

Alchemy 781

Chapter 781: Bloodlines

During the next half a month of training, Alex did come to learn the answer to the question he had been wondering.

Why are the beasts in the Beast realm so much more intelligent as compared to the beasts outside it. Not only were they intelligent, but some of them could also even fluently speak the human language.

When he asked about it the Jaguar, he had answered him the exact reason for it.

Apparently, the reason for a beast's intelligence had to do with its bloodline. The better the bloodline, the better one's intelligence would be.

Since the Beast realm had beasts with mostly better bloodline, they were more intelligent in general.

That made sense for Alex, but it had also raised another question in his mind. Why did the beasts outside the secret realm not have a better bloodline? Not all, but at least some of them should be vastly more intelligent, right?

That was when he learned what determined the strength of a bloodline. The bloodline always depended on the strength of its lineage.

A child of a Saint beast would always have a better bloodline than the child of a True beast even if the two of them were of the same bloodline.

Also, the bloodline would keep diluting as it went further down the line unless one could rise up to reach the same height as their ancestors.

Which for most beasts outside the beast realm was pretty much impossible. Because of this reason, Beasts that stayed in Qi-rich areas were always more intelligent than those that didn't in the long term.

After half a month had passed and Alex had trained every day, it was time for him to leave.

"I should go now. The registration should begin at any time, and I don't want to miss it," Alex told Yao Jia and the Jaguar.

"Alright, let's leave," the Jaguar said and took Alex to the teleportation platform on the other side of the palace underground.

They stood on top of the formation platform and the jaguar brought out the badge.

"Wait, father," Yao Jia hurriedly ran up to them. "Here."

Alex took what she had handed and saw a book in his hand. Even as he flipped through it, he realized what it was.

"You finished it?" he asked excitedly.

"Yes," Yao Jia said. "It was quite hard, but I did it."

"Thank you." Alex was very genuine. "It must have been difficult to translate it all."

"Eh, don't mention it. The translation wasn't that difficult. The most difficult part of it all was just writing the words."

"Do you know how many times I had to dip my claw in ink to write? Sigh, I'm never doing it again until I reach the immortal realm and can turn to a human form," She said.

"Thank you for this, seriously. You do not know how easy this will make my life now." Alex bowed towards her.

"Alright, I accept your thanks. Now leave, you don't want to be late right?" she asked.

"Yes, I will be back soon."

The formation activated and a white glow of light covered them as they disappeared from the palace and appeared outside.

The Jaguar quickly took Alex to the DawnSpring City which took them just about half a day with the Jaguar's speed.

'So slow,' Alex thought the entire time he was with him. 'This is nothing like what brother Shen Jing could do.'

Once they reached the DawnSpring city, Alex asked whether the jaguar could speed up even more or not.

"No, that's the fastest I can go. If I want to go any faster, I would have to break through some more," he said.

'Hmm, well here is two more realms at least above where the jaguar is, so maybe that's why,' he thought.

Alex then left the jaguar and secretly entered the Flowing Brush sect to meet his mother.

There, he also let Qin Shan know he was back.

"Oh, you really are here, good. It's only 2 weeks away from now," he told Alex.

"The competition? Good thing I came early then," Alex said.

"Yes, they have already started spreading information about the upcoming competition. I grabbed on for you, here. Read it."

Qin Shan handed him a talisman which Alex quickly read.

The talisman mentioned the date and time of the competition as well as the registration event.

Apparently, according to the talisman, they were going to have 1024 different participants in this year's competition.

For that, they had 16 registration areas from where they would gather exactly 64 participants.

"The closest one is in the Han Family home?" Alex asked after looking at the map.

"Yes, it seems so." Qin Shan nodded. "That would mean everyone from the nearby area will go to this place for registration, including the Heaven's Peak school.

"I see," Alex said. "I will have to prepare until then."

Alex stayed in cultivation for the next 2 weeks in his own room, without letting anyone know he was there.

The world still believed he was dead, so he didn't want to go out and create a distraction for himself just yet.

However, when the day of the registration arrived, Alex had to get out and leave for the Han family home.

He was already late as most disciples in the sect had already gone to register, but Qin Shan had come back for him. Qin Shan prepared his boat and Alex got on it. Then, the two of them flew towards the Han Family ground.

Alex watched the mountain turn to the plain as she flew by the side of the Dawnspring city and arrived in front of the Han family grounds.

The area was a massive place filled with a lot of buildings, all belonging to the Han Family.

There was a great open area in the center for people to train in, and today, it was filled with tents and makeshift stages.

Alex jumped off from Qin Shan's ship and landed outside the giant walls that were painted brown.

The word Han hung in the massive brown metal gate that was now fully open to accept the many people that were arriving.

Alex looked at the staff that was working and realized that it wasn't just members of the Han family. Rather people from everywhere were here to make sure that there wasn't any bias when it came to choosing participants that were to be registered.

Alex followed the group of young people that were led along by the staff towards the registration hall.

Alex watched the many people, most of whom were between 30 and 50 make their way along with him. He sensed their cultivation base and realized that majority of them were in the True Lord realm with quite a few True Kings and barely any True Emperor realm cultivators.

Soon, he arrived at a location where they were registering their information, so Alex got in a line.

Qin Shan had already left him to go wait somewhere, so he was alone in a sea of strange faces.

However, seeing everyone come here for the same thing made him feel like everyone was in this together.

The queue moved forward and Alex's turn came to give his information.

"Name and affiliation," the woman asked as she prepared a talisman to record his information.

"Yu Ming, no affiliation."

Chapter 782: Registration

"Yu Ming... and Rogue cultivator," the lady wrote. "Give me some identification for this."

"Here," Alex handed her his Alchemy badge that had the information written on it.

"What? You're from the Alchemy guild?" the woman looked at him with surprise.

"Yes," Alex said.

"Why didn't you say so? I will put that as affiliation." The woman went on to change the information, but...

"Stop." Alex stopped her. "I know what I said. I don't consider myself affiliated with anything in particular."

"So you really want to leave it blank? Being affiliated will help you, you know? You won't have to fight with people in your own organization early on," she said.

"Is that so?" Alex asked. He was surprised that was the case. Although it did make sense so as to not make allies fight so early in the tournament.

"I'll still go with blank," Alex told her.

"Well, your choice," she said. "Place your whole palm on the formation."

Alex nodded and did as told. As soon as he did so, the formation crackled and a bunch of information floated on top of it.

"27... and a True King 8TH REALM?" the woman's voice increased by a few octaves and decibels as she read the information that floated in front of her.

"Anything else you want to know?" Alex asked her seeing as she was too stunned to do anything else.

"No... no," the woman shook her head.

"Ok then, I'll go ahead." Alex started walking away.

"Wait!" the woman suddenly shouted from behind him.

"Yes?" Alex turned around.

"Here, your number for now," she said and handed him a number that read 314.

'I'm the 314th person to register today? So many,' he thought. He then thanked the woman and made his way towards the center square where there would be a test for the people to finally join the tournament.

The woman got back to doing her own thing now that Alex had left, but even as she did, a weird feeling arose in her heart.

'A 27-year-old alchemist called Yu Ming? Why does that name sound so...,' her eyes suddenly went wide and she turned to look at Alex. However, he had already mingled with the crowd and disappeared.

'No way,' she thought. 'I heard he died though. Can it really be him?'

'I wonder what the test entails,' Alex on the other hand wondered as he walked up to the crowd.

