.

“What?” Luo Mei said in surprise. “Oh no, did you tell master?”

“Yeah, I sent him a message, but I’m not sure if he’s seen it or not though,” Alex said.

“Let’s go and make sure he knows it,” Luo Mei said.

“No, you go. I’ve got some place to be,” Alex said.

“What’s going on?” Luo Xing was a bit confused. She couldn’t follow the conversation at all, but she could see that something was wrong.

“The beast horde is coming and I need to report to master,” Luo Mei said to her sister. “Let’s go.”

She took Luo Xing and walked out. Alex walked out as well and ran up towards his master’s manor.

Now that Luo Mei knew about it, he could depend on her to release the news to everyone. As for him, he needed to find a way to block the feeling he was getting so that the beasts couldn’t target him.

If they did, he would most likely die, along with the entire city. It wasn’t just a massive beast horde the likes of which he only saw in the capital, that would come for him.

It was going to actually be a saint realm beast that was targeting him as well.

He still didn’t know the reason behind why he was targeted. Maybe it was his body, maybe he had taken something from the forest that the beasts wanted, or maybe it was because of his spiritual roots.

Whatever the case may be, all that he was sure of was that the beasts were after him and he needed to hide.

He reached his master’s manor and without stopping, ran to the back of the house. There were the formation rods for the formations that had helped him stay out of the beasts’ senses that one time.

He banked his entire hope on it.

Once he reached the place, he started pouring in his Qi to one of the nodes. As required, he was using True Qi since that was the only one that would work the formation.

His 50% True Qi started to quickly deplete as it required a lot from him to run the formation. As a self-tempering realm cultivator, using True Qi wasn’t common at all, but he did.

His True Qi quantity and quality would certainly increase by a lot when he reached the True realms, but for now, he had to deal with it.

It took him a total of about 20% of the total True Qi to activate the barrier first. The barrier opened and Alex could see a small barrier pop up at the middle with about 1-meter diameter in size.

However, that was only what he saw from the outside. Inside, the size was totally different. The barrier formation could not only stop people from leaving or entering, but it could also increase the space inside the barrier to make it quite massive.

Alex then started pouring in his True Qi into the 2nd formation. This one took a little more out of him as this was a higher quality of formation. So, when it would run, it would run at a much better efficiency than the barrier.

It also had more strokes in general, so it would require more Qi.

This was the Spirit Disorienting formation. Anyone stuck in there would be stuck for almost a full month. The time would be less if Alex set the formation incorrectly, and more if he set it up correctly.

However, Alex didn't care about that. He only needed the formation to work for today only. Afterward, he would remove the formation until next month again.

The Spirit Disorienting formation could make people's senses unable to tell direction once they were inside the fog. Also, they would randomly be teleported around, not sure where they would end up.

That was the problem anyone who was trapped in the formation would face. However, Alex was not a victim of the formation like he was last time. He was now the owner of it.

He lost another 25% of True Qi, and the Spirit Disorienting formation was set up as well. Without hesitation, he walked in.

“Nice. So it really does work,” he thought when he sensed that the disorienting aspect of the formation was no longer working on him.

Not just that, he had much clearer visibility of the surroundings as well. While he couldn’t exactly see everything, he could see the barrier on the other side with some haze in between. That was the most he could do in this foggy formation, but that was way more than what any victims could do.

Since he was the one who set the formation, his Qi was running across the formation nodes, constantly being used as a pathway to make the pattern of the formation on the air using Qi alone.

Because of that, the formation regarded him as the master and didn’t work on him. That was one of the instructions written on the piece of paper that came along with the formation.

Alex was happy for a little while realizing that he was free in the formation and could walk out of it and the barrier with ease.

However, his happiness soon dwindled away when he realized what he was feeling.

The feeling of the beast horde, was still there. Even though he was inside the formation that was supposed to be hiding him, it was not working at all.

“Oh no! Is it perhaps that one concealment formation that did it? But that can’t be,” Alex thought. His own immortal grade concealment technique didn’t work, so it was unlikely that one that was focused on hiding sound and images was responsible for hiding him.

Alex’s fear crept upon him as he realized that his one last trick up his sleeve didn’t work at all, and now he was going to be the cause of a tragedy that would result in everyone he knew and cared for dying.

Chapter 484: Preparation for Battle

Alex started getting worried more and more. He ran around inside the formation wondering if there was any special place, hoping even that there was one. However, no matter what he did, the feeling just wouldn't go away.

Instead, it grew more and more, and soon the beasts would come here. He had an hour or two at most, maybe even less.

"No, no, no, no. I have to do something. I need to run away from here, or this place will turn to hell," Alex thought.

His masters, his senior brother and sister, his friends, and everyone else he ever cared about in this game, in this world, they were all here. If the reason they were hurt ever turned out to be him, he would never forgive himself.

"What should I do?" he started thinking. The only thing he could think of was to go ask the Royal Alchemist for help.

However, the best he could do was keep away the other beasts. The Saint beast would still be a problem. Given the aura he felt from the Royal Alchemist today, he wouldn't even be a match for him.

The man wasn't that high even in the True realm, and so none of the pills he could make would ever do anything to the Saint beast.

The next thing he thought of was flying away on his boat as far away from the city as he could.

The beasts were coming from the south, so that was a no-go. The east and the west too wasn't far away from the beast horde attack and he would be found within minutes.

As for the north, that was where he had flown last time to get away from the beasts and it had worked. However, this time, going north meant going towards the forbidden field, and there was no way for him to run away there.

Even if he did, he would maybe escape from the saint beast, but the thousands upon thousands of other beasts would surely destroy the entire city, killing everyone there.

Neither of the 2 ideas he had could save the ones he cared about in this place. There was only a single thing that he could think of that could save them.

He started deliberating on whether to do that or not.

* * * * *

Wen Cheng was in a meeting and hadn't had time to check the talisman that kept on buzzing in his storage bag.

He would be done with the meeting in just a few minutes so he decided to check it later.

"When do we go back to a normal schedule, sect leader? We've been doing this for a week now," an elder said.

"Just a few more days. There should be a beast attack happening soon. As soon as that takes place, we will go back to our normal schedule. The routines will go back to normal too," Wen Cheng said.

"Is there really a beast attac—"

SLAM

A door suddenly opened surprising everyone. Wen Cheng was about to scold the person coming in so rudely when he saw that it was his own disciple.

Luo Mei rushed inside, amidst the eyes of the many elders, who were dissatisfied with her behavior.

"Master, did you get the message?" she asked.

"What message? Why did you barge in like that? We have a meeting going on in here," Wen Cheng said.

"The Beast Horde, it's coming. You should have gotten a message," Luo Mei said.

"What?" Wen Cheng said in surprise and took out the talisman to read it. As she had said, there indeed was a message from Alex letting him know the beast horde was coming.

"Elders, the time is here. Get everyone ready; we will be going to battle with the beasts," Wen Cheng said.

