

## Alchemy 891

### Chapter 891: Opening the Seal

Alex stood not far from the gate in the group of 2000 people that were looking forward to the gate opening. There were 5 people present in front of the gate.

Huang Xinyi, the old man that had explained that earlier, the sect leader of the Blue Spring sect, wore his purple and white robes as he stood in the middle.

Wu Song, another elderly man that was the Grand elder of the Heaven's Frost sect wore his royal blue robes, waiting for the sun to come up.

Xuan Texin, Elder Xuan of the Frozen Heart sect also stood there, waiting.

Mu Beigong, the sect leader of the Nether Poison sect, had a face that looked half melted. Most others would have likely sought a cure or at least looked to hide it if they could not, but he didn't. Having been the victim of the best poison he had made, he proudly presented the horrific results of his actions to deter his enemies.

Finally, Tai Guan was an old woman that was a simple ancestor of the Blazing Earth sect, that was here today because she was close to learning a Dao.

The five of them were gathered in front of the gate to open it up as the gates of the Dao mountain required 5 Saint Soul realm cultivators to work in unison or a single Saint Transformation realm cultivator.

Alex watched the 5 elders with awe. Not only them. Every other Saint realm cultivator was in a league that was far above Alex.

He looked around, taking in the surroundings as he heard people talk to each other, and learned some names.

Long Jie of the Divine Heavens sect was known for being one of the best artifact crafters in the Northern Continent.

Gong Yaozhu was well known for being the oldest person that came to the Dao mountain every year and had never learned a single Dao.

Qin Meifen was known for being in charge of the Plum Fragrance Auction house's main body that had branches in all the different states in multiple cities.

Chang Lihua of the Nether Poison sect was unanimously said to be the most beautiful woman in the whole Northern Continent, even more so than anyone in the Frozen Heart sect. It was regularly said that the girl could kill anyone with just her look.

Alex did see her from not far away, and even he had to agree that she was very beautiful. Perhaps more so than anyone else he had seen. However, if memories counted, then she was nowhere close to being even half as beautiful as the woman that aided the Undying god when he was about to die.

Other than that, there were many more talisman makers, puppet masters, or other well-known figures in the group that were regularly talked to or simply greeted.

However, perhaps no one got as much attention or greetings as the woman who wore red and white robes from the Blazing Earth sect. No one seemed to know her real name and called her Veiled Fairy because of the veil she constantly wore to hide her face.

Some said she was not as good-looking as her contemporaries, while some said she was hiding her face because she was too good-looking.

Not that it mattered anyway since her face or the lack of it wasn't what gave her the popularity she had.

What made her so popular was the fact that even before she had entered the saint realm nearly 12 years ago, she had entered the mountain and made it all the way to the top where she apparently learned an incredible dao.

No one knew what the Dao was or what it could do, but based on the descent of the Daos, most knew that it was a particularly strong one.

After that, the woman had broken through and in just 12 years reached Saint Condensation 5th realm. That was incredibly fast for anyone here.

She had also come here without fail every single year, and in 3 of those times, she had learned some other Dao, making her one of the people with the most potential in the entire Northern Continent.

Alex was quite surprised when he heard that. 'Another person with multiple daos huh?' he thought. In fact, her number of Dao was even higher than his.

He couldn't help but wonder what exactly it was she learned.

As the sky in the east started to brighten up, it was time to open up the gate of the dao mountain.

The gate was a massive metal door with intricate patterns on it. When viewed closely, one could tell that it was a seal.

The seal suddenly brightened when the 5 elders from the 5 ancient sects started pouring their Saint Soul Qi into it. The seal brightened even further and suddenly a slit appeared in between the doors.

The gates then started opening up and finished opening by the time the eastern sky was fully bright.

Without any word, the 5 elders entered the gates and went up the mountain.

The people that were new here looked around awkwardly, wondering if they should go in or not.