When he got there, he saw someone appear and stage and get tested for their cultivation base. Alex watched a girl activate a formation that read the words True King 3rd realm for her.

The staff members recorded the information and sent her along. After that, they called another person using the number they were given. 122.

"Oh, it's that far already huh?" Alex couldn't help but say.

As more and more people kept being called, Alex suddenly felt a nudge on his shoulders.

He ignored it the first time, but when the nudge got stronger the second time around, he had to turn around to see who it was.

When he did, he met the eyes of two girls that had their hands to their mouth in shock.

"Alchemist Yu, is it really you?" Liang Qiu asked with utter shock on her face.

"It has to be him. Look, it is him," Han Daiyu said from the side. Aside from there, there were a few other disciples of the Han family and Heaven's Peak school, but Alex didn't recognize the rest.

"Hello, Sister Daiyu, Sister Liang, it's been a while," Alex said as he bowed a little towards them.

"It's been a while. of course, it has," Liang Qiu said.

"6 years really," Han Daiyu said. "I haven't seen you after you made our pills. Then suddenly, two years ago I hear you died. Why did you spread the false rumors?"

"Oh, I didn't spread any rumors," Alex said. "I really was missing, so they assumed dead. I only managed to escape from where I had been half a year ago and spent the rest of the time cultivating secretly."

"You were in a dangerous place?" Liang Qiu asked curiously.

"Yes, in the icy hell." Alex nodded at her.

"Well, I'm glad you're alive. It would've been a tragedy if the greatest alchemist the empire has ever seen were to die just like that after winning the competition." She pat his shoulders.

"Oh right, let me introduce these people." Han Daiyu started introducing Alex to the rest of the people there who were immediately friendly since they had learned who he was.

No one wanted to be enemies with someone that was an Immortal Grade alchemist.

"Are you not with the Alchemist guild?" Liang Qiu asked.

"No, how did you know?" Alex asked.

"You're not wearing their colors," she said. "Why not?"

"I just didn't want to have anyone take credit for who I am. Those who deserve it aren't here, so I won't let others take their place."

Liang Qiu smiled. "That's admirable. Anyway, what's your number?"

Alex looked at his paper. "314. Yours?" he asked.

"These here are around 270, but we two don't have any numbers," Han Daiyu said.

"You guys aren't registering?" Alex asked.

"No, we don't need to," Liang Qiu said. "We are seeded into the top 128 even without having to register. That's a benefit of the reputation we've built as some of the strongest younger generations.

"Oh, how many of you are there?" Alex asked.

"Around 16 of us I believe." Han Daiyu gave a thoughtful look. "7 great clans, 4 great sects, 1 from the Royal disciples, and 4 very strong and popular folks from everywhere else."

"I see, you're quite lucky then," Alex said.

"It's no luck. It's all hard work," Han Daiyu corrected him.

"Right, sorry."

One of the people he was introduced to was called on stage and they all watched.

The man that was called managed to receive a True Emperor 2nd Realm assessment and was sent away. The crowd buzzed with hushed discussions at the man's cultivation base.

"That's a weird reaction from the people," Alex said. Sure a True Emperor 2nd realm was great, but it wasn't anything amazing. There would be a lot more of them here today. After all, some had been waiting for 20 years just for this competition.

"Ignore them, most of them are just jealous," Han Daiyu said from the side.

"Of course, but I just don't see the need to be jealous," Alex said. "It's not like he got that cultivation base without putting in work."

"Oh no, they're not jealous of the cultivation base at all," Liang Qiu said.

"They're... not?" Alex was confused now. "Why else would they be jealous then?"

"Because he just got to skip directly to be registered," she said.

"I don't understand." Alex urged for more information.

"Do you not know?" Liang Qiu asked. "If your cultivation base is in the True Emperor realm, you basically automatically join the tournament."

"And if it's not?" Alex asked.

"Well, if it's not then, you have to sit around with these people and go through a test to see if you have what it takes to join the tournament or not. That will take you quite a long time though."

Chapter 783: Entering the Han Family Manor

"What? I don't want to do that," Alex said. Sitting around just because of his cultivation base even though he knew he was stronger than many of those that had already passed didn't sit right with him.

"Can't they just get rid of the True Lord realm and make room for the True Kings only?" Alex asked. "That would at least get the test done much faster."

"Ah, you may not have seen it yet, but they are getting rid of the True Lords already. They just don't announce it yet," Liang Qiu said.

"They are?" Alex grumbled a little on the inside. "I guess I have nothing to complain about then."

"Well, judging by your cultivation base, I don't see anything you will have to worry about," Han Daiyu said.

"I guess that's true," Alex agreed, but he still didn't like staying around for a test for such a long time.

In the end, there was nothing he could do, so he had to sit quietly and wait for his turn.

Or did he?

Alex's number was soon called after and he walked onto the stage with a curious look on his face.

"Get on up," the tester said.

"Senior, I will be fighting with my beast, so would it be alright if I got my beast tested instead?" Alex asked.

"A beast? I didn't realize there were any Beast sects around here," the person said curiously. "Yes, of course, you can."

Alex smiled. "Pearl, come out," he said.

"Meow!" Pearl roared as he appeared on the stage as a meter-tall, 2-meter-long beast of a cat.

His True Emperor realm aura radiated off of him giving the tester a bit of a surprise. He hadn't expected a beast to be this much stronger than the owner.

'Their friendship much is quite amazing for the beast to not have broken its bonds already,' he thought.

"Pearl, walk up there," Alex told him and pointed towards the formation.

Pearl didn't speak at all and instead did as he was asked. He walked over to the formation and it soon said what it should.

True Emperor 1st realm.

"Great, you can leave," the tester said.

"Come, Pearl," Alex said, and Pearl turned into a white light that disappeared into his left arm.

"Number 315" the tester called for the next person waiting.

Alex smiled as he walked back over to the group he was standing with and looked at their surprised face.

"I should be done now, right?" he asked.

"You have a True Emperor realm beast? When did you bond it?" the girls immediately asked.

"Umm... about half a year ago. This big guy was dying in the snow, so I saved him and in exchange, he agreed to become my bonded beast," Alex said.

He didn't know why he lied about Pearl, but that felt like the right approach here. Given his age and cultivation base, sooner or later, people would figure out that he couldn't have bonded with a beast that was already in the high cultivation base.

Given that, the only way for him to have a beast with a high cultivation base would be either to bond with it very early when it was weak and then help grow it or simply bond with a strong beast later on.

With the first one, Pearl's potential would immediately be out in the open, making needless enemies that would want to take him away, so Alex thought it would be better to take advantage of the second scenario.

"Congratulations, I guess. I didn't think you would pass this early," Liang Qiu spoke up.

"Thanks." Alex smiled back at her. "So... do I leave now or do I have to wait?"

"We wait until they speak up the numbers of those that pass, but I don't think it will be for a while, so we can get out of this place," Han Daiyu said.

"Where would we even go?" Alex asked.

"Are you kidding me? You are in my house, I will be treating you. Come," Han Daiyu said and started walking away.

A few of the people started following her while Alex wasn't sure if he wanted to leave. "I am fine just waiting for my num—"

"Nonsense, if you won't come, there's no point," she said.

"Huh?" Alex was confused.

"I already messaged my family that you are alive, and they want to meet you," she said.

"Hah." Alex sighed and shook his head. He should have known this would happen. No, he did know this would happen, he just didn't expect it to happen this quickly.

