

Alchemy 801

Chapter 801: Called onto the Stage

Alex was left alone for the most part by everyone. Even Zhou Ren who would annoyingly talk with him from time to time never came close after he beat He Liwei.

Not even Liang Qiu or Han Daiyu came to talk with him aside from a few words here and there.

However, Alex understood that they weren't ignoring him or trying to keep their distance from him, but rather they were way too focused on their own battle to think about.

The cultivation base amongst the fighters was so high now that it was no longer a fight between True Qi users.

It was a fight between Saint Qi users.

Alex was the only one that did not fight with Saint Qi.

After a night of cultivation, Alex returned to the arena on his own and sat on an empty seat in the finalist's quarters.

He looked at the giant display that had the name of all the winners of the 16 different groups.

As Alex read through their name, he understood why the seeds were who they were. Aside from He Liwei and Shen Hua, all the other 14 seeded individuals had made their way to the top 16.

He Liwei only lost because he was up against Alex. As for Shen Hua, she was never a fighter to begin with. She was also a bit too young to be here. This was supposed to be her sister's fight, but unfortunately, she had died over a decade ago.

Still, with her True Emperor 5th realm cultivation base, she had managed to be seeded. But a healer could rarely beat a warrior.

That was the only reason she lost. Because she was not a fighter.

That truly went to show that the ones that did make it through weren't popular for no reason.

Alex looked through the names in pairs and stopped on 11 and 12. Lin Shun and Yu Ming. His next opponent was to be one of the rogue cultivators.

'At least it isn't the man that was that raided a sect by himself,' Alex thought. He watched the stairs and after a few people walked through, saw the man named Lin Shun walk on.

'True Emperor 7th realm? That should be doable,' Alex thought to himself. He had already beat He Liwei who had about the same cultivation base and the girl from yesterday that had that same cultivation base.

So long as the man didn't have any weird skills that Alex couldn't understand, he would win no matter what. He had that much confidence in himself.

As everyone arrived and it was time to start.

The host started welcoming everyone to the Top 16. Alex waited for the formalities to end so that the fights may begin.

However, he was instead surprised by the host.

"Will all 16 of the finalists please come on to the stage?"

Alex was surprised, certainly, but he thought nothing strange of it. As far as he was concerned, the host was showing the 16 finalists on stage.

However, when he reached the stage, a group of staff members brought out a large box and placed it in the center of the stage.

"Winner of Group 1, please come and pick out something from the box," the host said.

Fu Tao looked with a weird face, confused as to what was happening, but he still went on to pick something out from the box.

"Please keep it closed for now," the host said and called the next person.

One by one, they all walked over to the box and picked out a wooden box. Those who could use spiritual sense used it on theirs, but to their surprise, they couldn't see through the box.

"Please open it," the host spoke.

Everyone simultaneously opened their box to see what it was. Alex opened his and found a single card inside that said the number 6.

"Huh?" he looked confused.

"3?" Liang Qiu looked around with a confused look.

"5," Song Shing said.

"I got 1," Fu tao spoke up.

"Everyone, please quiet down," the host spoke up. He waited for the people to stop talking and asked, "who got 1?"

Fu Tao raised his hand and so did Zhou Ren.

Suddenly, a massive screen hovered in the air as a tournament bracket appeared on it. The moment the people saw that they realized what it was.

'Our next opponent,' Alex thought.

"Who got 2?" the host asked again.

This time, Lu Yan raised her hand and so did the rogue cultivator that was said to have fought the entire mid-tier sect.

The 3rd pair ended up being Liang Qiu against Xue Meirong.

The 4th pair was Han Daiyu against the girl that defeated the lady from the Shen family to be here.

The 5th pair was Song Shing against one of the two rogue female cultivators that were seeded in the battle.

The 6th pair was the one Alex was in. When the number was called out, Alex raised his hand and showed himself.

At the same time, another hand was raised near him, one that had a yellow sleeve on it with criss-cross patterns on it.

'Jin Tenfei?' Alex looked in surprise.

However, the host didn't wait for him and continued on.

The 7th pair was the prince against the other rogue female cultivator.

Finally, the two remaining people, Guo Chiang and Lin Shun ended up as the 8th pair in the competition today.

Alex looked at the bracket in visible shock. His next opponent was Jin Tengfei.

While Jin Tengfei only had a cultivation base of True Emperor 7th realm, he was most likely the strongest swordsman in the competition.

10 years ago, he had already mastered the Sword Qi while Alex hadn't even discovered his own at the time.

Who knew how strong he was at the moment. He was certainly strong enough to get through the rounds without revealing much swordsmanship after all.

The bracket truly scared Alex, but it wasn't just because of Jin Tengei. Say he won against Jin Tengfei and entered the top 8. That was certainly hard, but not impossible. But after that, he would most likely come face to face with Song Shing, a True Emperor 9th realm cultivator.

He was one of the 4 people that everyone was betting on to win the whole competition.

If Alex found some heaven-sent powers and managed to defeat him, he would then have to go up against Guo Chiang, another one of the 4 people everyone was betting on. A True Emperor 9th realm cultivator.

If by some dumb luck he managed to win that too, he would have to go against either Fu Tao or Liang Qiu, another 2 that were almost guaranteed to win the whole thing. Both of them were at True Emperor 9th realm after all.

Alex felt scared of the upcoming matches as any one of them could be his final one.

It wasn't just Alex that felt scared. Every single one of the finalists could see just how dire the situation was.

4 different True Emperor 9th realm cultivators, by luck or intentional orchestration, had managed to fall on the four quadrants of the bracket.

Whether it was this round or the next one, everyone single one of them would have to face one of them, and nothing could be scarier than that.

Chapter 802: Sword Qi

Alex sat on the bench, worried about his match, but he needed to focus on what was happening in front of him.

The elites of the elites were starting to fight, and he needed to make sure he didn't miss anything.

Fu Tao stood in front of Zhou Ren. Neither of them held a weapon in their hands.

The moment the match started, Zhou Ren immediately started using his fire skills. Orbs, arrows, javelin, rope, whip, and all other sorts of fire skills flew towards Fu Tao who continued dodging without much struggle.

He was 2 realms above Zhou Ren, so even though the fire attacks were made of White Fire, he was still fine.

Fu Tao himself retaliated with normal fire attacks, which Zhou Ren struggled to dodge or counter either with his strong attacks or his movement skills.

As he dodged, his earring kept on flashing with light. Fu Tao had been bombarding him with spiritual attacks that were truly hard for Zhou Ren to skip out of.

Very soon, the earring lost all power and Zhou Ren took the full brunt of what Alex could only imagine being similar to Heaven's Impact.

He fell to the ground unconscious and Fu Tao won.

Next up was Lu Yan against perhaps the strongest rogue cultivator in the competition.

Lu Yan never really fought seriously, but her opponent this time pretty much forced her to.

Between attacks and defenses and control skills and movement techniques, this fight lasted quite a while.

The only way for Lu Yan to win that fight had been through the use of her ultimate skill which had Alex quite surprised.

Lu Yan had a superior Wood spiritual root, like everyone in her family. Perhaps, she had one of the best ever.

As such when she used her technique, the wind rushed past her opponent to move to the sky as it got even more violent up there.

Alex wondered what she was doing when she suddenly did it.

Every element existed in various forms that could be used to imitate the various aspects of the world.

Yang could create life and light. Yin could create death and darkness. Water could create ice. Earth could create crystals and sands. Fire could create poison. So on and so forth.

The wood element was the same as well.

Aside from growing plants, vines, and other things, someone with wood elemental spiritual roots could create wind as well.

However, that was not the only thing they could use. There was one more thing they could use.

The wind in the sky got more and more violent, and the man knew he would lose if he didn't do something.

He dashed forward to defeat Lu Yan, but Lu Yan moved before the man could reach her.