At the same time, a group of Saint realm cultivators arrived by the gates and turned around to watch the group go up.

"Please proceed slowly," they said. "Saint realm cultivators get to go in first."

Alex and the 33 other cultivators there had to wait as the many Saint realm cultivators slowly entered the mountain before them.

They started grumbling, saying that they were likely not going to have any place to stay where they could be and then would have to climb back down to a place with an open seating area.

That would be quite bad when Alex thought about it. However, he could only hope for there to be a spot for him when it was their turn to go.

It took the Saint cultivators nearly 15 minutes before they were all inside the mountain. The sheer amount of people that were here made it so that Alex and the rest were 15 minutes late in finding their spot.

As soon as the True realm cultivators were finally allowed to enter, they rushed into the mountain.

As soon as they entered, however, many of them, including Alex, had to stop for a moment to take in the weird scent that was neither bad nor good.

Alex felt the effect of the flower's scent on him immediately as he felt drowsy the moment he entered the mountain.

However, not even half a second later, he lost that feeling and could now start walking up the mountain.

Alex looked carefully in front of him to make sure there were no flowers that he would accidentally step onto. Fortunately, there didn't seem to be many until one had walked over 200 meters upward.

Just then, Alex saw one of the people from the Blue Spring sect bring out their beast.

Alex already had Whisker out, so he too didn't hesitate and brought out Pearl immediately. Pearl shook himself once to get rid of the random drowsiness.

Once there was nothing more to think about, Alex started walking up the mountain.

#### Chapter 892: Hot Spring

Alex slowly walked up the uneven steps. Now that he was already inside the mountain, the scents from the Soul Elucidating Tulips did nothing to hamper his movement.

Whisker sat inside his robes and Pearl walked next to him in his tiny form. Normally, he would've had him walk in his bigger form, but with so many people that were most likely knowledgeable about the attack on the Western Continent 5000 years ago, he didn't want someone to make the connection that Pearl was affiliated with the White Tigers somehow.

So, he remained in his tiny form.

Alex made sure to take note of both his beasts as he walked up the mountain. Any time either of them showed signs of getting sleepy, he was immediately going to put them back in their beast space.

Fortunately, they didn't do any such things and kept wide eyes as Alex walked up.

At around 200 meters up the mountain, Alex finally sensed a distinct change in the density of the scent. Because the scent flowed upwards, and there were no flowers below the 200-meter mark, the tiny amount of scent they were getting was basically nothing.

This was where the main test started.

Alex continued slowly walking up and felt that he was quite fine. Pearl didn't show any signs of drowsiness either. To his surprise, neither did Whisker.

Alex looked at his surrounding, and a few of the True realm cultivators coming up were already grabbing their heads a little as sleep started to look like a valid option for them.

Alex looked back at Whisker and asked, "are you not feeling like sleeping yet?"

Whisker shook his head. Alex looked at the group and wondered if mental strength had anything to do with any of this.

The ones that were feeling the headache didn't show any signs of spiritual sense after all.

He continued upwards and the few True realm cultivators be unable to go any further above. Around the 300-meter mark, they immediately stopped and started walking around the mountain to find a spot where they could sit down and meditate.

Of the 34 True realm cultivators, about 27 were left now, and they continued upward.

At 400 meters, 4 more stopped and went on to find a spot for themselves. Only around this point did Whisker start feeling dizzy. Even Alex was having trouble seeing a little through Whisker's eyes.

By the time Alex crossed 500 meters, 7 more dropped out of the pathway to go find a place to stay at.

Alex tried looking through Whisker's eyes this time around, but he was struggling a lot. By the time he would walk a hundred meters more, Whisker would surely get knocked out.

Alex couldn't help but wonder what would happen then. In fact, what would happen if Alex took him all the way to the top? Would his soul be hurt so bad that he couldn't do anything anymore? But then Whisker was supposed to be Undying. Even killing him shouldn't work, so a little pain to the soul shouldn't do much to him.