"Okay then, let's go." Alex wanted to get it over with as soon as he could.

Han Daiyu excitedly took Alex to her brilliant mansion that she called her home.

Alex was awestruck at how amazing the place was.

Green grass surrounded the massive mansion that was full of brilliant colors all around. Men and women in brown robes walked all throughout the place.

As Alex entered, he felt the coolness of the place that was distinctly lower than outside and realized there was a formation around the place to keep the people cool.

The inside was filled with different arts and crafts, giving the place a more lived-in vibe than even the royal palace.

Han Daiyu made them walk through the hallway until they came across a room full of sofas.

"Sit, I'll tell the elders you are here." Han Daiyu left the lot to wait and went on.

"Tsk!" Liang Qiu clicked her tongue on the side.

"What's wrong?" Alex asked.

"I'm a little jealous of her, or rather them. Right, would you come to our sect too after this?" she asked.

"Uhh... I don't know if I have the time. I will need to prepare for the competition," Alex said.

A minute or so later, Han Daiyu arrived back. "Alchemist Yu, the elders want to see you. Come with me."

Alex nodded and walked along with Han Daiyu through the wide hallways to a massive hall where multiple men and women were waiting for him.

Even at just a glance, Alex could tell that at least half the people there were in the Saint realm.

"This is the Alchemist Yu I told you all about," Han Daiyu introduced them.

"Greetings, seniors." Alex cupped his hand and bowed a little in front of the many strong elders of the Han Family.

He scanned the room with his eyes once more and noticed two people that he did recognize.

One of them was Han Hongqi whom he was familiar with, while the other one was a man that had similar features to Han Hongqi as well as Han Daiyu.

He had seen the man back in the competition ground when the Emperor had called upon him, and if he wasn't mistaken, this was Han Haixu, the eldest son of the Han family leader.

Speaking of which, Alex turned his head towards the heavily tanned and buff man with a bald, wrinkly head and gray beard, that sat in the seat at the center of the room.

The aura he gave off was stronger than anyone else in the room and his age was also the greatest.

Without a doubt, this was most certainly the Han family leader, Han Huaxian.

Chapter 784: Han Family Leader

"Welcome to our home, Alchemist Yu. We are glad to finally get the chance to meet you," Han Haixu spoke on behalf of all the Han family members present there.

The other elders nodded and gave warm smiles to Alex, but none of them spoke as it was out of turn for them.

"Thank you for having me, senior," Alex replied back.

"Young man," Han Huaxian started speaking. "I remember hearing a report about your winning in the alchemy competition. Apparently, you created a miracle out there. I must congratulate you on that."

"Thank you, senior," Alex respectfully bowed.

"But, then we also came to hear the tragic news of your death. I hear my sons were on the expedition to search you, but they never found you and so everyone assumed you had died," Han Huaxian said. "Can you tell us what happened exactly?"

"First of all, I would like to thank seniors for going out of your way to search for this junior. I thank you for that," Alex said. "As for why I wasn't found back then, it's simple."

"No one searched far enough."

Han Hongqi and Han Haixu's faces changed instantly as their eyes narrowed. They understood the implication of Alex's tone.

"Are you saying my sons gave up too early?" Han Huaxian's eyes moved from Alex over to his sons, who immediately started getting nervous.

"Of course not, senior. I'm not blaming anyone here. Going out of their way to look for me was already enough. What I meant to say was that they searched as far as they could, but the place I was at was much further in the Icy Hell," Alex said.

"You were in a place where my Saint realm sons couldn't go?" Han Huaxian was obviously starting to get suspicious at this point.

"Yes, senior. Thanks to an artifact a senior of mine gave me, I was able to traverse more of the location in the Icy hell than anyone, including Saint realm cultivators," Alex said.

"If that is true, that does explain why they didn't find you. But what about the fact that you were gone for... what? Nearly 2 years? How did that happen? And why were you there in the first place?" the clan leader asked.

Alex sighed internally as he thought of something to say, and decided to go with something that was both absurd and yet believable.

"The senior that gave me the artifact, he also told me about a treasure in the Icy Hell that could help me. So, I went out of my way to such a dangerous place looking for that treasure exactly," Alex said.

The elders in the room got curious all of a sudden. "What treasure is this exactly?" the clan leader asked.

"It's a Saint fruit that grows in the center of the Icy hell. It's a healing spirit fruit that can heal anything and everything that is wrong with one's body," Alex said.

"Oh?" the clan leader couldn't tell if what Alex was saying was true or not. It was indeed so absurd to think that a fruit existed that could heal everything at once.

"And where exactly is this fruit?" he asked.

"I—"

"You ate it!" Han Hongqi's eyes went wide all of a sudden.

"Hongqi, what are you talking about?" the clan leader got angry.

"Father, forgive my interruption. This young alchemist had an arm missing previously and had even asked me for help." Han Hongqi turned towards Alex. "You really ate it and grew your arm back?"

"Yes, senior," Alex said with a smile. His fake story was weaving itself with the truth and making it that much harder to unravel.

"I see. Incredible," the Clan leader said. "How many fruits did you get?"

"Only 1, and that too I ate immediately," Alex said as he shook his head.

"What's wrong?" the clan leader got confused with Alex's expression.

"Nothing senior, I was just remembering my stupidity," he said. "I didn't realize how strong a Saint fruit could be for my True realm cultivation and ate the fruit. I had to cultivate over a year to consume its energy so as for it to not kill me."

"Is that why you were gone for so long?" the clan leader asked.

"Yes," Alex said. "And I only came back a few months ago and had to go into closed cultivation to fix my cultivation base."

"I see. Are you still with the Flowing Brush sect?" the clan leader asked.

"Yes, I'm a guest elder there," Alex said.

"Do they treat you well?" the clan leader asked.

"I don't have anything to complain about," Alex said.

The clan leader tried to learn more about Alex, so he asked about his age and background. He was surprised that Alex was only 27 years old, they all were.

As for his background, Alex straight up denied speaking about it, saying he wanted to keep it in the past.

"I hear you joined this day's competition. Are you joining on behalf of the Flowing Brush sect?" he asked.

"No."

"Oh, then the Alchemy guild?" the clan leader asked.

"I'm joining on behalf of no one," Alex said.

The clan leader got confused. "May I ask why?"

"I don't have anyone to thank for who I am today," Alex said. 'At least, not in the empire.'

"What about this senior of yours that gave you the information about the healing fruit?" the clan leader asked.

"I... don't know who he is, so I can't really use his name," Alex said.

"You don't know who he is?" the clan leader couldn't believe it.

Alex shook his head. "As far as I know, only the Emperor knows his identity, but I doubt he will speak," Alex said.

"So, if you do not have anyone you think you belong to, then would you like to join our family? Trust me when I say this, you will get whatever you want," the clan leader said.

"I thank you for the opportunity, but I will have to regretfully decline." Alex bowed a little.

"Are you sure? You can take your time with this," the clan leader said.

"I am sure, senior. I don't plan on joining any sect or family right now," Alex said.

"I see. Well, our family will welcome you no matter when you want to join us," the old man said.

"Thank you, senior."

"So, if you can't join us, then I'm sure you can help us make some pills right? We will pay handsomely of course," the clan leader said. "The competition is coming up and our disciples need to get stronger. Can you help us make some pills?"

"I would, senior, but I myself need to prepare for the competition, so I will not have the time. You will have to ask other alchemists, unfortunately," Alex said.