She lifted her hands to the sky and pulled it down to the ground.

CRACK!

A massive bolt of lightning dropped from the sky hitting the man right in front of Lu Yan.

Lu Yan quickly backed away, but she didn't need to. Her opponent was fully unconscious.

Alex looked to the sky and wondered what would happen if he was ever hit by that. He had ever only heard about the Wood element being the primary source of lightning for a cultivator, but aside from the Heavenly Judgment, this was the first time he had seen an unnatural lightning bolt.

The next fight with Liang Qiu didn't last long as her Spear Qi was too strong for Xue Meirong to handle.

Han Daiyu won almost as quickly by sending out barrage after barrage of her quick but heavy hammer attacks.

Song Shing's battle was quite interesting for Alex to see. He fought with blood aura, but he never used his own. Instead, he brought out small vials of blood that he would break and then use to fight.

His match lasted barely a few minutes as the overwhelming strength he portrayed made the opponent give up a bit too quickly.

Alex feared being pitted against him, but that feeling would have to take a sidestep as his real threat walked right past him.

Jin Tengfei walked in front of Alex, down to the stage and Alex followed soon after.

The stage didn't need to be fixed with how quickly the previous match was, so before long both Alex and Jin Tengfei were on the stage.

Alex looked at the lean man that was about his height with golden-blond hair and holding a magnificent, black sword in his hand.

Alex thought for a moment about how to approach this battle. All this time he had been thinking, but the threat was never before him to urge him to come up with something.

Now that he saw his opponent, he needed something.

'How do I win this?' he tried to find an answer, but there never really was one, to begin with. The only answer was to give it his all and even then there was a great chance that Alex could lose.

Alex decided to change his approach. If there was no way to win this match, then he would instead find a way to learn from it.

After all, Jin Tengfei was the strongest swordsman in the younger generation.

Alex readied his sword and waited.

The moment the referee realized they were both ready, she began the match.

Jin Tengfei wasted no time and sent a golden slash in Alex's direction with no Sword Qi in it. There wasn't even much Sword Intent in it at all.

'He's testing me?' Alex thought and swung his sword to toss it to the side. At the same time, Jin Tengfei sent out another slash at Alex.

Alex's own sword glowed white with his sword intent as he hit the incoming slash as hard as he could and destroyed it.

Jin Tengfei looked with a pleasantly surprised face and nodded to himself as if he had something confirmed to him.

Then, he sent out his final slash.

Alex took a deep breath as his sword that was glowing with Sword Intent suddenly started glowing with Sword Qi.

The audience members who noticed that suddenly gasped. Even Jin Tengfei was surprised. He had expected Alex to know Sword Intent, but he hadn't expected him to know Sword Qi at all. No one did.

How the hell could an alchemist of his level ever have the time to grasp such a deep understanding of the way of the sword.

Alex swung his sword and a white slash went forward, directly hitting the incoming sword slash.

And it easily overpowered Jin Tengfei's own attack.

However, that wasn't all. Jin Tengfei noticed something in Alex's attacks that he had only noticed in select members of his family.

When Alex's sword slash landed on his own, he could see the sword slash pushing back his own even after defeating it. It was pushing it back to the point that even after his slash was gone, Alex's continued forward as if it hadn't hit anything.

Jin Tengfei simply swung his sword to get rid of this incoming attack, but it still struck his heart with fear.

After all, Alex's Sword Qi already had a characteristic, a personality to it, so to speak.

And that scared Jin Tengfei. After all, the only time a sword attack could possibly have a characteristic of its own was when one had transcended Sword Qi, and reached the realm of Sword Aura.

Chapter 803: Illusory Swords

Saint Qi flowed out of Jin Tengfei's palms and entered the sword he held. As soon as he did, he covered his sword with his Sword Qi and slashed toward Alex in a hurry.

The Sword Aura had freaked him out so he hit as hard as he could at once.

Alex saw the slash coming and sent his own sword slash back. However, it didn't really do much against Jin Tengfei's attack aside from making it weaker, which his body was able to handle.

Jin Tengfei gave a weird look. 'Why didn't he stop that?' he wondered.

Alex tried to dash forward, but the man used the same attack again, forcing Alex to either attack back or get out of the way.

Alex used the first sword attack of the Elusive Heavenly Dance to attack back.

While sending out Qi slashes were nice and all, they didn't carry the damage that came from his Body Cultivation. Since he was clearly the weaker of the two when it came to just Qi and Sword Qi, Alex had to put his body into the fight too.

The golden slash disappeared into a bunch of light, surprising Jin Tengfei again.

This time, he could only be said to be confused.

'How strong is he? Is he weaker than me or not?' he thought. He didn't expect Alex to be a body cultivator at all, so between the two attacks he made, he couldn't get a clear idea of Alex's strength.

'Does he have Sword Aura or not?' he thought.

Alex used the moment of confusion to send out Heaven's impact attack, but obviously, Jin Tengfei had to be wearing a defensive mental artifact.

"Tsk!" Alex thought. He could try a couple of times and try to fight back against that defense, but he could only use so many Heaven's Impact.

Over the course of the many years, his spiritual energy had only grown denser but not vaster.

As a result, while his mental attacks were incredibly strong, they couldn't really be used a lot consecutively.

'Should I throw it all out and hope for the best? Or should I keep it so I can use my spiritual sense?' he wondered.

After thinking for a bit, he came to an answer. 'That should be my worst-case scenario. If all else fails, I use that,' Alex thought and rushed forward.

Friction disappeared from all around him like snow on a hot day. His speed doubled if not tripled as he arrived in front of Jin Tengfei.

Their swords clashed and they started fighting in close combat.

Jin Tengfei's sword was filled with Saint Qi, while Alex drew on the power of his body.

Tengfei swung his sword horizontally. Alex swung his own sword to send it aside and followed through to stab at Tengfei.

Tengfei leaned to the side and dodged the stab as he swung at Alex.

Alex had his arms outstretched and couldn't bring them back in time to dodge at all. So instead, he simply teleported behind Tengfei and swung at him.

Tengfei immediately ducked as he too was midswing and couldn't do anything else to dodge. He slashed his blade backward without looking and accurately struck Alex's sword.

He quickly moved forward and turned around to look at Alex, but he couldn't see him at all.

'Huh?' he quickly swung behind him, but he only met with empty air.

"What the he—"

BANG!

A strong attack landed on Jin Tengfei's armor that barely managed to block him from getting hurt.

He was sent back a few steps before he stopped. Jin Tengfei remembered how He Liwei lost his match.

'Shit! He's invisible,' he thought. A wave of Qi floated all around him as he used his Qi sense to locate Alex.

He sent out a sword slash in Alex's direction with was met with Alex's sword.

'I can't do it,' Jin Tengfei thought. 'I can't win like this.'

Alex teleported in front of Jin Tengfei, but he was ready for his this time. The sword landed on the other sword as sparks flew in the air.

Alex was pushed back as he came out of invisibility. With Qi sense, it didn't make sense to keep being invisible anymore.

Alex thought of using explosions instead of just swordsmanship, but with the armor his opponent had, it didn't make sense.

"I need to—" Alex paused as Jin Tengfei suddenly brought out two more swords from his storage.

Three swords flew around him, while he wore armor and a defensive mental artifact. All 5 of the artifacts that were allowed to be used were on show now.

The three swords hung in the air with their tips pointed downward, and slowly they started circling Jin Tengfei.

Alex got cautious and got into a position to fight again. As he did so, he saw new swords from around Jin Tengfei.

They were all made up of white light as if they had been constructed solely from Sword Qi.

Numerous white swords like that formed around him, all of which were powered by his saint Qi. In the end, there were 21 swords in total hovering around Jin Tengfei.

'Shit!' Alex thought.

Suddenly, the swords started flying toward Alex. Alex smashed one of the white swords into pieces, while he hit one of the real swords that flew at him.