The elders looked around in surprise.

"Hurry!" Wen Cheng shouted.

The elders didn't dare delay anymore. As everyone was walking out, Wen Cheng called out to an elder.

"Get me the communication talisman to the capital," he said. The elder nodded and quickly ran away to get the communication talisman.

"Where's your junior brother?" he asked.

"He just left my house, saying he had something to do," Luo Mei said.

"Alright. Go to him, and see if you can get any more information from him. Any little information can help us a lot," Wen Cheng said.

"Yes master," Luo Mei said and ran away.

The elder returned with the communication talisman which Wen Cheng immediately used.

"Warning! I am Wen Cheng, sect leader of The first grade Tiger sect. The Beast Horde is coming. Please transfer the messages to all cities in the empire," Wen Cheng said.

He repeated the message two more times before stopping. If they didn't get the message by then, there was nothing else he could do.

He then left the building and went up to the mountain to find Alex, but he wasn't there. He found Luo Mei close by and asked, "Where's Yu Ming?"

"I don't know master. He isn't here and isn't responding to my messages either," Luo Mei said.

"What?" Wen Cheng said. "Where did he go?"

* * * * *

Ma Rong had returned back to the sect and started giving out orders. Every one of the elders was to fight in the upcoming battle.

"Sect leader, how do we know the beast horde is coming? Was there some message?" the Second Elder asked.

"Not yet, but it's coming. Believe me," Ma Rong said.

"I do, but..." the Second Elder said, " but if what you said is true then, my wife will be in danger. I don't know where she is right now, but I don't think she will be able to handle the beasts if they ever come her way."

"She's always been an alchemist and was never a fighter. I-I'm worried, sect leader," the Second Elder said.

"Don't worry, she'll be fine. Even if she's not a fighter, the Third Elder is pretty capable of saving herself," the Grand Elder said. "However, I do understand your worry. My disciple is out too, and I have no way of contacting him."

"Alright, that's enough time wasted. We should go to the city wall now and prepare for the beasts," Ma Rong said.

"Yes, sect leader," Everyone said in unison.

"Alright, you guys go ahead. I will go and see if we can get a little help," Ma Rong said and flew away.

She flew until she reached the place she had left from just a few minutes ago, the City Lord's house.

She went in, barging even until she found the royal alchemist who was still sitting and talking with the city lord.

"Little Ma, did you return for something?" he asked.

"Yes, senior Lai. The beast horde is coming, and I was hoping you could help us," she said.

"The... the beast horde?" the City lord asked in surprise. "How do y—" suddenly his storage bag started buzzing.

Fu Wen reached into his bag and took out a talisman before reading the message. "She's right, senior Lai. A beast horde is indeed coming. I just got the message too," he said. "Can you help us?"

"Beast horde? Hmm... I should be able to control the beasts a bit, but that's the most I could do. I don't have the means to fight them," the Royal alchemist said.

"I'm pretty sure the Saint beast is coming too," Ma Rong said. "Can you help us with that?"

"The saint beast?" a trace of fear appeared in the Royal Alchemist's face. "I'm afraid I can't help with that at all little Ma. Anything in the Saint realm is out of my league."

"Then please help us the most you can, senior," Ma Rong said and left them there to do anything they wanted.

"Get the men and guards to prepare for battle," the City lord said to his wife, lady Mo who was sitting right by.

"Right away," she said and walked away to give orders to the leaders of the guards and soldiers.

"Senior Lai, please come with me," he said. "Even if you can stay there as just a healer, that would be a lot of help."

"Yes, I shall do that," Lai Qing, the Royal Alchemist stood up to leave for this battle against the beasts. He did not know how useful he would be, but he would try his best.

Ma Rong flew towards the Tiger sect. Given that the City lord got a message, the talisman back at their sect should also have gotten a similar message.

She landed outside of the Tiger Sect and called out to Alex using her communication talisman. She was worried for him since the beasts would always come for him, so she wanted to do something to hide him.

She didn't know what, but she had to start with him anyway, so she came to get him.

However, no matter how many times she messaged him, he wouldn't respond to her messages at all.

"What's going on?" she wondered and walked into the Tiger sect.

The entire sect was mostly empty. Even the front of the Tiger sect was kept open with only a few guards keeping watch.

They didn't dare stop Ma Rong after recognizing who she was, especially in this time of crisis.

Ma Rong flew towards the top of the mountain to find Wen Cheng and see if he knew anything about where Alex was.

Just as she was thinking of it, she noticed Wen Cheng walking along with Luo Mei, as if he was in a hurry to go somewhere.

"Wen Cheng," she said while coming down. "Where's Yu Ming? He's not answering my messages."

"Ma Rong?" Wen Cheng said in surprise. "Yu Ming, he... he's not answering my messages either, and I can't find him anywhere in the sect. It's like... he's gone."

Chapter 485: The Emperor's Search

Ma Rong and Wen Cheng started searching for Alex, but he was nowhere to be found. He didn't respond to any sort of message at all.

Alex was the only one the Saint beasts were after, so after not finding him for nearly 15 minutes, they started to get worried that he might have already been found by the beast and maybe even be killed.

With no choice, Wen Cheng let out a sect-wide message, asking if anyone knew anything about where Alex was. That was the only way he could think of finding him.

* * * * *

3 men were inside an inn in Rosewood City.

"Any news yet?" one of them asked.

"No," the other one said. "I tried searching around, but it seems most people didn't feel anything. I have called the bald guy here. He didn't want to give me an answer, but I doubt he will want to do the same to you."

"Alright then, let's wait," one of the others said.

So, they waited. The inn was empty for the most part, but the three didn't seem to care.

"They should be fine right?" one of them asked.

"It should be mostly fine. I'm ready to fly back should they ask for our help again," one of them said.

"Look, he's here."

The door opened and a man walked in.

"I told you, old Yang, I don't want to talk with you bastard. I don't care who you are with, I don't want anything to do with you," the bald man said as he walked in.

"What? Not even me?" one of the men said as they lifted their hood.

"Y-Your majesty? Why are you here?" the bald man said with surprise.

"Am I not allowed in a city of my own empire? Is the Honor sect so big that they can question why I am anywhere?" the Emperor who was staying hidden until now said.

"Your highness, you are always welcome. Whatever I said, please don't mind it. They were all directed towards that bastard," the bald man said as he gestured towards the red-haired Yang.

"Whatever, I don't have time for your grievances. I'm here for some information and will leave as soon as I get it. There is a beast horde incoming and I don't want to stay here for much longer either," the Emperor said.

"Yes, please, ask whatever you want. If I know of it, I will tell you," he said.

"Okay, 2 weeks ago we felt a wave of an aura pass through the capital. It turned out only us 3 sensed it in there, and none of the others did. After we left searching for more information, we realized that there were very few people who managed to sense it."