"Surely you don't need to be so hard on yourself for this competition. Especially with a cultivation base like yours," the clan leader said. "One should never reach for something they cannot grab, young man. You should do what you are good at."

"Besides, whether you are going to this competition for fame or glory or just simple money, I can promise you, you will make far more on alchemy alone," the old man said.

Alex started feeling a little annoyed. Still, he didn't lash out. "I thank you for the advice senior, but I will go with my heart for now," Alex said.

"I'm telling you, young man. Your cultivation base isn't good enough to even come in the top 100 of this year's competition. You should stop wasting your time with this—"

"Senior, please do not waste your breath. This junior already has his mind made up. As for whether my cultivation base is enough or not, time will tell," Alex said sternly. "I believe it's time for me to leave. They will be announcing the results of the registration soon enough. I should be out there when they do so."

"Thank you for inviting me into your house," Alex bowed to the elders once again.

"Uh... yes, I think we have kept you long enough. Thank you for coming along," the old man said.

Alex cupped his hand and bowed to all the elders before walking away with Han Daiyu following behind her.

"Father, I think—"

"Stop, I know. I made a mistake. Sigh, but that kid is still being so stupid. He has been given such an amazing talent and opportunity in alchemy and yet he wants to waste it in fighting," the old man said. "Well, he will find out soon enough."

The elders in the room nodded and repeated what the clan leader said like parrots.

"Right! Haixu, try to find out who this mysterious senior is and how he knows of something so incredible as a fruit to heal all injuries," the clan leader said.

"About that, father," Haixu spoke slowly. "I don't think there is a point in trying to learn about the person. Rather, I don't think we should try to learn about the person."

"Huh? Why not?" the clan leader got angry all of a sudden.

"Remember when we said that the Emperor spoke an oath to not reveal a person's identity and that the person had taken away the princess' healing crystal?" Haixu said.

The clan leader's eyes went wide. "Wait, that was this... right, I forgot this kid was the Royal alchemist for some time. I see, I nearly made a grave mistake."

The old man finally stood up from his seat. "Forget about what happened today and go focus on getting the disciples ready for the competition. We must have them bring glory to the family by winning this year's competition."

"Yes, clan leader."

Chapter 785: The Human Language

"My apologies regarding grandfather, he can tunnel-visioned from time to time. You must be wanting to fight for a while now. I can understand," Han Daiyu spoke to Alex as they walked back towards the lounge area where Liang Qiu and the others were waiting for them.

Once they reached the group, they left back out to go wait for the registration to be over.

When they arrived back at the event, they were already around 800, so after waiting just a little longer, everyone that had come had been tested.

A man walked onto the stage with a talisman. "Everyone whose name I will call out has been registered for the tournament. If your name does not get called out, you will have to wait a little longer for some tests to be accepted," the person said.

After that, one after another, the man spoke of the number and the name of the person that had passed. Alex waited for a while and his name and number came up.

Thanks to Pearl, he didn't have to go through the test at all and could directly enter the tournament.

By the time he was done, the man had called out exactly 21 people. These were the people that were guaranteed a spot in the tournament.

"Those whose name was called out, you may leave. Those whose name wasn't called out, please stick around so we may choose the remaining 42 participants from you," the person said.

'42... that means they are taking 63 in total? Wasn't it supposed to be 64? Or are they accounting for the 16 seeded participants?'

Alex assumed that was most likely the case.

"I will take my leave now," Alex said his farewell to the group he was with. Liang Qiu tried to stop him to take him to speak to her elders but Alex shook his head.

He promised to do it once the tournament was over and went to find Qin Shan. Qin Shan was here to look after his disciples, so Alex had to return on his own.

A few minutes later, he was back with his mother and told her about the registration.

"3 months later you get to fight huh?" she asked.

"Yes," Alex nodded.

"Are you going back to the White Tiger's palace to train for the remaining months?" she asked.

"No, I can train here. I'm close to breaking through again, which I should be able to do in the next 3 months. So, I don't need to go back."

Alex then brought out a book from his storage bag. "For now, I think you and I should both read this."

"What is it?" Helen asked curiously.

"It's a book that will help us learn the Human language. It's translated from the Demon language, so it should be easy for you to read," Alex told her.

"Okay." Helen took the book and flipped through it. "Oh, this is that language from the last part of the flame book you had me read."

"Yes, this should help you understand what that part said when you get to the saint realm," Alex said.

Helen looked through the book and made a confused face. "This makes no sense," She said. "This right here is the word for 'Heat' apparently, and this right here is for 'Heaven', yet the beginning of the words don't match at all."

"Really?" Alex looked at what her mother showed and was surprised.

He looked at the words and the way they were written did indeed not have anything in common at the beginning.

"Wait a second." Alex noticed something. "The last part of the word is the same. Here."

He pointed to the words again and they did indeed end on the same syllable.

"Then..." Helen quickly looked through the other syllables and found out that the end of the word did match.

It didn't take the two very long to figure out that the words in the Human language were written backward.

"No wonder," Alex thought. "I tried converting the language on my own, but it didn't make any sense. But, if it is indeed read from right to left, instead of left to right, then that would make sense why I wasn't able to translate it for my master."

"Have you not read this yet?" she asked.

"No, I will once you're done with it. I have something else to do in the meantime."

Alex left Pearl with his mother and went back to his room to start writing a book from his memory.

He had brought Heaven's Impact along with him from the Hong Wu sect since it was his. But that wasn't the only book he had read that had words in the Human language.

He also had the two Yang books with him so there wasn't any problem there.

He then thought of the final part of the Flame Mastery scripture, but his mother remembered the words there despite not understanding it, so that didn't require writing down as well.

Which meant, the only thing he needed to write was the words from the Black stele back in the Tiger sect.

Instead of writing it down on a talisman, Alex decided to make a normal book out of it and took out an empty book.

Then, he remembered the words on the stele and started noting them down.

Since he learned that the Human language was written right to left, he started in the same order with the stele as well.

Starting from the right, he copies syllable after syllable from his mind and wrote them down on paper.

'Why is remembering this so hard?' he wondered as a slight headache plagued his mind.

He remembered more of the words and as he did, his headache grew.

By the time he had written 20% of the book, his headache was growing massively, so much so that, he had a hard time even looking at paper with clear eyes.

Since writing was getting so hard for some reason, He stopped it for a moment and just focused on remembering the words of the stele.

"STOP!" someone shouted in his head.

"What?" Alex's attention wavered for a second as she stopped trying to think about the stele. The pain in his mind lowered and he could think again.

In an instant, Alex closed his eyes and went into his Spiritual sea. When he did, he was both astonished and scared.

In front of him, his Spiritual sea moved around like the sea in an earthquake. Tides rose high and low, some nearly reaching the silver mountain that hovered above it.

The silver mountain itself was shaking a bit.

"Oi! You bastard! Are you trying to suicide?" a voice spoke to his left and Alex turned his head to see the sword's artifact spirit speak up.

"What do you mean?" Alex asked.

"What were you doing? You nearly ripped open your own spiritual space," the artifact spirit shouted at him.

"I... I did? Was that why I was having such a bad headache?" he asked.

"What were you trying to do?" the spirit asked.

"Trying to remember the words of a technique I read not long ago," Alex said.

The artifact spirit audibly sighed. "Well, if the owner doesn't want you to, then maybe you should give up!"