He was pushed back a little but he quickly got hold of himself to strike away the next illusory sword as well.

One after another, the 21 different flying swords attacked Alex relentlessly.

The illusory ones were destroyed, while the real ones were only pushed back. Since the swords had both Qi and Sword Qi, each attack was equivalent to a normal attack by Jin Tengfei.

Which meant that Alex had to give it all to survive.

Through the attacks, Alex saw that Jin Tengfei was continuously recreating more illusory swords to count for the ones he had lost.

After a while, the swords stopped attacking Alex.

When Alex finally had a chance to breathe, he couldn't as fear took over him at the sight of what was in front of him.

21 swords. 3 real ones at the front, 6 illusory ones behind it, and 9 more behind that formed 3 layers of swords that started spinning around quickly.

The audience watched this move with great intent. After all, it wasn't every day that someone got to see the Jin Family's famed 21 Sword Array.

Alex took a deep breath as he readied himself for the attack. His body turned marbled as the defensive technique activated.

A simple barrier appeared in front of him too. At the same time, he clutched his sword as hard as he could and poured everything he had into it, waiting for the array of swords to come down upon him like hellfire.

When it did, Alex moved.

Alex struck back as hard as he could as he clashed against the 21 different swords. He struggled for a moment, his sword Qi pushing back against the attack even as it was destroyed.

However, none of this managed to stop the sword array's attacks at all. This resulted in a deafening blast that sent both Alex and Jin Tengfei tumbling backward.

Alex hit the ground as he heard the clanks of many things that fell next to him. He wearily looked to the side and saw the broken pieces of his sword.

He tried to lift his arm to check the state of the sword he was holding, but to his surprise, he couldn't move his arm at all.

He tried to force it, but that only brought on more pain. When he used his spiritual sense to see what had happened, he saw the broken sword in his palm. As his senses moved upwards, he could see the many parts of his skin that had split open from the force of the attack.

As a result, the bones on his right arm had also been broken.

Alex's was fine for the most part, but his right arm was mostly unusable anymore.

His spiritual sense expanded as it fell on Jin Tengfei who had already managed to stand back up. The most he was feeling was a little disoriented.

Even then, he was back in shape already.

Alex slowly got up back to fight.

Jin Tengfei started to gather up his swords again as he used the final remaining bit of Saint Qi to create the array again.

Alex looked at the swords that were starting to gather in the sky again. He sighed.

An illusory sword only he and the referee could see appeared in his hand. "If a sword fight is what you want, then shall give it to you."

Chapter 804: Wounded

Alex stood up straight. He looked at his mangled arm which was starting to swell.

'If only they allowed to bring a pill here,' he thought. His spiritual sense was fully spread all around him, surprising even the referee to how big it really was.

People had known from his previous fights that he had it. If not for sure, they had an educated guess. So, the referee had come to the match expecting to see it.

However, when she really saw the side of his spiritual sense, she was truly surprised.

Most True realm cultivators that had spiritual sense could expand it to 60 or 70 meters at best, which would give them about 100 meters of sense if they forced it to.

However, Alex didn't seem to be straining her eyes and even then he had the entire stage covered easily.

'Can it go more,' she thought. Just then, she noticed something with her eyes that her senses had ignored.

In his left hand, there was a sword. Or so her senses had told her. This was pretty normal as people had backup weapons.

However, when she looked for it, it wasn't there at all. Only her spiritual sense could see it. Even then she couldn't feel any Qi from it.

'What's going on?' she started worrying that she might make some mistake in judging the fight since she had some knowledge missing.

Alex looked at the flying swords and frowned. Those were truly strong and there were many.

However, many swords also helped him in a way. Many swords created many shadows.

Although only 3 of them were real, that was 3 more shadows on the ground than before that he could use.

When Jin Tengfei saw Alex stand up again, he used his 21 Sword Array and the swords flew back down at Alex.

A punch and a palm strike flew directly at the incoming attack. They hit the front 3 swords, but that only paused them for a bit.

However, that pause alone was enough for Alex.

Jin Tengfei saw Alex suddenly move forward towards him and appeared halfway in between them.

Then, he disappeared again.

'Shit!' he thought. He immediately turned his swords around and pulled them back to attack Alex.

He turned around in time to see Alex swing a punch at him. He managed to back away just in time to miss it by a bit.

However, he felt his defensive mental artifact on his chest go warm. The warmth never faded as Alex's eye fell on him.

Jin Tengfei wasn't an idiot. He immediately realized what was happening. 'Spiritual sense?' he thought as his eyes went wide. 'This damn kid is like Fu Tao.'

His final bit of Saint Qi was all he could rely on to win at this point, but those Saint Qi were flying around the sky, unable to strike Alex.

The Sword Array was his last chance at victory, however, Alex kept dodging it. He could only think of a single thing to do.

The direction of the swords suddenly changed as they fell towards Jin Tengfei himself. At the same time, Alex also teleported right next to him.

Alex saw the swords in the sky, but the shadows were clustered in a single area, so he couldn't teleport to run away.

Jin Tengfei didn't run as that would allow Alex the opportunity to escape too.

Alex didn't know what to do so he punched Jin Tengfei as hard as he could, and Jin Tengfei allowed the attack with an open arm.

The punch landed on the chest and sent Jin Tengfei flying, and the sword array landed on Alex at the same time.

With no time to do anything, Alex put up his right arm in reflex as his defensive technique took over him.

His already bad arm was getting worse as they started chewing through his skin and then his muscles. Soon they would reach his bones and completely sever the arm.

The referee tried to move to save him, but Alex didn't let her. 'Don't!' his voice entered her head.

Suddenly, fire burned on top of Alex's arm and that was the only thing he could think of to save himself.

"EXPLODE!" he shouted.

BOOM~!

A massive explosion sent shockwaves through the stadium as even the barriers shook to let the audience know just how strong the explosion was.

Helen gasped when she saw her son's body tumble through the stage towards one of the corners.

He hadn't crossed the boundary at all, but that didn't matter at all if he was dead. Tears welled up in her eyes as she wished for him to be fine.

As if hearing her pray, Alex slowly stood up. The right side of his face was charred and bloody. His chest was equally bad as half his robe was gone, and his well-defined body was burnt and bleeding.

Worst of all, half of his right arm was missing. His stump bled a bit, but not much.

Alex was in incredible pain and turned to look at Jin Tengfei's horrified face. When he saw that, he smiled.

The creepy smile only worked to terrify Tengfei even more.

His spiritual sword appeared on his left hand as he dashed forward towards Jin Tengfei.

Tengfei had expected the match to be over, but Alex was clearly still fighting. He looked towards the referee who too was confused as to what she had to do.

Seeing her not move, he understood that the fight hadn't ended yet, so he brought back his swords and prepared his array again.

Unfortunately, he no longer had Saint Qi to make it as strong as before. Now, it would only be as strong as his Qi and Sword Qi could make them.

Still, he believed that would be enough to beat Alex, given how run down he was at the moment.

The sword array moved down from the sky at Alex while he prepared for Alex to teleport again. However, Alex did no such thing.

After sensing the strength behind the Qi, Alex knew there was no more Saint Qi in the swords. So, without hesitation, he appeared in front of it with a single fist burning bright in golden light.

A single punch landed on the 21 different swords. The audience watched in disbelief as the punch easily overwhelmed the 21 swords.

The 18 different illusory swords vanished, while the 3 real ones were heavily damaged without the protection of Saint Qi.

Alex arrived in front of him and punched Jin Tengfei again. However, Jin Tengfei had been ready for it, so he dodged it.

Still, he felt the artifact around his chest go warm. His mind screamed in terror as he realized he was being mentally attacked.

Alex punched at him again and he dodged, but the artifact went warm again.

Again and again, the attacks kept piling up on Jin Tengfei. He tried to fight back, but even wounded, Alex was stronger than him when he didn't have any Saint Qi.