However, when he remembered how the 8th Undying God died because of some damage to his spirit, Alex didn't dare test the theory with Whisker's soul.

"You should go back," Alex told him.

However, the stubborn little mouse declared that he could keep going, even when he clearly couldn't.

So, Ale gently tapped Whisker on the head and said, "You did better than 18 True Emperor cultivators as a Meridian Tempering realm cultivator. You don't need to do anything better than this."

Whisker hesitated a bit but went back in the end.

Alex felt someone missing when he could no longer see. Especially when there were still 1500 meters to go.

"Come on, Pearl. You're my eyes now," Alex said. He couldn't see through Pearl's eyes, but Pearl sure could describe what he was seeing to Alex.

Along the way, by the time he reached 700 meters in height, only 3 more True Realm cultivators were remaining.

Alex ignored them and continued walking. Pearl had no problem with the height too.

Alex smelled the scent as he kept going and felt a slight bit of drowsiness. However, with a simple shake of his head, it would disappear.

As he walked, Pearl started relaying information about what he could see on the sides.

Since Saint cultivators would be cultivating here now that he was approaching the halfway point, Alex had kept his spiritual sense at best 10 meters around him, just so he knew where he was going.

So, when Pearl told him that there were Saint realm cultivators sitting not far away before even reaching the halfway point, he was quite surprised.

By the time Alex himself reached the halfway point, all the True realm cultivators were gone, and according to Pearl, there were Saint realm cultivators above him now.

Alex wondered why there were still Saint realm cultivators on the path now. Given how early they had left, they should have already reached the point where they could no longer go above, or simply kept going until they did.

However, it was only when he crossed the first slow Saint realm cultivator did he realize that they were so slow.

The Saints were forcing themselves to move. As opposed to the True realms who immediately went on to sit down because they felt they could no longer keep going, the Saint cultivators were slowly pushing themselves up the mountain to see how far they could go.

In a way, they were testing their resolve. Also, if they could go even 50 meters higher, the benefits would be surely higher.

Alex continued walking and was informed that there were fewer and fewer saints in front of him now. Either they were stopping to go find a place for themselves, or he was simply passing them too quickly.

"You are fine, right?" Alex asked Pearl.

"Yes," Pearl gave an answer.

Alex smelled the thick scent and was hit with a wave of sleepiness. However, 2 seconds later, it disappeared.

He shook his head and kept walking.

1400 meters, 1500 meters, and even 1600 meters, he easily cleared the distance without any trouble.

He was now at a height where he constantly felt slightly drowsy, but he could handle that easily. Even Pearl could handle it.



There were only 400 meters left, and at this point, every other Saint cultivator had already stopped and found themselves a spot.

Only Alex and Pearl were remaining, so they continued walking. Pearl looked around and told Alex that there wasn't anyone in the surrounding now.

For the next 150 meters of stretch, Alex felt all alone. Everyone who couldn't come up had stayed behind, and everyone who could had most likely gone to the top.

As he thought, numerous spiritual senses landed on him from up front, so he too spread out his spiritual sense to see who it was.

Alex saw around 8 different people at the top of the mountain, sitting inside a small pond.

'There's a pond?' Alex was quite surprised. He could sense a hot spring up there.

"Can you keep going?" A voice spoke in his head.

Alex recognized elder Xuan's voice and nodded. It wasn't like he had any problem. Not even Pearl had any problems. But then, was that really so surprising? He did after all have a Celestial Grade body, and Pearl was the descendant of a legendary beast, whose skills and talent he seemed to have inherited.

He continued walking and finally arrived at the peak of the mountain where the scent was most concentrated, but he could still go.

The 8 people, that seemed to have only just gotten into the hot spring, looked at him with curious eyes.

5 of these people were without surprise the 5 elders that helped open the gates of the mountain.