Chapter 786: Intents

"I... I was getting a headache because I was trying to remember the words on the stele?" Alex couldn't believe such a thing was even possible. "What do you mean the owner doesn't want me to read it?"

"Sometimes when someone is particularly passionate about a technique and very good at it, if they were to write the technique down on something, they leave behind their intent."

"Sometimes this just happens, while other times it is intentional. However, it's usually only intentional if that someone is of a very high cultivation base." The artifact spirit started speaking.

The spirit was full of the black goo as Alex hadn't visited here in a while, but it still spoke clearly.

Also, since Alex's mental strength was now far better than what it was years ago when he met the spirit, he didn't have to worry about being easily tempted. Not when the spirit was this weak.

"There are such intents too?" Alex asked.

"Everything has intent. You can't do something without intent, not when it comes to cultivation and everything that surrounds it."

"Swing a sword, you need intent. Create a fire, you need intent. Even breaking through itself, you cannot do without the intent to break through. So, while it may not look like it, I promise you, everything has intent." The sword spirit was surprisingly chatty this particular day and talked quite a bit.

Alex watched the sea below start to calm down and asked, "so does that mean I cannot copy the information from my mind?"

"I don't know what you read, but the owner clearly didn't want just anyone to read it, so—" the artifact spirit stopped. "Hm... that's weird," it thought.

"What's weird?" Alex asked.

"I saw the damage just the memory of what you tried to remember did to you. If that was the case then why are you not dead when you have indeed already read the technique?" the spirit asked.

Alex thought for a moment. "What exactly constitutes as reading actually?" he asked.

"I don't know. Just reading?" the sword spirit asked.

Alex thought to himself. 'I never really did read it though, did I? I just looked through it and my mind learned it on its own.'

"What if I wanted to learn the technique, but I didn't understand what it said, would that still hurt me?" Alex asked.

"Hmm, since you did intend to learn it, it should hurt you, but since you didn't know how to read, the majority of the damage should be mitigated," the sword spirit said. "Is that what happened?"

Alex nodded. At the same time, his brows furrowed with concern. "If I were to write it down and give it to someone that can read it, will it hurt them?" he asked the spirit.

"If you're writing it, then it depends on your intent," the sword spirit said.

"So if I want just anyone to read it, I can do it?" he asked.

"Yeah, there's no problem with that. You are already fighting with someone else's intent to keep it from coming out anyway," the sword spirit said.

"I see, thank you for explaining," Alex bowed a little towards the spirit.

"That's nothing, just find me a god wannabe to kill from time to time to satiate my hunger," the spirit said.

"Uhh... I don't think anyone is dumb enough to want to be a god here," Alex said.

"Well, then let me control your body once in a while. I promise I won't use it recklessly. I'm stuck on this body you know. If you die, I die."

"Besides, you can get rid of my control whenever you want," the spirit said.

'Yeah, no,' Alex thought.

"I'll think about it," Alex said. He wasn't going to straight-up deny it, not after it helped so much right now.

He stayed behind in his mind for a bit and collected all the flying silver threads in the sky. The sword spirit had already returned to the side, doing its own thing.

Once Alex was done, he returned back outside and finally felt a calm mind that wasn't plagued with headaches.

'I should go about it slowly,' he thought.

Over the next couple of days, Alex slowly copied the words from the stele in his mind onto the page of his book. In doing so, he had to suffer from multiple migraines over the course of multiple days.

Every time it got too hard, Alex would stop and rest his mind. He would cultivate as long as it took for his mind to return to normal after fighting the behemoth of an intent that belonged to the words on the stele.

3 days later, Alex finally fully wrote everything he could remember from the stele.

Excitedly, Alex left his place and went over to his mother.

He quickly went inside and gave her all of the different books. "Since you should know the language now, you should read and learn these books. I don't know if this cultivation technique will help you or not, but you can try that too," Alex informed her.

"Okay," Helen said and took the books. At the same time, she handed back the translation book to Alex. "You should read this too."

"Okay, I will once I return," Alex said and kept the book.

He waited as his mother started reading through the books and looking at them. Meanwhile, he talked with Pearl to learn if he had any chance of breaking through any time soon.

"Alex, did you give me the wrong book?" Helen asked all of a sudden.

"Wrong book? Which one?" Alex turned to look at the books. Surprisingly, his mother had the book he wrote from the stele in her hand.

"No, that is the right book. Can you not read it?"

He wondered if perhaps the technique's owner's intent was messing up with her somehow.

"I can, but... the book isn't complete at all," she said.

"Not complete?" Alex asked.

"Look, it ends in the middle of the sentence," she said.

"That can't be." Alex took the book and read through it to remember the words on the stele. Through some headaches, he remember everything he had written was accurate.

"There's nothing wrong with the book, does it really end abruptly?" he asked.

"Yes," Helen said. "Where did you read this?"

"It's the black stele from back in the Tiger sect. Remember the one I told you not to use your spiritual sense on no matter what?" Alex said.

"Oh, that?" Helen thought as she looked at the book. "You wrote all of it?"

"Yes," Alex said. "If the technique is incomplete that would mean the technique on the stele is incomplete."

"Well, it ends abruptly. Are you sure there were more words on it?" she asked.

"Where else would the words—" Alex froze. Suddenly, he realized something he should have thought of a long time ago.

"How could I not have thought about it before?" he slapped his own forehead.

"What's wrong? What did you not think of?" Helen asked.

"That black stele, it's the cause of the crater in the Tiger sect, which I assume came along with the meteor shower," Alex said. "If it came down with such force then certainly it must have embedded itself onto the ground."

"Stupid! I should have checked below the ground too," he thought.

In Alex's defense, the stele was in fact one of the most terrifying things to use his spiritual sense around. Every time he did, the intent of the owner of the stele would come to attack him.

So, even if he had thought of there being something underneath the whole thing, he still likely wouldn't have dared to try it all.

"That bit should still help you create some technique, you should learn it," Alex told his mother. "I'll go and learn the language now."

Alex left his mother to learn the techniques and returned back to his place and brought out the book to read it.

However, before he could do it, a thought came to his mind.

"Wait, if there is more to the black stele than just this, and if knowing what I'm reading will be devastating enough to kill me when I do read it, isn't it better for me to not learn the language?" he thought.

Alex had waited many years to learn this language. However, now that he had finally had the opportunity to, he found out that it was in fact better to not learn it at all.

Chapter 787: The Tournament Approaches

"Well, that sucks."

Alex didn't know what to do now. On one hand, learning the language seemed like a more than good idea given that he had been hoping to learn it for so many years now.

On the other hand, just the partial knowledge of the technique let him create swords to cut through a person's mental fortitude. What if he learned the whole thing?

If he tried to read the Stele after learning the language, Alex was sure the Stele would definitely kill him.

"I don't need to learn the language just yet right?" he thought to himself. "I can just scan it and learn it that way. Like I've always done. My brain translates it into concepts on its own anyway."

While he did think that, it wasn't just a simple decision for him.

"Urgh! Whatever, I will think about it after the competition."

Alex put away the book and left the room. It was way in the afternoon, so he went to search for the jaguar.

Surprisingly, it wasn't the jaguar that was here this time. It was the leopard.

"Senior? Where is senior Yao?" Alex asked. The leopard was strong, and he didn't have any grievance with it, so Alex didn't mind it being the one to look after them.

But he had a closer relationship with the jaguar, and if possible, he would love to have found him.