So, after a while when his artifact finally failed, Alex's spiritual sword went across his neck and Jin Tengfei suddenly lost consciousness.

Alex stood up straight, albeit breathing heavily, while Jin Tengfei was on the ground.

Alex raised his only hand in victory while the crowd cheered along with him.

Alex had won, and now he would move on to the Top 8.

Chapter 805: Nothing

Alex stumbled back as the loss of blood finally started catching up to him. He barely held himself as the pain was slowly overcoming his adrenaline.

However, it was still not potent enough to make him make a sound.

The referee quickly ran up to him and caught him before he hit the ground.

"You stupid child, why did you tell me not to help?" she asked angrily as she produced a pill from her storage bag to quickly feed it to him.

Alex didn't care what percentage the pill was or what pill it was even real. All he knew was that was a healing pill and that was all he really needed to know.

He quickly swallowed the pill and everything that was damaged, including his right eye was slowly healed.

Before a minute even passed, all the charred and burnt skin around his body came back to normal. However, he was once more stuck with a stump for his right hand.

Without even thinking much about the stump, Alex instead started thinking if he should eat the pill during the tournament or after.

'People will get suspicious if I get my arm back now. Maybe I should wait a bit,' he thought.

"I'm going to get reprimanded because of you now," the referee said. "Look at your arm. We could've— Your majesty!"

The referee quickly bowed and did not dare look up again. Alex slowly turned around to find the Emperor standing behind him on the stage.

"Your majesty," he bowed as well.

"Congratulations on the victory," the Emperor said. "But you pushed yourself a little too far. Fighting for victory even when the odds are against you is a fantastic trait to have in a cultivator. However, this is a friendly battle. You didn't need to go so far for this."

"I was wrong, your majesty," Alex said.

Everyone in the crowd was surprised to see the Emperor there and many even bowed from the stands. The crowd was mostly silent and listened to the Emperor speak as it wasn't always that one got to see him.

"Well, I do applaud you for giving your all to defeat an opponent that is clearly supposed to be stronger than you. As a reward, you may have this."

The Emperor threw something onto Alex, which he caught with his left hand.

He scanned the item with his spiritual sense and a look of understanding came onto his face. However, he quickly hid it behind a facade of confusion.

"What is this, your majesty?" he asked.

He knew damn well exactly what it was. It was the pill to regrow his arm. He understood that Zhanrou must have found some incredible blood to create this pill so quickly, and from what he could tell, she had done an incredible job.

The pill was very much an immortal grade pill.

He was very happy to get it at the moment as he would no longer need to be in a dilemma on when exactly to get his arm back.

Still, he had to act it up for the sake of the audience so no one knew that he knew.

The Emperor smirked at Alex's acting. "It's a pill that can help heal your body entirely and even regrow limbs," he said.

A look of surprise appeared on so many people's faces that they didn't even see the obviously fake shock on Alex's face. No one cared about it at the moment.

"A pill to regrow limbs? Something like that exists?" Zhou Tianqiu looked at the pill in Alex's hand in shock.

"How did he get that?" Zhou Zirong wondered from the side.

"Could it be the Emperor has been hiding something like that from us?" Xue Mufan wondered.

"We'll ask him later, damn it." The Jin family lord was in a sour mood since his grandson had lost the match against someone who had yet to enter the True Emperor realm.

Down at the stage, Alex decided to waste no further time and popped open the vial to eat the pill.

His stump started itching the moment the pill reached his stomach and started wriggling.

The crowd watched in absolute awe as Alex's arms came back to him.

He felt it a bit, moved his new arm around, and was surprised to find that it had the newly grown arm also had body cultivation.

'Was the last one not matching with body cultivation because it was weak when I lost it?' Alex wondered. He couldn't help but analyze the situation and come to the conclusion that body cultivation not only made someone's body strong but also rewrote their DNA to say that their body was stronger by nature.

He then couldn't help but wonder if this rewritten DNA was part of the reason that when he did eventually have children, it would pass down as a trait of his body, giving them what people would refer to as 'bloodline' powers.

"Come, let me take you to the medical room," the referee took him and Alex had no more time to think about what he had been thinking.

Even as he left, he heard the Emperor explain the situation of the pill and how it had only recently been discovered in the Imperial Treasury.

Alex smiled as he understood that the Emperor was following through with his promise.

Alex was forced to stay in the medical room for some more check-ups and was thus forced to skip the remaining two matches of the day.

The next two matches had obvious victors in his eyes. Guo Chiang and the prince would in no way possibly lose to their opponents. Still, he wanted to see them fight more, reveal more powers.

However, it didn't matter much for him as he had already seen his next opponent fight.

Song Shing, the True Emperor 9th realm cultivator that fought with blood. How was he possibly going to fight against someone whose entire body was filled with nothing but Saint Qi?

There would be absolutely no True Qi in his body at all. At least, not initially. True Qi would slowly fill him back without cultivation, but he would have to use up the Saint Qi he would obtain through cultivation first.

And by the time he was done with that, Alex would have already lost.

He had just won a super hard battle and he would have to fight an even tougher one the very next day.

He slumped on the bed in the medical hall as he thought about what he could do.

He had many different skills, sword techniques, mental attacks, superior physical body, and even a few goddamn Dao. However, when he thought about which of them would be useful against Song Shing, there was really just a single answer.

Nothing.

That was the only answer he could come up with. Nothing. There was nothing he could possibly do to win against Song Shing.

No, there was one thing he could do, but he didn't want to do it. He could try and break through to the True Emperor realm. However, given that he was right in between the two realms, and given that he was doing it out of fear of fighting someone vastly stronger than him, he was absolutely sure that he would face an Inner Demon.

If he fought with the Inner Demon and didn't win, he would at best end up going through Qi deviation. At worst, he would most likely cripple his own cultivation.

'That's not the way to go,' Alex thought. 'Maybe it's time I give up. I did end up at Top 8. That's the top 8 out of thousands upon thousands of youths that tried to take part in the competition. I've done my best.'

'Maybe I should concede? No,' he thought, bringing himself back out of demotivation. 'I might lose tomorrow, but that does not mean I will lose giving up like a weakling.'

'I will fight the best I can and lose like a warrior,' Alex thought. He nodded to himself as he came to the conclusion of what was going to happen tomorrow.

Once the staff was certain that he was fine, they let him go. When Alex came out of the area, the arena was mostly empty, except for a few people.

Alex saw his mother in the stands and had the staff members allow her to visit him.

"Are you okay?" she asked.

"Yes, mother. I'm fine. I'm not hurt," he said. "Listen, I need you to do something for me."

Chapter 806: Top 8

The next day of the tournament was here. The battle was starting a little later in the day as there would only be 4 different fights today.

Alex arrived at the stands around noon and sat down. He was worried about his match, but the worry didn't help him win, so he was ignoring his thoughts.

The crowd was riled up as they were ready to have some of the most spectacular fights out there.

The Emperor and the other heads were up in the tower, looking down on the stage, waiting for the fights to begin.

"We really need to speak with that kid today," one of the old men said.

"Why? The emperor told us not to approach him. Didn't you hear that he has a strong backing?" Xue Mufan asked.

"What backing? We keep hearing he has a backing, but we never really see it, do we?" the male sect leader of the Glory's Edge sect said.

"Apparently that kid can use the traits of Sword Aura even while he only has Sword Qi. I need to learn how that is possible. What sort of insights he couldn't possibly get into his own self," the Jin clan leader said.

The Han clan leader leaned forward. "I don't know if it is true or not, but I believe that kid has a very strong physical body," he said.

"Oh, you noticed that too?" a woman in a blue robe asked. "In yesterday's fight with the Tengfei boy, he was weaker when he fought from the distance, and stronger when he got close. He must have an amazing physique skill."