"We are searching for the source of that aura and came to ask if you know something about it. I know of a fact that it came from this general direction. It was maybe even released from this very city," the Emperor said.

The bald man's eyes brightened. "2 weeks ago? I knew I wasn't going mad. I told the sect elders to see what was up, but none of them felt anything and instead thought I was just talking nonsense. Damn those fools, they think I'm going senile with old age," the bald man said.

"I mean, they're not wrong," the red-haired Yang chipped from the side.

"Stop talking," the Emperor ordered. "So you did feel it. Where was it from?"

"That... it's weird. I felt the aura come from somewhere up northwest, but you should know what's there, right your highness?" the bald man said.

"The desert? I've heard of it in the records. I've never been there myself," the Emperor said.

"Right, that desert. I felt the energy come from the desert area," the bald man said.

"That can't be true," the Emperor said. "From what I know of, there shouldn't be any Qi in that area. Even people with a cultivation base lose all of it when they go there. How can something with such a profound aura originate from there," the Emperor said.

"Besides, the desert is so big that it will be impossible to find anything in it at all," the red-haired Yang said. "I once went there when I was still in the True realm when there was a sect in the desert. I had immediately lost all of my Qi and didn't want to stay there any longer."

"But the desert is massive right?" Feng who had been staying quiet this whole time said. "Even if we know it's there, it will be impossible to find it, assuming he's not lying in the first place."

"I promise on my longevity, your highness. The aura definitely originated from the desert," the bald man said.

"Hmm... the desert. How do we enter there again?" Feng asked.

"If I remember correctly, it should be through the mountains in the Scarlet City," the Emperor said as he recalled the map in his head.

"Isn't there a sect there? I remember my grandson mentioning it a few months ago," the red-haired Yang said.

"Hmm, maybe we should go there. My daughter and nephew are there looking after my sister-in-law. I heard she was also healed recently. It might be a good idea to go there," the Emperor said.

"Wait," the old man Feng said. "Didn't the information for the beast horde come from there too? I thought it said Tiger sect."

"Right, it did," the old man Yang said. "Hmm... maybe it is a good idea to go and see how they find out about the beast horde. They predicted it last time correctly, so there must be something important there."

"Now I'm curious too. Let's leave. Thank you for your help, sect leader," the Emperor said.

"Uh, I haven't been the sect leader for ages— I mean, its my honor, your majesty," the bald man said.

The three of them left the inn and flew up into the air above the Rosewood City. The entire city was empty with the only people visible being a crowd on the city walls, ready to fight.

"How far is Scarlet City again?" the old man Feng asked.

"About 20 minutes away for us," the red-haired Yang said

"Let's go," the Emperor said and put on his hood again before flying.

The 3 of them flew at an incredible speed that no flying artifact could ever hope to achieve. Their speed was just something most True realm cultivators could even imagine.

They flew on top of the road that would usually be filled with peddlers and merchants and caravans. But, now, it was empty. There was not a single soul in sight for the longest time.

The 3 Saint Realm cultivators couldn't even sense any bandits outside. With the Beast Horde incoming, there was not a single sight of anything.

"It's coming," Feng said as he looked to his left. Far away in the southern forest, he could see the trees moving.

"God damn, they really can predict the beast horde's timing," the red-haired Yang said.

"That will maybe take 15 more minutes, let's hurry up," the Emperor said and was about to increase his speed when he sensed something.

"Fuck!" the red-haired Yang said as he sensed it too.

Feng's face went white with fear as he sensed it too.

The Saint Beast was amongst the ones coming in the direction of the Scarlet city.

"How are we so unlucky to meet that damned thing? He's way too strong for us," the red-haired Yang said.

"Do we retreat, your highness?" Feng asked.

"We shou—" the Emperor was about to answer when suddenly his face twisted. Not only him, Yang and Feng too had massive changes in their faces all of a sudden. And none of them were for the better.

From what their senses were telling them, there wasn't just a single Saint Beast coming their way, there were 2.

"Your highness, this is bad. We already lost to a single beast. If a second one decides to fight us then we are done for," Yang said with a worried face.

"Your highness, I seriously suggest that we retreat back," Feng said.

"NO!" the Emperor said. There was a hint of a tremor in his voice, but he spoke with as much determination as he could muster. "My daughter is in that city. I cannot abandon her," he said.

"Shit!" the red-haired Yang said. "My grandson is there too. Fuck! I hope we don't have to fight them."

"Let's go," the Emperor said and all 3 of their flying speeds increased drastically.

"How much further?" the Emperor asked after a few minutes.

"We should be close to the Gap soon. After that, it's at most 5 minutes. We will surely make it before the beasts do," Yang said.

"That's for the best. As long as my daugt—" the Emperor suddenly stopped talking and looked down at the road next to the gap.

Feng also saw what was on the road and was a little surprised.

"What's that idiot doing there? Does he not realize a beast horde is coming?" Yang said.

The emperor didn't speak and instead flew down from the sky. The other 2 followed suit.

"Young man, there is a beast horde incoming, you should quickly run away from here," the Emperor said.

The young man turned to look at them. When he did, the other 3 could see nothing but fear in his eyes. And even then, the young man spoke up and said, "I know. The beasts are here for me, and if I let them have me, I will probably be able to save the people I care about."

Chapter 486 - More Arrivals

"You 3 seniors should run away quickly. The beasts should be here at any moment," Alex said. "You should go help out the others in the city that will have to fight the other beasts."

The 3 saint realm figures couldn't believe what they were hearing.

"Junior, are you alright in the head? What makes you think the beasts are after you?" the red-haired Yang said.

"I... I just know. You should hurry away instead of staying here. It will be very dangerous here very fast," Alex said.

"Haha, what makes you think that we can't handle a bunch of beasts?" Feng said.

"I don't doubt you guys can fight the beasts normally but are you sure you guys can fight the saint beast coming over here?" Alex asked.

"What? Why would the saint beast be com— Shit!" the red-haired Yang said.

"What?" Feng asked.

Yang's face twisted as he realized something. "Kid, where were you during the last beast horde attack?" Yang asked.

"I was running away last time," Alex said. "However I have nowhere to go now. You guys really shouldn't be staying here, talking with me. Leave already."

The one named Feng seemed to have realized as well.

"Brother Zexian, I think he might be the one running away from the Jaguar last month. He is certainly telling the truth," Feng whispered into the Emperor's head.

"I can see that," the Emperor said. "Besides, I would have figured it out eventually it seems." The Emperor turned his head towards the south as a twisted expression appeared on his face.

The 2 Saint beasts weren't going towards the Scarlet City from what he could sense. They were coming right where they were, apparently attracted to the kid in front of them.

The Emperor then turned towards Alex and asked, "What do you have that they want?"

"I don't know," Alex said without hesitation. He truly had no idea. He could come up with a bunch of reasons such as his body constitution or his talents or even his spiritual roots. However, none of them made any sense to be attractive to a beast, one at the Saint realm at that.