"We take turns watching over you," the leopard explained. "What are you looking for?"

"Just to fight," Alex said. "Would you be willing to fight me? For my training of course."

The leopard thought for a moment and shrugged. "Why not? I'm bored anyway."

Both Pearl and Alex fought the leopard for a while before returning back to cultivate.

When the next day started, they did the same thing. Soon, they got into a rhythm, a schedule they would follow where they would train and cultivate, in between very few other things.

The jaguar returned after a few days and they trained with him too.

In such ways, Alex's days passed very quickly, and before he knew it nearly 3 months had already passed by and he was now one step away from the True Emperor realm.

The tournament of champions, as it was apparently called, was just a week away.

Alex reached the Radiant city on his own a week before the competition. The rest of the Flowing Brush sect members would come on their own a few days later.

For now, Alex had a task to do.

Without waiting around for anything, he directly went to the royal family.

When he notified that he wanted to meet with either the Princess or Zhanrou, the princess came out on her own to meet him.

"You're alive??... is what I would say if I didn't hear about you a few months ago," the princess said as she walked out.

"It's good to see you, princess." Alex bowed a little towards her.

"You really managed to stave off all those people by faking your own death huh? That's quite bold of you," she said.

"I didn't... whatever, I will explain to you later. For now, I came to meet with Zhanrou and give her something," Alex said.

"Oh? What is it?" the princess asked.

"You will have to wait princess," Alex said.

"Fine, let's wait in the garden. Zhanrou should be making pills at the moment and will take some time."

The princess turned around to walk on. However, she stopped and turned around. "Although my father might want to speak to you about your disappearance."

"Yes, of course. I will explain," Alex said.

"Good. I'll let him know we're coming."

The princess took Alex directly to the Emperor's hall where the many court officials were already making their way out for Alex's privacy.

As the princess and Alex walked in, the court officials saw him and talked about him in hushed voices.

'They know about me?' Alex was a little surprised.

"Good!" the Emperor exclaimed as soon as Alex walked in. "Our miracle Alchemist didn't bite the dust just yet."

"Greetings, your majesty." Alex bowed toward the Emperor.

"It's good to see that you are safe and sound, young man." The Emperor had just said that when he noticed something.

"Actually... more than just safe and sound. Did you get a realistic fake arm, or is that your actual left arm I see."

The Emperor got down from his throne to check on it closely.

"It is real, your majesty," Alex told him.

"How did... did you use the healing crystal somehow?" the Emperor asked.

"No, I... I managed to create a pill that can heal any sort of grievous wounds, including cut off limbs and organs," Alex told the Emperor truthfully. With what he was here to do, lying wouldn't make any sense to him.

"You did what?" The princess shouted in disbelief from behind. She hadn't noticed the new arm as it had been two years since she had seen him and had forgotten a few details.

However, the emperor with his spiritual sense and excellent mind saw all the changes immediately.

"You really are the miracle alchemist as the citizens call you," the Emperor said.

"Come on, tell me all about it."

Alex nodded and told him exactly how he found the pill. As for where he got the original pill recipe, he chalked it up to Shen Jing providing him with one.

As soon as the Emperor heard Shen Jing's name, he no longer asked questions in that direction and started changing subjects.

"Please don't let anyone know that it was the pill that healed my arm. Make up something like you found it tucked away in your treasury and Zhanrou managed to make one on her own, or something like that," Alex said.

"Huh? Why not? You will be famous when the people find out. In fact, way more famous than you already are," the emperor said.

"Your majesty, If I cared about fame, I wouldn't be here giving away my recipe."

The Emperor stopped what he was about to say and nodded. "Alright, we will hide that information. Now can you tell us where you have been for the last 2 years?" he asked.

Alex explained the same thing he had said to the Han family, except this time the fruit he had gone to eat was something that fixed his body from something that was wrong with it.

The emperor already knew about the problem in his body, he just didn't know what it was. When he heard that Alex had fixed the problem, he congratulated Alex.

"So, what do you plan on doing now?" the Emperor asked. "Do you want to join the royal family? I'm sure any of my daughters would—"

"Father!" Xumei shouted from behind.

"Haha, I was joking," the Emperor said as he scratched his chin. He was definitely not joking at all.

"I meant to say, do you want to become the royal Alchemist again? With you and Zhanrou, we will not have to worry about pills ever again," the Emperor said.

"Thank you for the opportunity, your majesty. But I will have to decline," Alex bowed a little. "For now, I just want to take part in the Tournament of Champions and see how well I fare against the elites of the younger generation. That has been my wish for quite a while now."

"The tournament? You registered in it?" the Princess was surprised.

"Yes, your highness," Alex replied to her.

"Well, you do have the appropriate cultivation base, but I'm not sure if you will make it any far with just this," the Emperor said. "Still, good luck. I will cheer you for your victory."

Unlike the Han family's leader, the Emperor was a bit more understanding of his sentiment and didn't try and talk down to him as a fighter.

"Thank you, your highness."

They were done with their talks and the Emperor needed to go back to talking with his officials about empire matters, so Alex and the princes left not long after.

Alex then met up with Zhanrou and handed her the recipe. He told her the difficulties and how she couldn't let anyone find out about them. Especially the part of it requiring a lot of blood.

Zhanrou was understanding, so she easily complied. Alex also met up with Wei Ruoran and spoke to him for a bit before leaving the palace altogether.

He then went back to his hotel room where he would cultivate for the next 7 days and wait for the tournament to start.

Chapter 788: Tournament Brackets

"Welcome everybody to the first Tournament of Champions in the last 20 years!"

A man stood up on a giant stage that was perhaps kilometers wide in both length and width. Only cultivators could clearly see him from that distance away.

The space on the stage was clearly expanded using formations and the real space was perhaps a fourth of what was being shown at the moment.

The host continued talking, welcoming everyone to the competition, while the rest of the people got onto their own thing.

"I can't keep Pearl?" Helen asked from the audience space.

"No, I need him for the battles. Just keep these storage bags of mine, mother," Alex said and handed over everything except for precisely what he needed.

"Alright, but make sure he doesn't take get hurt. You're stronger than him, so you need to be the one to fight," Helen said.

"Don't worry, mother. I know what I'm doing," Alex said and left the place to go over to where the contestants would be gathered.

The host started explaining the rules of the tournament.

The rules were mostly there to give no external advantage to a cultivator that they didn't gain themselves or to protect them.

Since there were no Saint realm cultivators in this tournament, the usage of Saint artifacts was banned. Anyone found using it would be immediately disqualified.

They were also allowed only 5 different items, in general, to take with them to every battle that would be checked beforehand.

That would include any not artifact items such as formation flags and talismans as well, both of which could also not be of Saint rank.

Taking pills to enhance oneself before a match was also banned, and if found out, one could be disqualified depending on what pill one ate.

For people that fought with beasts and puppets, they could not have more than 2 of those on the stage at the same time. The rules allowed for interchanging them, but up to 4 beasts or puppets at max.

Finally, there was the general rule of not harming someone deliberately, but this wasn't that intense of a rule as Saint realms would act as referees for these matches.

Alex arrived in a room that looked familiar yet different. The competition was taking place in the same place where the Alchemy competition was held, but somehow due to the changes done to the stage and room, it felt different.

He walked in and saw a bunch of people all looking around the walls at something that Alex couldn't see properly due to the many people that crowded it.

He went on to check what one of those was and saw that it was a bunch of information about who would fight who.