"Just the fact that he can fight against people 7 realms above his own should be reason enough for us to ask him questions," the female sect leader of the Glory's Edge sect. "Also, I have special information about him that might interest you all."

"Oh, what is it?" the people around the room started getting curious.

"Apparently, that kid is actually one of those people known as the players," the woman said.

"How do you know?" the people asked with a surprised look. While players weren't that good for cultivation normally due to their botched understanding of how to do it, when given the right training, they would go further than anyone.

"My disciple told me," the woman said. "He is a player too."

That was information that these people didn't have. However, given that He Liwei had in fact arrived out of nowhere in the last 12 years, it was obvious in retrospect.

"You know," Zhou Tianqiu suddenly spoke, "if he really is a player, he might have acquired his Alchemy knowledge from there. Do you not want that?"

He turned to look at Xue Mufan, who grumbled to himself. He remembered how serious the Emperor had been regarding the matter of how Alex had been appointed as the Royal alchemist back then. He was certain these people were playing with fire.

"He has spiritual sense," one of them spoke up, and all of them nodded. That was pretty obvious by now.

They started talking about Alex's skills and how unique they were. His ability to go invisible, his ability to teleport, etc.

As they continued talking about Alex's achievement, the first match of the day started down at the stage.

Lu Yan and Fu Tao walked onto the stage and got ready to battle. The moment the referee gave them the go, a violent round of fights began.

Lu Yan fought with wood, air, and lightning, while Fu Tao fought with fire, formations, and mental attacks.

None of Fu Tao's attacks could reach Lu Yan due to her violent wind attacks as well as violent roots that sprung up to block all attacks.

As for Fu Tao, he remained safe behind the formation barrier he had put up. The battle lasted for a while as neither side could get a clear advantage.

It was obvious that Fu Tao wasn't fighting with his all, but it was only making a more enjoyable fight so the crowd forgave him.

In the end, Lu Yan ran out of more Qi to attack with and as such ended up losing.

Next up were Liang Qiu and Han Daiyu. Their fights were perhaps more spectacular than anything else.

The fight was simple, mostly kept to close combat. However, the hammer striking against the spear gave the crowd an exhilaration that could only ever come from the shockwaves of two amazing fights clashing.

Using her physique, Han Daiyu was surprisingly keeping up with Liang Qiu despite the difference in their cultivation base.

However, as time passed, Han Daiyu's saint Qi slowly depleted to nothing as she had to use it for both her body and her skill. As a result, the battle ended up in Liang Qiu's favor, which she subsequently won.

Once the battle ended, Alex started feeling anxious. After all, the next fight was going to be his, against Song Shing. It was pretty much guaranteed that he was going to lose, he simply didn't want to lose in an embarrassing way.

Most of all, he wanted to stay in the battle long enough that people didn't think he lost immediately.

He stood on the edge of the stage and he made sure his earrings were in place. Song Shing most definitely had spiritual sense, so Alex couldn't ignore the possibility that he could have some spiritual attacks.

Aside from that, he also had the armor he was wearing. The previous day, he had sent his mother to buy the best armor she could find that wasn't a Saint-grade artifact.

The blue armor he was wearing beneath his robes was the one she came back with. It was True Heaven grade armor, capable of stopping attacks from True Emperor cultivators up to True Emperor 6th or 7th realm.

Alex didn't know how much that would help when it came to stopping attacks from Song Shing, but it was better than nothing at least.

Alex brought out a sword from his storage bag. Unfortunately for him, the actual sword that he had refined for over 2 weeks now had been destroyed in the last fight.

And since he couldn't use the poison sword, he was forced to fight with either an entirely new sword or the sword that had no grade.

Given the fight he was up against, it was an obvious choice on which sword he could use.

Alex held the thin sword with the silver blade and white handle as he stood in front of Song Shing.

Song Shing brought out a vial of blood and held it in his hand as he got ready as well.

Alex closed his eyes and took a deep breath as he got ready for the fight to begin. His spiritual sense slowly emerged from him, spreading around the arena.

He sensed Song Shing's spiritual sense, which was about 100 meters away from him, while Song Shing sensed his with wide eyes. He realized how big Alex's spiritual sense was and prepared for it accordingly.

When the referee saw that the two of them were both ready to fight, he raised his arm and began the fight.

Chapter 807: Blood Aura

Alex dashed away the moment the fight started. Instead of moving towards Song Shing, however, he moved to his right.

Song Shing crushed his vial of blood as the droplets flew all around him, ready to attack.

However, Alex was moving too fast for him to target accurately.

'What is he doing?' Song Shing thought. His spiritual sense barely caught Alex a few times he was inside the 100-meter radius, but Alex was moving all over the place so much that he was going in and out of his senses way too quickly to attack him.

'Is he stalling for time?' Song Shing didn't understand what good it would do to him.

A sword slash flew towards Song Shing, which he easily destroyed by moving the many drops of blood all around him.

Alex finally stopped, breathing a bit heavily, but not too tired.

Song Shing saw the opportunity and shot out a few drops of blood. That was when he finally understood what Alex had been doing.

The moment the drops of blood approached Alex, he vanished, appearing a few distances away.

Song Shing, from the previous matches he had watched, had noted Alex's teleportation skill. Being in the audience, he had also noticed that he could only teleport to places where there were objects in the open.

Or more accurately, from his estimation, Alex needed shadows. He didn't know any more than that and he didn't need to.

After all, his theory was proven firsthand by Alex. During the time he had rapidly moved all around the stage, Alex had been destroying the stage upon which he ran.

As a result, the stage was now full of chunks of rocks that created shadows for Alex to teleport to.

"Let's see how long you can keep it up then," Song Shing said and the blood floating in front of him turned into many small drops that started shooting at Alex.

The moment Alex saw the blood droplets getting shot at him, he teleported again. He appeared a few meters away and had to immediately teleport again.

When he arrived at the next location, another droplet of blood was already getting shot at him.

Alex teleported again and again, and the more he did it, the harder it became to keep track of the area.

However, he was managing to dodge every single attack from Song Shing.

Song Shing kept going for a while, but he was starting to get bored. When all the blood droplets in front of him vanished, he brought out a new vial and poured the content onto the ground.

Alex watched the bloody ground slowly glow red as the blood started moving around Song Shing as if it was being affected by a cyclone.

As the blood moved, it grew bigger and bigger, until it looked like a flood of blood.

Alex prepared his sword, ready to fight any attack that was coming his way.

Just then, Song Shing activated his technique. The blood that flooded all around him moved out in incredible force. Their amount had obviously been affected by Song Shing's Qi, but it was still terrifying to see this much blood at once.

The flood of blood came up to about Alex's waists, so he quickly jumped up to dodge.

'That wasn't as dangerous as it looked,' he thought as he watched the blood flow to the edge of the stage. And that was when Alex noticed the problem.

"Shit!" he thought. All the work he had done, breaking the stage, creating chunks of rocks to teleport to, had all gone to waste as the bloody flood swept everything away.

There was no more place to teleport to. At the same time, Alex noticed that Song Shing already had his next attack prepared.

More droplets of blood appeared all around him, and this time they all fired off at once.

Alex slashed his sword, sending out a wave of energy to stop the droplets, but there were hundreds and thousands of them to possibly block.

As a result, Alex was forced to go on the defensive. He stabbed the sword onto the ground, while he used every single defensive technique he had to protect himself.

He placed his two arms in front of his face and waited for the barrage to arrive.

The drops of blood shot past him like bullets from a machine gun, battering him throughout.

His armor protected him from most of the attacks, but that was only around the chest area.

For the rest of his body, the blood bullets left tiny cuts all around him that slowly bled on their own.

Once the barrage ended, Alex quickly grabbed the sword with his bloody hands and got ready to fight. As he did, he saw Song Shing standing there in front of him with his right hand pointing towards Alex.