"Stop lying, young man. If you tell us, then we might be able to save you," Feng said.

"I seriously don't know. If I knew what it was by now, I would have either discarded it or handed it to someone stronger," Alex said.

"We are strong. If you do know of it, this is your last chance to save yourself," the Emperor said as he got rid of his hood and showed his face.

Alex was a little confused for a second as he felt the face was familiar. However, in the next moment, he realized who he was looking at.

"Your majesty," Alex said as he bowed a little.

"Oh," the Emperor said with a bit of surprise. "I didn't know my vessels recognized my face so easily."

"I was there during the competition in the capital when the beasts came for me there too," Alex said. "I remember you from then."

"I see," the Emperor said. "It seems they truly are after you. In fact, they should be here any moment now."

"Well, we have company before that," Yang said as he looked up in the air. Alex looked up and his heart skipped a beat when he saw who was there.

In the air were 3 people, 2 ladies and one man in a small boat that flew towards their location.

Alex could see both his master and senior sister there and immediately started panicking.

"You guys, what are you doing here?" he asked in a worried tone.

Ma Rong flew down from the boat and landed in front of him.

"You stupid disciple, what were you trying to do?" she asked as soon as she was before him. "Are you trying to get yourself killed?"

Alex could see the worry in Ma Rong's eyes and didn't know what to say. "I—"

"Ma Rong," Wen Cheng called from behind as he came down with Luo Mei. "Your Majesty," he bowed towards the Emperor. Luo Mei did the same.

Ma Rong finally realized that she was in front of the emperor. "Your Majesty," she said as she bowed towards him as well.

"Who are you people?" the Emperor asked, not recognizing the two sect leaders, but then his eyes fell onto Luo Mei.

"Oh, it's you, little girl. You were the one that nearly won the Annual competition, weren't you?" he asked. "What's your name again?"

"It's Luo Mei, your majesty," Luo Mei said.

"I am Ma Rong, sect leader of the Hong Wu sect," Ma Rong introduced herself.

"I am Wen Cheng, sect leader of the Tiger sect," Wen Cheng said.

The Emperor's eyes brightened. "The Tiger sect? You were the one that messaged about the Beast Horde, weren't you? How did you kn— Ah, I see," the Emperor said as a mystery opened up to him as he looked at Alex in front of him.

"No wonder you always knew when the beasts were coming. He told you, huh?" the Emperor said. He then turned to Ma Rong and asked, "You said Hong Wu sect right? So it must be one of your people that found the recipe to the pill that helped by younger brother's family."

"Yes, your highness," Ma Rong said. "In fact, it was my disciple who found it."

The Emperor's eyes brightened even more. "You did?" he turned to ask Alex.

"Yes, your highness," Alex said, but he turned around in worry once more. "Master, please go back. The beasts will be here any moment. You can't fight them at all."

"And you can?" Wen Cheng asked. "What did you plan on doing here? Giving your life to protect us? Do you even know if that will work? Did you ever stop to think what we would feel like when we found out that you died for us? What would we do as masters who couldn't even help their disciples?"

Wen Cheng seemed calm, but there was anger hidden in each of his words.

"Let's go back quickly, junior brother. We will think of something for the beasts. I'm sure we can fight them off this time. Look, even the Emperor is here. He will surely save us," Luo Mei said as she turned towards the Emperor.

The Emperor just shook his head. "I'm afraid that's impossible," he said. "If I could defeat the beast, I would've done so ages ago."

"Your majesty, if you can't defeat the beast then you should go to the city as well. Please take my masters and senior sister too," Alex said.

"I..." the Emperor stopped for a moment and said, "I would happily do that considering what you've done for my brother and sister-in-law. However... I'm afraid we've run out of time."

Suddenly, a massive aura erupted from the forest as a horde of beasts, in amounts that exceeded the one from the capital appeared in the Gap.

The Gap was created previously during the wars when the empire was still shattered. No beasts could be seen venturing this open part of the Southern forest, but now it did.

Alex could feel the overwhelming aura that gave him nothing but a sense of hopelessness. Adding on to that the feeling of tragedy that he had caused when he saw that his masters and sister were here, he couldn't feel anything but the worst right now.

The many beasts ran through the open grass and flew through the air, all coming directly towards the 7 people that were there.

However, just before they reached Alex and the rest. 3 distinct aura appeared from behind Alex that seemed to suffocate the entirety of the beasts, and also the 4 non Saint realm folks that were there.

Ma Rong and Wen Cheng's faces changed when they saw that the two other people with the emperor were also Saint realm in cultivation.

Even Alex was surprised.

The beasts all stopped right where they were and started cowering in fear and they tried to crawl on top of each other to find a way back.

Sounds of whimpers and hisses and howls all sounded from the group of beasts that were hurting from the pain they were feeling.

"Stop harming them."

A voice came from behind the beast that rung around the entire forest, followed by a massive aura that seemed to snuff out the Emperor and the other two's aura as if they were nothing.

"So, it's true," the Emperor said as he realized the difference between him and the opponent.

The black Jaguar showed itself, with its purple eyes that seemed to look directly into a person's soul.

Alex saw the beast and immediately recognized it without even having ever seen it.

"How are you humans always there where I am?" the Jaguar asked.

"Haha, well, this one is just a coincidence," the Emperor said. "Why don't you introduce our new friend? I don't see why he had to remain hidden."

"Who says I'm hiding?" a voice came from behind the Jaguar as a puma with white furs and black-tipped ears and paws showed itself.

The puma was very bulky and looked almost twice as wide as the jaguar who itself was quite large already. "I'm only in the sideline for today, so you humans don't need to worry," the puma said.

The Jaguar looked down at the group of humans and said, "Finally, I managed to track you down after 4 months. It's time I take— huh?" the Jaguar stopped speaking.

"This can't be," it said as it looked at Alex.. "But you're a human."

Chapter 487 - Ruler

Alex and the rest were both scared and confused when they heard the black jaguar.

"You... you are a human. This can't be true. What is going on?" the jaguar asked as it was itself confused as well.

Suddenly, a fearsome aura spread out from the jaguar making even the Emperor himself cower in fear. Beads of sweat appeared on his forehead as he finally realized just how wrong he was even after figuring out that the jaguar was stronger than him.

'This is like nothing I've sensed before. Not even grandfather ever lived enough to be this strong,' he thought.

It didn't need to be mentioned just how badly the others were suffering.

"Did you do something to deceive me, human? Speak up or I will kill you right now," the jaguar said.

The Emperor and the other two turned to look at the jaguar only to see a truly angry face of his.

The puma who said that he was just an observer in this event, slowly came forward. A wave of similar anger appeared on its face as well.

"Let's kill them all," he said, striking fear in the heart of all 7 that were there.

"No, we need to make sure we are wrong first," the jaguar said. He then turned around to the 7 and asked, "Speak up, what is going on here?"