'It's just a bunch of numbers though,' he thought. 'Except that one.'

Guo Chiang was written on the top right of the match bracket and he would be fighting someone who was number 84.

'Guo Chiang, I've seen this guy before, haven't I?' Alex thought. He remembered back to those group of elites in front of the House of Undying, and recalled a young man with a ghostly face wearing a robe of green and blue.

He tried searching for him in the room, but it was way too crowded to find without using his Spiritual sense.

'The top disciple from the Broken Ravine sect. So he must be one of the seeded people huh? It's surprising they're letting their names be known so easily while everyone else's names are hidden behind a number.'

Alex looked around and saw there were about 16 of these things, each with 64 different numbers on them.

'Each of those must have one of the 16 seeded participants,' Alex thought. 'Which one is mine?'

Alex walked around for a bit before finding a registration-type area that was handing out numbers to the people that came up to them.

"Hello, I'm looking for my number," Alex went up to them.

The people there asked for his name and affiliation, which Alex gave them.

The man that heard his name gave a weird look. "Are you the miracle alchemist?" he asked.

"Um, I believe people are calling me that," Alex said.

"I didn't know you would be taking part in the tournament," the man said.

Alex gave a small smile and said, "Yes, I am. Can you please help me find my number?"

"Oh right," the man went back to searching for his number and soon came up with it.

"Number 746, huh? Let's see which group I'm in."

Alex walked around the room for a bit before coming across Group 12 which contained players from 705 to 768.

Before viewing anything else, his eyes immediately went to the top right of the bracket to look at the person that was seeded in his group.

"He Liwei," Alex read his name. He didn't remember this man clearly, but he did know that the Glory's Edge sect wore a black and gold robes, so that made it easier to pick him out from the elite group that imprinted onto his head.

'Is it that young man?' he thought as he recalled his memory from nearly a decade ago.

He would have to see on his own later on. Fortunately, he wasn't the one fighting against that young man. He wouldn't want to fight a seeded fighter, at least not this early in the competition.

However, given that he was on the same side of the bracket, if both he and Alex continued winning, the man would be Alex's 4th opponent.

'For now, I have nothing to do but wait huh?' he thought and walked around.

Just then, someone tapped his shoulders. Alex turned around and saw a familiar face, that he would rather not see today.

"Brother Yu, you really are here," Zhou Ren spoke to him from behind.

"Brother Zhou, it's been a while." Alex looked at his cultivation base and realized he was in the True Emperor realm. That too at quite a high place.

'True Emperor 6th realm, huh? That's not bad,' Alex thought.

"When I heard that you were not only alive but also taking part in the tournament, I thought they were playing some kind of prank on me. However, it seems they weren't lying at all," Zhou Ren said. "What group are you in?"

"12," Alex said simply.

"Great, I'm in 8. That means we won't fight until the top 16 or actually top 8," Zhou Ren said. "Although, I doubt you will make it that far. But hey, who knows right? Maybe you will end up beating that snobby little He Liwei somehow."

"Well, it will feel good to be better than you at fighting at least," Zhou Ren said as he felt great about himself.

Alex couldn't believe how self-centered this man was.

"I will go look around the place now," Alex said and turned to leave.

"Nonsense," Zhou Ren put an arm around his shoulders. "Come, since you are one of the most popular younger generation people, you should hang out with your own peers."

Zhou Ren took him over to the corner of the room where the crowd had parted giving space for the people that were hanging out there.

Alex was now going to finally meet with most of the elites of the younger generation.

Chapter 789: Meeting the Elites

"Alchemist Yu, you're here," Liang Qiu and Han Daiyu walked up to meet Alex and started talking.

"I see you've already met these two," Zhou Ren said and turned to the rest. "Everyone, over here," he called out to the group.

"Come and meet the miracle Alchemist that returned from the dead just to fight in the tournament with us. This is brother Yu Ming," Zhou Ren introduced him.

"Brother Yu, it's great to see you again. I didn't think you would make it so far so quickly." Fu Tao walked in front of them all and bowed his head.

"It's a pleasure to see you here, brother Yu," Lu Yan walked in front and cupped her hands in greeting.

"Greetings, brother Tao, sister Yan." Alex cupped his hands and greeted them back as well. 'True Emperor 9th realm, True Emperor 7th realm. Both of them got quite strong, huh?'

"Huh? You two already know him?" Zhou Ren asked.

"We met each other back when we were lost in the Beast Realm. Brother Yu here comes from the empire beyond the forest in the north," Fu Tao explained.

Alex sighed. 'The cat's out of the bag. Not that there was ever in a bag to begin with,' he thought. It was only a matter of time before people learned about this.

"I heard you were in the empire and returned a few months ago, is that true?" Fu Tao asked.

"Ah, City lord Fu must've made it there safely then. Yes, I was in the empire. After my near-death experience in Icy Hell, I decided to go see my masters and fellow disciples again," Alex said.

"I see. You must have a way through the beast realm now then," Fu Tao said.

"Somewhat, yes," Alex said.

"Enough talk you two. Brother Yu needs to meet with the others too," Zhou Ren said. Zhou Ren turned toward Xue Meirong.

"You've already met Meirong right, so no need to introduce you there," Zhou Ren said.

Alex saw Meirong subtly nod at him and he nodded back in greeting.

"This is brother Guo Chiang, from the Broken Ravine sect. One of the strongest amongst us."

Alex looked at the deathly-faced man that looked bored out of his mind. He humphed a bit when Zhou Ren spoke, but other than that showed no other reaction towards them. 'True Emperor 9th realm,' Alex read his cultivation base as well.

"This is sister Shen Hua, from the Shen family."

"Hello," the blue-haired girl cheerfully greeted Alex.

"Hello," Alex greeted her back too. 'True Emperor 5th?' She was one of the weaker ones there.

"This is brother Jin Tengfei, from the Jin family."

Alex greeted the yellow-robed man and saw surprised that his cultivation base wasn't very high for some reason.

However, now that he thought about it, he never had a strong cultivation base back in the Demon realm either. What made him strong was his Sword Qi.

Now that it had been nearly 10 years, it was bound to get stronger for sure.

"And finally, this is brother Song Shing, from the Song family," Zhou Ren introduced him.

Alex greeted the tall, long-haired man in the bloody red robe and smelt iron in the air around him.

'Such strong Blood aura,' he thought. 'On top of that, he is a True Emperor 9th realm too.'

Until now, there were only 4 different people he had seen with that cultivation base. Fu Tao, Song Shing, Guo Chiang, and Liang Qiu.

"Well, I would introduce you to the prince that is one of our seeds too, but... wait, aren't I missing someone?" Zhou Ren looked around.

"Oh hey, what are you all talking about?"

A short and thin man with a mouse-like face walked up to them from somewhere.

"Ah, here he is," Zhou Ren said.

"Brother Yu, meet He Liwei, the strongest disciple of the Glory's Edge sect," Zhou Ren explained.

"Yu? As in the Alchemist Yu?" the short man turned to Alex. "Oh, it really is you. I've seen you in those talisman recordings. It's great to meet you, miracle Alchemist."

The young man walked up to Alex and shook his hand. Alex shook his hand as well and just then he realized what he had done wrong.

"Oh, you know what this is," the man said as a smile appeared on his face. "I didn't think I would find a fellow trapped man in this tournament."

"What are you talking about?" Zhou Ren asked as he couldn't make head or tail of He Liwei's words.