His 5 fingers spread out, and Alex's spiritual sense caught something behind him.

Song Shing had used 3 different vials of blood by now, and behind Alex, those blood was starting to fly into the air as droplets again.

Alex realized what was happening. Song Shing's left arm was ready to attack Alex the moment he teleported to him, and Alex saw that.

He had nowhere to go. Song Shing closed his fingers and the blood shot back towards him, leaving Alex in the crossfire.

Alex's face turned resolute as he thought of a way to escape this predicament. He immediately jumped high into the air even as the droplets flew toward him.

He waited just until the droplets were right next to him, and then, he vanished.

When Alex reappeared, he arrived on the other side of the barrage.

"Tsk!" Song Shing clicked his tongue when he saw that Alex was safe from the sneak attack. He knew sneak attacks were useless against Spiritual sense users, but that was why he had made the attack so big.

Even then Alex had found a way to dodge it. The 3 vials of blood returned to his hand as he poured more Saint Qi into it as it slowly turned into a blood disc that spun around quickly.

Alex sighed in relief as his plan had worked. Using the position of the sun in the afternoon, he had flown up to create a shadow behind him in the distance which he had then teleported to.

Alex was glad he managed to dodge the attack, but a stronger attack was forming in front of him.

Alex snapped his fingers and a small sun appeared behind his head, casting a very long shadow on the stage in front of him.

Song Shing realized what was happening and his blood disc got ready to shoot out.

Just then, Alex teleported right in front of him as he swung his sword at Song Shing.

Song Shing also moved to attack back, but he froze mid-attack. His eyes went wide as his body didn't respond to him.

Alex's sword landed directly on his chest, striking his armor as hard as he could.

Song Shing couldn't think of anything at the moment, so he was unable to protect himself.

As such, Alex's strike ended up being strong enough to send him flying back.

Song Shing realized that he had frozen and tried to get his balance back, but by the time he managed to get a hold of himself, he realized he had stepped out of the boundary.

Alex looked at the man, and then at the boundary. "The hell?" he thought. Had he won? No way.

The referee didn't understand what had just happened, but he saw that the Song Shing was out of bounds. As such, he announced Alex's victory.

The crowd didn't cheer. They couldn't. They felt like they were betrayed. They expected an explosive battle, and instead, they got a whimsy victory on the side of the battle that was clearly the loser.

What exactly happened?

Helen's worried face had already disappeared into confusion. Qin Shan wondered if Alex could've possibly bribed him.

The tournament committee was immediately sent to start looking for possibilities of collusion between the two opponents.

The Emperor looked from the tower with a confused expression, while the Princess couldn't help but smile at Alex entering Top 4.

Alex was led back to the stands, to wait and watch the next fight as he hadn't lost. 'I didn't lose,' he thought to himself. 'Wasn't I supposed to?' he couldn't possibly understand why he was still here and why he was possibly going to the top 4.

"What the hell is your grandson doing?" one of the old men in the room in the tower asked angrily.

"I'll go find out," the matriarch of the Song family walked out of the tower and went to meet Song Shing who had just been led out of the stage.

As Song Shing walked, his grandmother arrived next to him and grabbed him before taking him somewhere where they could be alone.

"What the hell was that? Are you purposefully trying to ruin our family's name?" she angrily shouted at him.

"No, no, grandmother, that is not my intention," Song Shing said. "I... I simply froze."

"Why the hell would you possibly freeze? Tell me, did he bribe you? Did he promise an Immortal grade pill? Is that why you lost?"

The matriarch was not happy with the result at all. However, Song Shing was still in a daze from the fight to care. He still remembered the feeling.

"Grandma, I... I sensed it," he said.

"Huh? What did you sense?" the matriarch asked.

"I sensed it. I SMELLED it. The blood aura. HIS blood aura. It... it's so potent, so strong. I froze the moment he came close to me and I sensed it."

"I... I have never sensed something with more blood aura than that man's blood. It... it was at least a hundred times stronger than my own blood aura," Song Shing spoke while he was still trying to figure out how that could possibly be true.

"Are... are you serious?" the matriarch started to understand what might have happened.

"Yes, grandma. We... we need to get him. We need to get his blood. With his blood, we may be able to use the techniques we have never been able to," Song Shing said as his eyes started going manic from the blood thirst.

"With... with his blood, once he enters the saint realm, we... we might end up being able to use the technique like it was meant to," Song Shing said and the matriarch understood. She didn't think her grandson was lying, which meant...

"If... if his blood really is that potent then," her eyes went manic from possibilities as well. "Then... we can finally use them. We can finally use the techniques written in the Blood God's Manual."

Chapter 808: Guo Chiang's Strength

Alex sat on his seat in the stands, silent, watching the match that was taking in front of him.

Liang Qiu fought against Fu Tao in the semi-finals, releasing the full fury of her Spear Qi, while constantly fighting off Fu Tao's mental attacks.

Any formation plates that Fu Tao did throw into the ground were immediately destroyed by Liang Qiu, making it impossible for Fu Tao to get an upper hand.

Liang Qiu sent out spear Qi after spear Qi. Spear Qi itself was nothing but annoyance for Fu Tao, but it was an annoyance he had to fight against using his Saint Qi.

This meant, that while Liang Qiu kept her Saint Qi, Fu Tao was forced to use his.

Fu Tao managed to bypass Liang Qiu's defensive mental artifact and finally could attack her directly. However, he was still unable to do much as Liang Qiu herself had an incredibly strong mind due to her spiritual sense.

In the end, Fu Tao couldn't go past Liang Qiu's mental fortitude before her attacks reached him, and in the end, he lost.

Fu Tao was one of the strongest individuals in the younger generation. However, due to him being stuck at the True Emperor 9th realm for the last 2 years, others had caught up to him.

As a result, today, he lost in the semi-finals.

Alex saw the final spear strike and realized Liang Qiu had won. Which meant, that next up was his battle.

He hadn't expected much from the upcoming fight, but he wanted the same thing from it as what he wanted from his fight against Song Shing.

He wanted to give it his all and lose only after giving it his all.

He closed his eyes and prepared himself. He took deep breaths until his name was called. Then, he stood up and walked directly up to the stage, watching nothing else.

He didn't realize how he had arrived at the edge of the stage, but he had.

Guo Chiang had easily won against the prince yesterday, and now he was standing against him.

Alex took out his sword and was ready to fight.

The pale and near-dead-looking Guo Chiang stood on the other side of the stage in a very tired stance. He held a sword on his left side, currently hiding inside of the hilt.

The referee, a woman from the Jin family stood between the two as she waited for the two to be ready.

Alex took a little longer than normal to get ready, but he did in the end.

Guo Chiang looked so bad that it was impossible to tell if he was ever ready to fight.

Still, after a while referee took note that both of them were ready. As such, she began the match.

Alex immediately dashed the moment the match began. He needed to take advantage of his speed and...

Guo Chiang took out his sword.

The surrounding air suddenly vibrated as Alex felt a deep chill pass through his spine. The world stopped all around Alex as if time itself had come to a stop.

Alex used his spiritual sense to see what was happening, and when he reached around Guo Chiang, he felt a backlash that hurt him.

Alex quickly withdrew his spiritual sense and looked at Guo Chiang in fear as his spiritual sense itself felt like it was cut in half when he viewed Guo Chiang.

Guo Chiang had seen Alex fight. No matter how hard the fight was for him, he had somehow won. Even against Song Shing, who should have been close to him, Alex had somehow won.

So, Guo Chaing planned on not letting Alex get started at all. From the very beginning of the fight, he wasn't holding back at all.

Alex saw Guo Chiang's sword and realized it was ordinary. However, what was around the sword was in no way ordinary at all.

Sword Qi moved away from the sword and all around him. It wasn't just the Sword that produced the Sword Qi, but Guo Chiang's body itself was producing Sword Qi.