Aside from that, 2 of the others also looked like they were ancestors from the Blue Spring sect, and the Heaven's Frost sect.

The last person was the very popular and nameless Veiled Fairy, whose face Alex had no way of seeing as the veil blocked all spiritual sense.

"A True realm cultivator? That too a male from the Frozen Heart sect? Lady Xuan, you've prepared quite a surprise for us," the sect leader of the Heaven's Frost sect said.

"Not just him, even his beast was able to get here. How did you come upon such a beast, boy? With such a beast, you have a very good chance of becoming an elite Elder in our sect," Huang Xinyi of the Blue Spring sect asked as well.

The several others didn't speak much, but they did congratulate elder Xuan for having a disciple that made it this far up.

"Well, it's a surprise for me too," elder Xuan said.

She then turned to Alex and said, "I had hoped you would make it far, but this far was never in my imagination. Come, get in the water."

Alex nodded and looked at the water and how deep it was using his spiritual sense.

"The scent from the flowers has been infused with the water," the ancestor of the Blazing Earth sect said. "You will find quite a bit more benefit if you get in the water."

"Thank you, elder," Alex said and stepped into the slightly foggy, and even a little pink, water. The hot spring was about 15 meters wide, so there was plenty of room for just 9 people there. Alex walked to an empty place and sat down with Pearl.

#### Chapter 893: Learning another Dao

As soon as Alex sat inside the hot spring that barely came up to his knees, he could immediately feel his mind go blank for a few seconds.

Not only was the hot spring extremely potent with whatever scent the flowers gave, but also the vapor that came off of the hot spring contained even more of the scent, which would then gather inside the dome that was just a few dozen meters above them, making the peak of the mountain even more potent overall.

"What's your name, young man?" one of the elders with Royal blue robes asked him.

"It's Yu Ming, senior," Alex said.

"Yu Ming... hmm, I don't think I've ever heard of that name before," the elder said. "Where did you come from young man? And how exactly did you manage to enter a sect like the Frozen Heart sect?"

Alex was about to say something to answer without answering when Elder Xuan spoke on her own.

"Does my sect needs to tell brother Wu why it does what it does?" she asked.

"Of course not, sister Xuan," the old man said. "Forget I asked anything. I just hope you can come to increase your understanding of whatever it is that you are practicing. Having another talented individual like this little girl will help elevate us a lot."

"That's enough talk, brother Wu. My head is starting to hurt. The young man must be barely hanging on too. Let us start meditating," another man said.

"Yes, yes, of course," Wu Song said and spoke nothing else. Then, the 9 of them slowly stopped resisting the effect of the scent, and one by one they fell into a trance.

Alex too gave in to the scent's effects, but even then it took some time for him to fall into a trance. Even though he was willing, his body constantly cleansed the effects of the scent, making it hard to do anything.

With nothing else to do but wait, Alex started cultivating as he waited for his body to fall into the trance.

Pearl was told not to cultivate, so simply staying in the scent, it didn't take long for Pearl to fall into a trance as well, however, he still managed to hang out longer than the old men and women there.

It wasn't until noon that day that Alex finally felt the effects of the scent and he too fell into a trance.

The trance wasn't a simple trance either. Alex knew he was lucid, he could think everything, but he wasn't able to do anything else.

As if his outer body had been disconnected from him, only his mind seemed to be working. He could tell that if he forced it, he could break this trance and wake up, but since the trance was why he came here in the first place, Alex let it be and accepted the experience.

His mind was extra clear to think about anything he wanted. Every single memory was vivid.

He remembered when he learned about the Explosion Dao, the remembered what he had thought to come to that conclusion. He remembered the Heat Dao as well as the Dao of Heat Conduction and remembered how he had gotten to that point.

What thing was there for him to think about that he was getting good at?

Alex remembered that what helped Dao to become easier to understand was being close to the thing or having come in contact with its essence.