The emperor didn't exactly know why the jaguar was angry, but seeing how it didn't seem to be here for a human, he asked, "are you not after this child?"

The jaguar turned to look at Alex properly once more and a bit of hesitation arose in his heart. "I don't know. Who is this and why did you bring him here?"

"I didn't bring him," the Emperor said.

"I came here on my own," Alex said, with a really pale face. "You are here for me, so take me and leave them alone."

The Emperor and the other 2 saint realm experts looked back in shock to see Alex even able to speak. It was hard for even the emperor to speak given how much suppression they were under due to the jaguar's aura. And yet, a kid that wasn't even in the True realms could speak up under such conditions.

The jaguar and the puma were certainly surprised as well. The jaguar slowly looked up and down at Alex, with the thousands of beasts that were cowering in fear behind him as well.

"The one I'm looking for does appear to be you. But this has to be a mistake because we aren't looking for any sort of humans. We want nothing to do with your kind," the jaguar said.

"Then what are you here for if not me?" Alex asked.

"For our own kind. I'm here to take back the one who has our lord's bloodline. I do not know why it appeared on you human. However, it seems I must take you back to see what is happening." The jaguar said.

"If it appears to be deception on your part, I will come back to destroy your entire empire," the puma threatened from behind.

"There is no deception here," Alex said. "I came here because I could sense the feeling of something calling me towards the south. Every time this feeling appeared, the beasts appeared along with it."

"To protect the ones I cared about, I chose to give myself up," Alex said.

The jaguar and the puma's face suddenly changed. The puma disappeared from where he stood and appeared right next to Alex, smelling him a little.

"Where is the feeling coming from? Show me," the Puma asked.

"I can't move," Alex said.

The puma released his own aura and countered the jaguar's aura, allowing Alex and the rest to move again.

"Show me," he said.

Alex nodded and pointed towards the southeast direction. "That's where the feeling is coming from," Alex said.

Puma looked in shock and went back to the jaguar. "What's going on? That human child is accurately locating the palace," the puma asked.

"I do not know. Is there something wrong with the fountain perhaps?" the jaguar asked.

"No way," the puma said. "Every single one I found was accurate. There is nothing wrong with the fountain. Besides, this is our last chance. The fountain won't work after today."

The jaguar's face soured when he heard that. Lady Ren had indeed given such an assessment, which was the reason the two of them had decided to team up together for this time.

"So we take him back, right?" the jaguar asked.

"We have to. If the fountain isn't wrong, then he has the bloodline of our Lord," puma said.

"Can it really be that this human was born to be the king of our people?" the jaguar asked.

The two of them were speaking softly, but they were in no way quiet. Alex could clearly hear them say the words 'bloodline', 'lord', and 'king', and a distinct feeling rose in him.

'It can't be!' he thought as he felt a sense of clearance in his mind. He seemed to have finally realized that they weren't here for him.

They were here for Pearl.

'These feline beasts are here for Pearl? But why? Are they his family? Are they taking him back?' Alex wondered and looked back up to listen to the beast's talk.

However, they weren't talking anymore. Instead, they were staring directly at him.

'Shit!' Alex thought when he realized that his shocked expression had given away that he knew something.

"Speak up, or we won't be very merciful," the puma said.

"No, I won't," Alex said. There was no way Alex was going to let them learn about Pearl without first learning their intentions properly.

"I might have an idea as to who you are looking for, but you will have to tell me what you want with him," Alex asked.

"You know who we want?" the jaguar asked with surprise. "Spill it."

"Right after you," Alex said, not budging a bit. The Emperor and the rest were clearly surprised to see Alex stand up to a battle of words against the saint beasts.

"Yu Ming, stand down," Ma Rong whispered to him from the side. Her heart was leaping out of her ribcage when she saw her disciple speak with a saint beast like that. It wouldn't even require the beasts to make a move if they wanted to kill him at any point.

"Human child, you have no room to order us around. Tell us what you know, or we will kill all 7 of you," the puma said.

"I know you can," Alex said. "But I just heard that this is your last chance. If you don't want your last chance to be a failure, then tell me who you beasts are and what you want with him."

Anger flared in the puma's eyes and he decided to kill them all. However, just then, a voice appeared out of nowhere.

"STOP!"

A third saint realm aura appeared from beyond the two beasts as a white beast appeared from behind them.

Alex looked behind and saw another feline beast appear, only this time, Alex couldn't help but be surprised by her appearance.

'A White Cat, just like Pearl,' he thought as he looked at the female cat appearing in front of them.

"Did your fathers never tell you how much the lord cared for his people?" the White Cat asked the two beasts.

The two male saint beasts were much stronger than the female saint beast, and yet they still lowered their head when they saw her approach.

"Lady Ren, why are you here? You shouldn't be out of your chambers," the two of them said.

"A day or two out won't hurt me," Lady Ren said. She then turned to Alex and looked at him.

"Hm... this certainly is weird. Why do you have my husband's aura on you? Are you perhaps someone from outside?" she asked.

Alex's heart skipped a beat when he heard that. 'She knows about the real world? Is she a player? Or is she someone with knowledge of a world existing aside from this one?' Alex wondered.

"No, you can't be from the outside," Lady Ren answered herself. "Your cultivation isn't high enough to make those sort of travel. This certainly adds to the mystery of why you have my husband's aura then."

"It's someone else you guys want, but I won't tell you the location until I know what you're up to," Alex asked.

"Oh, so you not only know that we are looking for a beast, but also know that beast's location? Adding onto the fact that you have the aura on you... am I correct in assuming that you've bonded with the beast?" Lady Ren asked.

Alex's face paled when he realized that he had given away his hand. He looked left and right, trying to think of a way to avoid any sort of tragedy.

"Don't fear, child. We aren't here to harm you. We are just here for the beast, and once we get the beast, we will leave," Lady Ren said.

"How can I believe you?" Alex asked, still fearing.

"Young man, we have no other choice," the Emperor said. "We are in their palm now. Whether they want to squeeze us, or gently lay us down on a bed of flower, it's their choice now."

"However, if it's any consolation, that Jaguar said the same thing to me on the first day they arrived in the capital too," the Emperor said.

"Why do you want him then?" Alex asked.

"This continent has been without its ruler for a long time now.. If your friend is worthy, he shall be the next king of the entire Western Continent."

Chapter 488 - Taken Away

"A... king?" Alex was surprised when he heard that.

"Yes, of the Continent," Lady Ren said. "Or Queen, whatever your friend can be. But I do remember you saying 'him', so he must be a male beast."

"This continent is lacking because it doesn't have a ruler, and so it desperately needs one. Please show us the beast so we can see if he's worthy to become what this continent needs," Lady Ren said.

Wen Cheng, Ma Rong, and Luo Mei's eyes were wide with shock since they had realized what the beasts were after. The two sect leaders who knew the origins of the little cat were especially surprised that there was such a big history behind him.