No, when Alex looked at it more closely, it wasn't sword Qi at all. The sword Qi all around him was going in and out from looking like a sword to looking like a blob of light.

Sword Qi never moved around like that.

Suddenly, Alex guessed what it could be, and only fear invaded his heart.

Guo Chiang raised his sword and swung it downward.

All the sword Qi that was all around Guo Chaing suddenly followed the path he made for them with his intent and a large slash flew towards Alex that seemed impossible to dodge.

Alex prepared the best he could, but before he could do anything, the referee appeared in front of him and fought back against the sword slash.

Alex felt the shockwaves from the clash between the two attacks and that was enough to send his mind into turmoil.

Guo Chiang's attack was on par with a Saint realm cultivator. His attack... definitely had Sword Aura.

Alex got back up slowly. With the referee having to move forward to protect him, he had lost.

Just like that... he had lost.

Alex stared forward blankly. He had thought of so much to do. So much power and skills to fight with, and yet... he had lost just like that.

Surprisingly for him, he wasn't mad at all. Yes, it had been a very quick loss, but it had been a loss against someone that had Sword Aura.

'I didn't realize he was the strongest sword user in this whole tournament,' Alex thought. He had expected it to be Jin Tengfei, as he came from a sword family.

However, given the Sword Aura, it was obviously Guo Chiang. Unless Liang Qiu brought Spear Aura out of nowhere, Alex didn't think there was a way for him to lose at all.

The referee announced Guo Chiang's victory and the crowd obviously cheered. A small smile appeared on Alex's face as he once again remembered that he had lost.

He turned around and walked out of the stadium. However, before he could go any further, the referee stopped him.

"Young man, where are you going?" she asked.

"Um, I lost. I'm leaving the finalist's area," Alex said.

"You aren't done fighting though," she said.

"But I lost, right?" he asked with a confused look on his face.

The referee chuckled a bit when he heard that. "Yes, you've lost. But there is still one more match that you will have to fight. Unless you are giving up right now. Are you?"

"One more fight?" Alex turned to look towards the area where Guo Chiang and Liang Qiu were starting to leave since the matches today were over, and was surprised to see Fu Tao was still there, despite losing earlier.

"Oh! The match for third place. I nearly forgot," Alex said. "Thank you for reminding me."

Alex returned back to his room where he now had to prepare for one more fight.

For some reason, sitting there after losing made him feel free, relieved even. As if a weight had been lifted off of his chest and that he didn't have to force himself to make it as far as possible.

He knew how far he could go and this was it. As such, a smile appeared on his face as he got a feeling that he could do it now.

So he did. He closed his eyes and started breaking through.

Chapter 809: Fighting Fu Tao

The crowd gathered for the final day of the competition.

They poured into the stands, more than ever, as this was the day that would reveal to them who the strongest person amongst the younger generation was.

The host appeared on stage and started welcoming little kids who had barely started cultivating to show off before the crowd while they waited for the actual matches to begin.

Alex heard a knock on the door and walked out. He was then led by the staff all the way out into the sun.

Alex walked onto the stands just as the rest of the people arrived. He smiled at Liang Qiu and said, "Good luck on your match today, sister Liang."

Liang Qiu smiled. "Thanks, I probably need that," she said as he glanced toward Guo Chiang.

Alex had come to learn more about Guo Chiang after his fight had ended. Apparently, the Broken Ravine sect was built on top of a giant ravine that was said to have been carved out by a single attack belonging to an immortal.

It is said that people could not enter the ravine at all as it was full of the immortal's sword intent. However, if one did manage to enter, they could learn about the said immortal's sword intent and grow out their own.

Alex didn't know how true this was as it had been thirdhand information, but he thought there to be some truth to it.

Liang Qiu turned around to him and said, "Good luck on yours too."

Alex thanked her and went to go sit on his own. He looked at Fu Tao who didn't seem to be in the best of moods.

"You okay, brother Fu?" he asked.

"Huh? Oh, I'm fine. I'm just angry that I will have to be 3rd place when I could have been second or even first if I was just able to break through to the Saint realm," Fu Tao said.

Alex's eyes narrowed as he nearly chuckled when he heard that. Fu Tao's words seemed arrogant, but Alex could understand that he wasn't even expecting Alex to be much of a challenge at all.

Well, he wasn't wrong to expect that after how easily Guo Chiang wiped the stage with him in the last match.

When the fights on the stage finished, the host finally called for the two fighters that would be fighting for the 3rd place in the tournament.

Alex walked onto the stage and walked up to the edge before turning back. Fu Tao also went to the other edge and got ready.

The referee for this round was from the royal family, and he looked at the two fighters to see if they were ready.

When he turned to look at Alex, his eyes narrowed a bit at what he was sensing. 'Wasn't he...?'

Alex brought out a sword, The sword, and waited for the match to begin.

Fu Tao didn't have any weapons. He only had 2 defensive items and that was it. As far as Alex could tell, the next 3 items that Fu Tao was allowed to bring into the match were most likely all formation plates, which he would have to be careful about.

Once the referee saw that they were both ready, he decided to start the match.

"Begin!"

Alex immediately felt his earrings buzz a bit. Fu Tao had already started attacking just as the match started.

Alex ignored the mental attacks as rushed forward toward Fu Tao.

Seeing that his mental attacks weren't gonna do it, Fu Tao decided to end it with his fire technique. He poured his Qi out and a fiery bird formed in the air that flew towards Alex.

Alex smiled. He released Fire Qi from his hand which turned into a spear which then flew directly into the bird.

A fiery explosion rang out as the attacks clashed, with both of them getting destroyed in the clash.

Fu Tao looked at him with a confused look. 'How is that possible?' he thought. His firebird was made out of Saint Qi and yet it couldn't overcome Alex's own fire attacks?

Alex smirked and pushed his left palm toward Fu Tao. A massive yellow palm attack flew towards Fu Tao.

Fu Tao immediately activated his movement technique and got out of the way of the attack. At the same time, he sent out a bunch of fire arrows toward Alex.

Fu Tao was having a problem understanding how Alex was suddenly keeping up with his attacks. It was just yesterday or even the day before that Song Shing's and Guo Chaing's attacks were absolutely wrecking him and now suddenly he could keep up with him? Was he that weak?

Due to Alex hiding his cultivation base the entire time, Fu Tao hadn't realized that Alex was now a True Emperor as well. And the jump from True King to True Emperor had given him a significant boost in power.

Alex sent a golden fist towards the arrows and destroyed them all at once.

A formation plate slid below the explosion, taking advantage of the chaos. However, Alex had been expecting this as formations were one of the strengths of the Fu family.

The moment the formation plate came close to him, he immediately stabbed it to destroy it. However, when he did stab it, he realized that it was a dummy as the real formation plate arrived right afterward.

Alex pulled the sword out and turned around to move, but the formation was already activated and a barrier sprung around just the formation plate like a dome.

Alex's earrings started buzzing like crazy as he was being attacked with mental attacks from everywhere. The formation was affecting everything on the stage aside from just Fu Tao.

Even the referee was being affected. However, a saint realm's mental fortitude was too strong for a measly True rank formation to do anything.

Alex rushed to the formation plate and struck it as hard as he could, but he couldn't break through the barrier at all. At the same time, Fu Tao attacked with his fire skills, which Alex had to avoid while thinking of a way to break past the formation that was constantly pressuring him with its mental attacks.

He did think of going directly to fight Fu Tao, but that was a bit too dangerous as Fu Tao most likely had more than just one of these formations.

If he managed to trap him in another one, Alex would be in trouble.

Alex dodged one of the fiery birds that went on to explode behind him and tried to pour Qi into the barrier. However, as he had expected, it wouldn't expect the Qi from anyone other than the person that created the formation.

If only he could find a way to...