"Nothing, just a secret between two men," He Liwei smiled at Alex.

Alex gave a smile back as well, but in his heart, he was cursing himself for getting caught up in the moment.

'Goddammit! He's a player. I got caught up in the moment,' he thought. 'Is it bad? Will something happen if he knows I'm from the central continent? In the first place, he shouldn't know about it.'

Alex started thinking of all the things that could go bad from others knowing that he was a player, but for the most part, he couldn't come up with anything.

'Maybe I don't have to worry about it in the first place,' he thought.

Alex checked his cultivation base and realized he had a True Emperor 6th realm cultivation base.

'That's... doable. Unless he has some tricks up his sleeve,' Alex thought.

"Well, good job on making friends with the miracle alchemist Liwei, because he's in your group," Zhou Ren said.

"He's in my... what?" He Liwei turned to look at Alex. "You're in my group?"

Alex nodded. "If all goes well, we will meet in the fourth round," he said.

"Aw, that sucks man. Well, at least you'll make it to the Top 128 if that happens. That's something for an Alchemist like you," He Liwei said.

Alex felt a hint of anger boil up in his heart, but he didn't show it on his face.

"I will try and overcome my obstacle then," Alex said.

"You don't mean me right?" He Liwei's face turned into a grin.

"Not necessarily you. I meant whoever is in my path throughout the tournament. Be it you, or something that beat you and took your place," Alex said.

"No one is doing that," He Liwei shook his head while his grin turned maniacal.

Alex turned away from him and looked toward Zhou Ren. "What about the rest of the seeded people? I don't see them," he said.

"Well, I can't help you on that end. Even I don't know who they are. I believe they've been chosen from the strongest rogue cultivators, so they must have been selected somewhere else. I saw their names, but I don't recognize any of them."

"I suspect we will know them soon," Liang Qiu spoke up. "But now, it seems we have to start moving."

She gestured towards the other side of the room where the staff was beginning to pour in to gather them up.

"Everyone please gather by your group in front of your brackets," A staff asked and everyone started walking up to them.

Alex walked along with He Liwei to make up the 64 people group that would be fighting amongst themselves until a single one remained.

"Number 705 and 706, you're up."

Chapter 790: First Fight

The fight happening outside was shown inside the room. A big screen hung over each of the groups showing them the matches from their group.

Alex watched two people fight against each other using swords and spears.

The fight went on for a while before one of them won with a close victory.

Alex saw the staff member go and switch his number forward in the bracket and called out the next two participants.

'One loss and we're gone huh?' Alex thought as he looked at the new set of fighters arriving on the stage.

One by one, the people fought their way through their opponents until it was He Liwei's turn to fight.

Alex watched the man on-screen and saw him fight casually and win against his opponent. 'That was just normal hand-to-hand combat. He didn't even need to use any techniques,' he thought.

A few more people went onto the stage to fight, and finally, it was his turn.

"Number 745 and 746," the staff member called out.

Alex walked forward towards the staff and saw a girl walk out from the same group. The pink and green colored girl belonged to the Falling Lotus sect if he wasn't mistaken.

However, given that her cultivation base was around True King 7th realm, Alex knew she wasn't anyone big in that sect.

In fact, she was weak enough that Alex wouldn't even have to worry about hiding his power yet.

The staff asked for their storage bags and checked them to make sure that everything was according to the rules.

Alex had brought exactly 5 items, so he was let go.

The two of them reached the stage, and Alex felt the referee's spiritual sense land on him.

He tried feeling the woman's cultivation base, but it was so high in the Saint rank that he couldn't properly tell.

He looked at the referee's blue robe and knew she was from the Shen family.

'Focus on the match,' Alex told himself and watched the other girl bring out a thin, rapier-like sword from her storage bag.

Alex already knew she had to be wearing armor as everyone else did, and got ready to fight. He didn't bring out any weapons, however, as he didn't find the need to.

The sun had already gone way past the afternoon phase and was only a few hours away from setting.

The referee looked at both of them to see if they were ready, and when she realized they were, she started the fight.

"Begin!"

The girl slashed a few attacks toward Alex to check on his reflexes.

Alex dodged to the side. Seeing the direction Alex was moving toward, the girl got to work.

She immediately dashed forward while stabbing her sword into the air multiple times in a single second.

Each one of those stabs created a single golden line of attack that flew towards Alex.

Alex saw the Metal attacks coming his way and immediately changed direction.

The girl landed halfway through her dash and switched her direction too, following Alex to attack him.

The rogue attacks landed on the barrier around the stage that was protecting the audience from the fighters and vice versa.

Before even coming to the stage, the girl had realized that there was likely no chance of winning against Alex, given that his cultivation was 2 realms higher than her own.

However, she needed to win this round. At the very least, she couldn't be the first person to leave her sect.

For that, she needed to not let Alex attack at all. And that was exactly what she was doing.

Alex had to immediately run in the other direction when he saw the barrage of metal attacks come his way.

"AAAARGH!" the girl shouted as she kept stabbing onto the air even as her hand ached.

She turned as she attacked since her target kept moving.

Alex was weaving through her attacks, zig-zagging around the stage while slowly closing in on her.

He could have simply knocked her out already, or teleported behind her and won. Or, he could've attacked her, which could've hit her.

However, he didn't. He needed to hide his skills, abilities, and power until the right moment. At the very least, he wanted to give He Liwei a taste of what he could do since he had openly underestimated him.

As he got closer, it became harder and harder to dodge. However, he could see that the girl was struggling, so he had a chance.

Alex suddenly stopped moving and the metal shots all landed on him.

The girl rejoiced when she saw that her attacks landed and started attacking more and more.

She sent out maybe 5 hundred of such attacks before her Qi nearly ran out and she was unable to move her arm at all.

The cloud of dust rose high where she attacked and breathed in relief. However, when she saw the referee stand there, doing nothing, she worried.

Suddenly, the dust moved as Alex flew out. Next to him was a flying shield that hovered around him.

The girl was both surprised and scared. At the same time, she moved her feet and ran backward.

The place they were fighting on was about 250 meters by 250 meters, so there were plenty of areas for them to run around in.

As Alex closed on her, the girl sent out random attacks to deter him, but the shield moved on its own to block the attacks.

The girl stopped running away and placed her palm on the ground. Suddenly, vines sprung out of the ground, trying to catch Alex.

Each one of the green vines was about the size of his arm. If they grabbed him, it would be like getting constricted by a dozen different pythons.

A golden claw appeared on his two hands at the same time as he jumped forward towards the vines and swung at them.

Like a butcher's knife through meat, the claws cleaved away all the vines until they were completely useless.

The girl was surprised to see that he could fight the vines so easily. She started preparing some other attacks, but Alex wasn't going to let her do that.

He employed his movement skill and suddenly all resistance was removed from him as his speed nearly tripled and he arrived in front of the girl.

The girl's armor lit up to protect herself, but Alex was way too strong for her.

He kept away his Qi and simply used his physical force to punch the girl.

Even then, she was sent flying into the air as she landed a few dozen meters away, and skidded along the stage until she was out of bounds.

The referee had to run to grab her before she caused problems on the other side where another match was going on.

She quickly checked the girl and found out that she was okay.

"Can you get up?" she asked the girl who looked around in a daze for a while before nodding slowly.

"Good." The referee brought her up to her feet and turned toward Alex.

"Congratulations, you win."

Alex bowed towards the referee and the girl he hit and walked away.