Alex still didn't trust the beasts fully, but he was more so inclined to do what they said after listening to them and seeing the type of beast Lady Ren was.

"Come out, Pearl," Alex said. A bright white light appeared as a small White Cat appeared from inside of the beast space.

The three beasts saw Pearl after the shine disappeared. The moment they did, their faces changed.

"That's..." the jaguar looked at Pearl in surprise.

"Another White Cat?" the puma asked as well. "That shouldn't be possible."

Lady Ren was very surprised as well to see another one of her kind after so long. "Child, come here," Lady Ren said when she saw the White Cat.

"Meow?" Pearl cowered a little in fear around the new people and beasts. He jumped onto Alex's arms and tried to snuggle in there. He then looked around at the new figures.

He could only recognize Alex's masters and sister since he had interacted with them and they had been nice to him.

He then turned around towards the other 3 humans with no recollection as to who they were.

Finally, he looked at the beasts. At first, he thought he was fighting them, but once he felt their aura, he cowered even more.

Then, out of nowhere, the aura from a few months ago started calling to him to the distant place, and once again, the same fear from when he was inside the formation started appearing.

"It's alright, I'm here," Alex said as he caressed Pearl slowly.

The jaguar and puma seemed to have realized something. "Lady Ren, what's going on?" they asked.

"What do you mean?" Lady Ren asked.

"Our senses, we can't lock on anyone anymore. Neither the child nor the human," The puma said.

"That can't be. I can perfectly sense—" Lady Ren stopped as her eyes went wide again.

"What's wrong?" the jaguar asked.

"I can sense the human and the child," Lady Ren said.

"Hm, I wonder if we lack the lord's bloodli— wait, did you say you can sense the human too?" the jaguar asked.

"Yes," Lady Ren said with clear confusion on her face. "I don't know what's happening now. The human... he has the bloodline of our King too."

"That's impossible," the puma cried out. "How could a human possibly have our lord's bloodline."

"I do not know. None of the knowledge I have told me anything about a human having the bloodline of the 4 great families," Lady Ren said. "The fountain's aura should be ending soon. If we want to find out more... then we will have to take them back."

"No!" Ma Rong shouted. "He's my disciple. You can't take him anywhere."

Ma Rong stepped in front of Alex. Wen Cheng wanted to get there too, but he realized that the atmosphere had changed. The warm air had turned incredibly cold all of a sudden and the grass below them frosted.

The three saint realm humans were surprised too when they sensed the sheer chill around Ma Rong.

"Interesting," Lady Ren said. "I didn't know there were still humans with such great body constitution. But little girl, you can't do anything to us. Especially, to me."

"I can try," Ma Rong said stubbornly.

Alex was behind her and he wanted to say something. However, he could not stop his body from trembling in fear at the aura his master was releasing. This one was far more potent than any of the other times.

It seemed that not only had she gotten good at controlling her constitution, she could also make it stronger now.

"MA RONG!" Wen Cheng shouted. "Can't you see what you're doing to your disciple?"

Ma Rong lost focus on the beasts and turned around to see Alex nearly on the ground. Her heart skipped a beat when she remembered what her aura did to her disciple.

"I'm sorry," she said and hurried to catch him before he completely fell. Once her cold aura disappeared, Alex began to retain his senses and could think without feeling fear for his life.

"Are you his Master, little girl?" Lady Ren asked.

"Yes," Ma Rong said.

"I see," Lady Ren said. "I can see why you are defensive then. But I can promise you that we mean no harm for your disciple. We will just be taking him back to the palace and we will learn why he has the bloodline that he does."

"Give us the child, human boy," the puma said.

"No need," Lady Ren said. "He seems scared around us unfamiliar faces. Let him stay with the human until he's back in the palace."

"Lady Ren," the jaguar whispered. "What do we do about the bond? Can someone who submitted himself to a human truly be our king?"

"Hah," Lady Ren said. "You guys need to grow up quickly and learn more. You can easily tell that the child hasn't submitted to anyone. They have the Bond of equals and thus none is below is the other."

"Oh," the jaguar and puma said as they turned back to look at Alex and Pearl.

"I see," the jaguar said. "Thank you for enlightening me, Lady Ren."

"Alright, enough time has been wasted already. We need to return back and not miss the optimal timing for the baptism," Lady Ren said.

"Yes, Lady Ren," the two beasts bowed their head.

Alex suddenly felt his body move on its own as he was lifted into the air and put on top of the black Jaguar.

"Carry him," Lady Ren said.

"Wait, you can't take him," Wen Cheng cried out.

"Don't take my little brother," Luo Mei shouted as well.

Ma Rong was starting to pour out her yin qi again, but she was a little apprehensive about how much she did it.

"Worry not, this human will be back very quickly," Lady Ren said, not allowing any of their words to reach her. "You will be able to see him again in less than a decade."

"A... decade?" Ma Rong questioned with surprise.

"Let's move," Lady Ren said.

"No, let me go. I don't want to be away for a decade," Alex shouted, but he couldn't struggle against the constraints of a saint realm's aura.

"Yes, Lady Ren," the two beasts said and started moving.

"Let me go," Alex shouted but could do nothing aside from that.

"No!" his masters and sister started shouting.

Seeing that he was not going to be able to get away from them, he resorted to the only thing he could do. He shouted.

"Don't worry about me. I will be back one way or another. Just wait for me."

* * * * *

The sun had set and the battle was over. The Scarlet city remained victorious against the beasts with very few casualties. The people celebrated in happiness and the ones hiding finally came out to celebrate as well.

Outside the walls, the people who were dealing with the aftermath remained.

"Are the beasts always this low in number?" the Royal Alchemist asked after seeing the pile of beast corpses.

"No," the City lord said. "Maybe continuously attacking for months led to them being low in number?"

"I don't feel like that's true," the Royal Alchemist said. "If anything, there should be more beasts out there than there are humans. I don't think you realize just how massive the southern forest is."

"Then only God knows why their numbers are low," the city lord said.

The Royal Alchemist looked at the corpses once more and looked around immediately searching for someone.

"What's little Ma?" he asked.

The city lord looked around and shook his head. "I don't know. I haven't seen her for a while," the city lord said.

"What is that girl doing? She should be getting her sect members to butcher these beasts and take out the alchemy ingredients before they turn bad," he said.

"I will go look for her," the city lord said.

"No need, she's here," a voice said. The city lord and the Royal Alchemist book looked up to see 4 people on a boat.

"Your majesty. What are you doing here?" the Royal alchemist asked.

"Stuff happened, Lai Qing," the Emperor said. "How are you doing, nephew?"

"Uncle, it's good to see you," the City lord said with a bow.

"We would like to be dismissed, your majesty," the miserable-looking Wen Cheng said to the Emperor.

"Sure, go. I have some questions for you, especially your sect leader Ma, but those can wait for later. I will stay in the city for a week," the Emperor said.