Three spears of fire forced Alex to move away from the formation. The buzzing of his earrings was getting weaker and weaker, and it was only a matter of seconds before it would be destroyed and Alex would have to rely on his spiritual sense to fight against the formation's mental pressure.

That would start an uphill battle that would only end in a loss in most cases.

Alex was preparing to go attack the barrier as much as he could to quickly destroy it, but the problem was Fu Tao. He was already creating more Fire arrows to throw at Alex.

Alex looked at the fire arrows and then at the barrier with a look of frustration. However, just then, his face changed as an idea came to him.

He immediately dashed toward the barrier and Fu Tao attacked him on reflex. The fire arrows flew through the air towards Alex to stop him from getting close to the formation.

However, when Alex saw this, he smiled.

Instead of attacking the arrows to destroy them, Alex struck one of them with the side of his blade and pushed the arrow towards the barrier.

The fire arrows that were filled with Fu Tao's Qi struggled, but managed to enter the barrier. Just as it was halfway through, Alex appeared next to it and poured his Qi into the fire, and wrestled the control over from Fu Tao's Qi.

As soon as the control was taken away, the barrier tried to force the fire arrow out, but Alex was already ahead of it as he poured more Qi into the arrow from both himself and the surroundings.

As the fire took in the Qi, Alex used his authority over it and gave it his command.

"Explode!"

Chapter 810: More Barriers

Fu Tao was forced to close his eyes because of the massive explosion that shook his very senses itself.

Alex was sent hurtling backward from the shockwave, but most of the explosion had actually taken place inside the barrier so he was mostly fine.

He quickly got back up, worried that Fu Tao was going to attack back, for fortunately for him, Fu Tao seemed completely dazed by the explosion to attack.

Alex also noticed that his earrings had stopped buzzing which meant the explosion had done the trick. The formation plate was cracked all over, which meant it would be impossible to use it anymore.

Now that the mental pressure was gone, he would—

Alex paused. A mental attack struck him directly, surprising him a bit. It didn't hurt, nor did it get him disoriented. For the most part, it felt like someone had blown strong winds at him, where he had to steel himself a bit to not get pushed back.

However, the hit wasn't the thing that surprised Alex. It was that he had actually been hit in the first place.

His senses quickly moved to the earrings that had stopped buzzing and only then did he realize why.

They were dead. His earrings were destroyed. He didn't know if it was the mental pressure that did it or the explosion, but they were gone.

Which meant, Alex would have to rely on his own spiritual sense to protect himself.

Alex's spiritual sense suddenly spread out in response. They wouldn't let Fu Tao's own senses pass through at all.

A clash of spiritual senses occurred in the center of the stage which only the referee could see. And as far as he could tell, it wasn't even a fair fight.

Alex's spiritual sense was way too strong, nearly double as strong as Fu Tao's own spiritual sense as he pushed him back.

Fu Tao realized this as well and couldn't help but be surprised at the fact that there was someone else in the younger generation that had a stronger spiritual sense than him.

How was an expert alchemist, whose Qi, body, and sword were strong as hell could possibly have the time to forge such a strong mental strength as well?

Fu Tao got hungry for whatever Alex had.

A wave of spiritual energy rolled out from Fu Tao as it approached Alex's own spiritual sense. This was an attack formed using spiritual sense, so it was in a way stronger than just plain spiritual sense.

Alex still managed to block it, but he had to concentrate on his spiritual sense just in front of him.

Alex waited for Fu Tao to throw out either a formation plate or more fire attacks. However, something different happened.

His fire attacks stopped as an ice spear formed in his hand. He tossed the spear at Alex, which Alex easily destroyed.

Alex got confused. Why was he suddenly switching to ice? Did he decide to change his approach just in case the fire wasn't doing anything?

Before Alex could think of an answer, another long icicle was thrown at him, which Alex destroyed with his sword.

Alex twisted his body a bit to dodge the third icicle. The fourth one wasn't even close to hitting him.

'Wait a second,' Alex thought.

He destroyed the 5th and the 6th icicle that flew towards him. However, the 7th one flew a bit too far from him to even require dodging at all.'

However, Alex teleported right in front of the icicle and struck it with his sword breaking it into a million pieces. One of those pieces, however, was a long and thin metal rod with a leather flag on top of it.

'Formation flag,' Alex realized. He remembered this exact same attack done by that Fu girl in the demon realm who was trying to steal his secrets to make herself stronger.

'Is he trying to put me in that dream state just like her?' Alex thought. It was possible that it was some other formation, but either way, he couldn't let that happen.

The formation flag flew back to Fu Tao who quickly threw out more icicles.

Alex tried to destroy the icicles to get to the formation flags that would be hidden inside them, but due to the constant attacks on his spiritual sense, he didn't realize that a formation plate had at some point appeared beneath him.

A barrier sprung up around him while another barrier sprung up around the formation plate.

Alex tried to teleport out of the formation, but it seemed the space was constrained within this place.

Alex wasted no time in destroying the formation as he sent barrage after barrage of attacks at the barrier around the formation plate.

With just a few True Spirit stones to it, the plate could barely handle more than a few punches. However, that was just enough time for Fu Tao to plant the formation flags all around the barrier.

By the time Alex destroyed the formation plate, the other crimson formation was already active and it was pressuring his spiritual sense.

It was a Spirit Restraining formation, where one's spiritual sense would be pushed down to be a mere fraction of what it was.

At the same time, more and more spiritual attacks landed on him from Fu Tao.

Alex struggled against the barrage of spiritual attacks as his spiritual energy was constantly depleting from having to protect himself from both the formation and Fu Tao.

Alex knew he wouldn't last much longer under their constant attacks, so he needed to get rid of either of those two.

Since it was impossible to touch Fu Tao given that he was outside of the crimson barrier, Alex could only attack the barrier itself.

He lifted his sword and struck it as hard as he could.

The barrier shuddered, giving Fu Tao a sense of dread. Given how well made the formation flags were, the barrier was supposed to be quite sturdy. However, it still shuddered under Alex's attack.

'Dammit! Just how strong is he?' Fu Tao couldn't help but wonder.

It was quite hard to pinpoint Alex's strength. His True Qi was denser than any other True Qi out there, however, it wasn't as strong as a normal Saint Qi.

If Alex had to guess, he was somewhere in between True Emperor 9th realm's True Qi and True Emperor 9th realm's Saint Qi.

Given that, his attacks were doing quite a lot of damage to the barrier. However, while the barrier shuddered, it still didn't seem like it was going to break.

The two separate mental attacks piled on him and by now, his spiritual energy was half of what it normally was, and it was still depleting fast.

'I need to break it fast,' he thought. Alex struck the barrier more and more but the barrier didn't seem like it would break. It looked like it was on the verge of breaking. It only needed something... stronger.

Alex couldn't help but sigh. 'Do I have to do it?' he thought. He had wanted to use this as a surprise attack, maybe catch Fu Tao off-guard and defeat him. However, it seemed he would have to use this to save himself from the barrier.

Alex transferred the sword into his left hand and then flattened his right hand. A vigorous and vibrant yellow Qi flowed into his palm.

Alex felt the strength of the Yang Qi in his palm and then shot it out towards the barrier.

The Palm of the Sun attack skill created a yellow palm-shaped attack that went on to strike the barrier at an incredible speed.

Fu Tao watched the attack without much thought as it seemed like a desperate attack from Alex to get out of the situation. However, when the attack landed on the barrier, his eyes went wide in shock and surprise.

In one fell sweep, the crimson barrier crumbled down into nothing and the formation flags went dull. The pressure that was constantly applying on Alex more than halved as only Fu Tao's mental attack was on him.

With his spiritual sense released fully, he could easily fight that.

Alex smiled when he saw the barrier crumble too. He was surprised that it worked just like he wished, but that was to be expected.

After all, what else would he expect from the attack where he had poured all of his newly formed Saint Qi into.