"Surely, your Majesty," Wen Cheng said and shook Luo Mei and Ma Rong who were even more miserable than him.

"Go and rest, Ma Rong. It's been a long day today," Wen Cheng said. "We will do the same."

Ma Rong nodded and flew away, speaking to not a single person along the way, knowing completely that she had lost her disciple for good.

Chapter 489 - Questions

Alex was holding dearly to Pearl, ever so vigilant of his current situation. He still didn't trust the beasts completely, and the only reason he didn't struggle to fight back was that somewhere in the back of his head, he was curious to see what was going to happen.

On the slightest hint of anything bad happening to him or Pearl, he would do his best to get himself out of there.

"I know you are worried, young human and nothing we will ever say will get you to trust us right now. So, just trust on the fact that despite us being so strong, you are alive right now," the White Cat said.

Alex looked around at the forest underneath them. They were moving so fast that almost everything looked like a blur to them. He decided to use focus mode to see what was underneath them.

"What are you doing?" the White Cat asked Alex suddenly.

"What?" Alex asked, controlling the focus mode back.

The White Cat scrutinized him with her golden eyes for a few moments before taking them off. "Nothing," she said.

'Can she sense it when I use focus mode?' Alex wondered and stopped doing that.

"Who are you, uhh... miss?" Alex asked.

"I am Ren," Lady Ren said. "You can call me Lady Ren, human. And as for you my child, you can call me grandma."

She gave a sweet smile towards Pearl with no hint of malice at all.

"Grandma? Are you very old?" Alex asked.

"Boy, speak respectfully to Lady Ren," the Jaguar said.

"Let's just kill this human," the puma said.

Alex immediately cowered as the saint beasts started releasing their aura once more.

"STOP IT!" Lady Ren shouted. As soon as they did, the two beasts stopped using their aura on Alex and he could finally feel free again.

"I told you two to stop this hatred you have, and you still keep it up?" she asked.

"Forgive us, lady Ren," the jaguar said.

"But lady Ren, it was the humans that—"

"Not another word. It doesn't matter what the humans did. You can't use the crime of a few to hate on the many," lady Ren said.

"I-I'm sorry," the puma said.

Alex looked at them curiously. "What did the humans do that you hate us so much?" Alex asked.

"It's because of humans that this continent is as bad as it is," lady Ren said with a sigh.

"Why? What? did they do?" Alex asked.

"Haha, no need to ask so many questions right now. Why don't you answer my question first," lady Ren asked.

"Uhh... If I can answer it, then sure," Alex said.

"How did you come upon that child?" she asked.

Alex was surprised that was the first thing she wanted to know. "Pearl? I found him by chance I should say," Alex said.

"His name is Pearl?" Lady Ren asked with amusement. "That's a nice name." She then went close to Alex and looked at Pearl with a smile again and said, "Nice to meet you, Pearl."

"Meow?" Pearl looked back at Alex to find out if he should answer at all or not.

"Go ahead," he said. This wasn't the time to hide what he knew or could do. The more he showed off himself, the higher his chances at survival would become. There was also the chance of them wanting him so much that they wouldn't let go of him, but that at least meant that he would live.

As for leaving, given how fast he could cultivate, it wouldn't take a lot of time. At least not the 'nearly a decade' that Lady Ren predicted.

Pearl looked back towards lady Ren after getting the permission and said, "Nice to meet you too." Only, he didn't say it out loud but used his spiritual sense to speak.

Just as Alex expected, a face full of shock appeared on her face. "How did you? How does he have spiritual sense?" she asked.

"I gave him a Spirit Cleansing Lily," Alex said.

"A... Spirit Cleansing Lily? I'm afraid I'm not familiar with flowers. Can you tell me what it does?" she asked.

"Sure," Alex said. "It unlocks one Spiritual Sense without needing to enter the Saint realm."

"Hmm, do all humans have spiritual sense then?" she asked.

"Are you planning on just asking questions and not answering any?" Alex asked.

"Oh, my bad. Go on ask what you want," she said.

"Who are you exactly to these two? You are much weaker than them, but they respect you very much. I thought the beasts followed a hierarchy of power," Alex said.

The other two didn't seem offended at the question and instead started giggling.

"Oh, they do follow the hierarchy of power," Lady Ren said with a chuckle as well. "The fact that you call me weak just means that you are weak yourself. Cultivate for a few hundred years, and if you are lucky, maybe you will start finding inkling of my strength then."

Alex was surprised when he heard that. "Are you very strong?" he asked.

"There are only a handful of beings stronger than me on this floating piece of rock," she said.

The way she said it, Alex couldn't help but believe her. "Are you at the peak of the? Saint realm?" he asked.

Lady Ren gave a mysterious smile and said, "it's my turn to ask the questions."

"Oh, sorry," Alex said. "Please ask."

"Regarding Pearl, can you tell me more about the circumstances you found him under?" she asked.

"Uh, I was in the forest one day, and he and his mother crashed into the forest. She was very heavily wounded and couldn't even fight a common beast. When I helped her fend off a wolf, she asked me to take care of pearl, and... she died," he said.

"I see," Lady Ren said with slight tears in her eyes. "So my granddaughter died just like that huh?"

"Yea— wait, your granddaughter?" Alex asked with shock on his face.

"What? You think I want to be called grandma by just any other beast?" Lady Ren said.

"Are you telling me Pearl is your...?"

"Great-Grandson, yes," she said. "Or at least I think he is. There shouldn't be another White Cat beside me in this realm, and the only ones that have been was my daughter."

"Where is she now?" Alex asked.

"We married her off to a beast in the Eastern Continent," she said. "So I think the White Cat you met might have been my granddaughter. Although, she could have been my great-granddaughter as well. Sigh, I can't tell how much time has passed in the outer world."

"It should have been about 5000 years since the Princess' marriage, Lady Ren," the jaguar said.

"Has it only been 5000 years? I thought more time would've passed already," she said.

'Only... 5000? How old is she?' Alex wondered.

"So you aren't certain that Pearl is your descendant, right?" Alex asked.

"No, of that we are absolutely certain," the puma said. "After all, we had his mother's body brought to us a few months ago."

"... wait, Pearl's mother's body went to you guys? Why?" Alex asked.

"It was someone who recognized her kind and brought the dead body to us and left without letting us know. We wanted to find more out, but we couldn't at the time. But it seems we now have the answer," the jaguar said.

"Wait, wait, wait," Alex said as something didn't make sense to him. "You said you married your daughter to the Eastern continent, right? Then why were Pearl and his mother here?" he asked.

"That..." Lady Ren stopped for a second as the same confusion Alex had appeared on her face as well. "You're right, how was she here? You said she was wounded too, right? Then there was no way she flew across the Blue."

"Well, how did you marry off your daughter to the Eastern Continent in the first place? Did they fly all the way there too?" he asked.

"Don't be silly, human. The ocean is not something one dares to cross even at the higher realms of the Saint Realm. There are many beasts in the ocean that will kill you before you even know what is happening," the Puma said.

"Then how?" Alex asked.

"She teleported there," Lady Ren said.

"Teleported?" Alex asked. "You can teleport between continents? Isn't that very far away? How many resources would that use?"

"It is far," lady Ren said. "That was why they were teleported twice instead of once."

"Twice?" Alex asked.

"People would first teleport to the Central Continent, and then to the other continent. Since the central continent is at the center, it was used as a mid-point to go to before going to your desired continent," Lady Ren said.

"Central Continent?" Alex asked with confusion. "You mean the 5th continent that people can't enter?"

"Oh, you know about that?" Lady Ren asked with surprise. "I'm surprised humans have this much knowledge of the world. I assumed that after the teleportation formation stopped working, they wouldn't be able to get any more information about the outside world. It seems I was wrong."

Alex didn't say anything and let her believe what she thought of it. "so the teleportation formation is not working anymore?"

"No. Humans found it useless after they stopped working due to the central continent no longer being accessible and destroyed it. they plundered the resources keeping it alive, and thus is no longer usable," Lady Ren said.

"I see.... What happened in the central continent making it unable to go to?" he asked.

Chapter 490 - Blood Blessed By The Gods

Lady Ren sighed as she remembered the incident with the Central Continent.

"Stuff happened there, making it start gathering Qi from all over the realm, and destroyed everything there as before," Lady Ren said.

"It used to be a continent with barely any Qi in it, so the only ones that lived there were common beasts and mortals. Due to that, no one wanted anything to do with the continent, and most of it was barren."

"Later on, everyone got tired of using way too many resources to teleport between continents, and so the four rulers of the other 4 continents got together to establish teleportation formations on the Central Continent itself. They used resources from the continents to make it a transition point during teleportations," Lady Ren said.

"But one day, it suddenly started showing unusual behavior. When people couldn't access the teleportation formation, all 4 of the rulers went to check, but... sigh, forget about it. It's not a memory I would like to remember," she said.

"Oh, the other continents have rulers too?" Alex asked with surprise. He didn't remember anything about them in the myriad of information that was floating on the internet.

"Of course they do," Lady Ren said. "Only the Central Continent didn't have one, and that was for obvious reasons."

"Oh, is any one of the humans?" Alex asked.

"No, little human. The rulers are chosen from the 4 Great Families. No human would ever have a chance of obtaining that honor," Lady Ren said.

"The 4 great families? I don't think I have ever heard of something like that," Alex said.

"I would be rather surprised if you knew who they were," Lady Ren said. "Can I ask my questions now?"

Alex nodded. '4 Great Family huh? I will have to ask my sister and see if she knows something about it tomorrow morning. If not, I hope the internet has some answers,' he thought.

"Can you tell me truthfully how you came to acquire the bloodline of one of the 4 Great Families?" Lady Ren asked.

"Huh? I have something like that?" Alex asked with surprise. But then when he thought about it, the ruler of this continent was from the 4 great families, and Lady Ren did say that he had the blood of the ruler.

"You very clearly do. In fact... you have just as much as this child does from what I am sensing," Lady Ren said.

"Uhh... I think I know the reason for that," Alex said. "Wait a second. Pearl, can you go back inside?"

"Meow!" he said and agreed. He would rather go back to his beast space than stay out here amongst these unfamiliar faces, flying so fast in the sky.

"Why'd you send him inside?" Lady Ren asked.

"It has to do with his mother's death, so I would rather not talk about it in front of him," Alex said.

"Go on then," Lady Ren asked.

Alex nodded and explained it all as much as he could and told them how he acquired a blood essence from her. He didn't go into detail about how the blood essence came to be and just said that she handed it to him.

"And then?" she asked.

"Then one day when I was just messing around, I brought out the bead that was the blood essence. It was so strong that I was nearly choked to death, but Pearl ate it up like it was nothing," Alex said.

"After that, he absorbed it, but not all. After a few minutes, he spit out some blood that he couldn't absorb, and... somehow, my body attracted it. I don't know what happened afterward, but when I woke up, I had absorbed it too," he said.

Suddenly, the jaguar stopped flying, and so did the puma. Lady Ren stopped too, but the shock in her face made it look like she wasn't paying attention to anything.

"You absorbed the blood essence?" the jaguar asked.

"That's not possible. Even we can't do that," the puma said.

"When you say your body attracted it, what do you mean?" Lady Ren asked.

"The blood, it was floating in the air and my body craved it and took it in directly through my forehead," Alex said. "I fainted afterward, and since then my Metal roots have significantly improved."

"Your metal roots? My god, you really did absorb it. You not only absorbed blood blessed by the gods, but you absorbed the blood essence itself. That's... that's not something I have ever heard of happening," the White Cat said with a face full of confusion.

"Does the library not have anything on it, lady Ren?" the jaguar asked.

"No, we might have to go back to the lord's ancestral home if we want to learn anything about it at all," Lady Ren said.

"Is it that unusual?" Alex asked. 'My body is divine grade, so there should be a few bodies above mine that can do that as well, right?' he wondered.

"I admittedly don't have all the knowledge as I am but a lowly concubine to the lord, but... I have never in all of my life heard of a human absorbing the bloodline of any of the 4 Great Families. The bloodline blessed by the gods is not so easily acquired by just about anyone."

"Most of them can't even reproduce in all of their lifetimes. It's one of the downsides of having just a godly bloodline," Lady Ren said. "Even when they do manage to reproduce, the child may not fully acquire the bloodline and only part of it."

"It's similar to what is happening to your right now. You are part of whatever your parent's bloodline was and part the bloodline of blood essence you absorbed," Lady Ren said with an amused face.

"Suddenly, you have started to become more interesting than I would have previously imagined."

Alex couldn't understand the benefits of having such a bloodline, but he has already experienced some of it. Just having his metal roots be improved was beneficial enough.

"Are there any more benefits of having this bloodline than just improved Metal roots?" Alex asked.

"Um... there are, but I am not sure if they will manifest on a human. Your physiology doesn't exactly match that of those that usually have this bloodline," Lady Ren said.

"I see," Alex said. "Then, can I ask what this bloodline is called?"

"You'll learn soon enough," Lady Ren said. "Let's hurry back."

"Yes, lady Ren," the jaguar and puma said.

They immediately flew through the night sky once more at blisteringly fast speed.

'Dammit,' Alex thought as he was carried away. 'They gave so many answers, but not a single concrete one. I can't even demand that they answer more clearly.'

Alex once again looked around at the incredible speed they were flying at and wondered just how far he was. The surroundings all looked the same to him and he had no map of anything outside of the Crimson empire to even make an educated guess.

Finally, after an hour, the there of them came to stop.. It seemed they had reached their destination.