For example, it was easy for Alex to understand Dao related to Fire because he had a good Fire spiritual root and was used to making alchemy which required a lot of fire.

This meant that since he had such good Metal and Yang spiritual roots, he should be able to obtain their dao rather easily.

However, given how little time he spent understanding metal itself or even Yang itself, Alex couldn't find a start to understanding any Dao under it.

The next best thing after that was his Yin dao, but once again, that was in a similar situation. There was one aspect of Yin that he could understand, but for reasons he couldn't explain himself, he didn't want to understand it, as that would mean reliving the horrible moment.

As such, Alex's mind started to wander as he thought of the many things he had come to learn during his lifetime.

Slowly, he forgot he was even in a trance and started thinking of something that he had come to learn a lot about recently.

Alex failed to realize this, but over a week passed as he fell into this course of thought. There were many things he had to test about this topic, but for some reason, one by one, he started understanding what would happen if he did something.

Even without physically doing it, Alex had an instinct he had built up over the last 6 years that was starting to show fruit now.

All he had learned, all he had accumulated came to him in a wave of information, and as the understanding reached a crescendo, the worldly laws descended upon him from the sky, making it, even easier to continue the understanding.

Many people who were out of their trance could feel the laws descend, but many didn't think twice as Alex's wasn't the only law that descended.

Over a dozen different people were learning Dao this time around, so Alex's Dao was hidden amongst them.

The only ones who realized he was learning a Dao were the elders that were around him and could feel the disturbance not far away from them.

They were surprised that he was understanding Dao so easily, but they did nothing to disturb him.

However, what they did not realize was that within the worldly laws that had descended on Alex, there was another Dao that was being understood by the little cat that stayed on his person.

Pearl was fully in trance, understanding the Dao for something he was very much used to.

Pearl had some help in learning the Dao. It wasn't just him that understood the concept he was learning the Dao of, he was also remembering the information that was ingrained into his bloodline.

Nonetheless, Pearl was learning the Dao himself, which made it his own accomplishment.

Not long after, Pearl opened his eyes, fully understanding the Dao. He had started learning earlier than Alex, so he understood it faster than him.

He was a little confused by what he had learned, as Dao wasn't something that he had information on. However, he remembered what the old man that had taught him had told him.

He had said that he would someday learn about this, and when he did, he should ask Alex for his help in understanding what he had learned and to not use it recklessly as it could hurt him.

So, he waited for Alex to wake up so he could ask him. About half a day later, Alex opened his eyes as well.

It had taken him a while, but he had understood it. The understanding had come to him and the worldly laws that descended had left.

Alex didn't move and only kept to himself as he thought of what he had just learned.

Dao of Plant Growth.

To be more accurate, it was the understanding of how plants grew and how it could be helped to grow even better and in most cases, faster even. Having worked with plants for so long now, when it was time for him to learn a Dao, he naturally gravitated toward what he was very used to these days.

Alex wished it was the Dao of Techniques, as that would make everything so much easier, but without putting any work into it, there was no way he could learn that.

As he was thinking that, Pearl spoke to Alex.

"I learned something," he sent a mental message.

Alex had been invested in himself to even realize that Pearl had learned a Dao too.

"You learned a Dao? Of what?" he asked.

"Of Metal," Pearl said. "I know a lot about metal energy now."

"Oh, not bad," Alex said. He spread his sense around to see who was awake, but most people were in their trance.

"We'll do a test once we are out, okay?" Alex said and let Pearl return back to another trance in hope that he learned something.

Alex also at the same time remembered to reapply the medicinal paste to his eyes and then returned to falling into a trance. Since quite a bit of time was remaining, he hoped to learn something else as well.

#### Chapter 894: Elemental Interaction

Alex was a little surprised by the amount of time it took to learn a Dao. Back when he learned about explosions, he had taken about 2 days to understand them. While he had some understanding of the explosion at the time, the real understanding had come from witnessing the explosive technique of the Blueflame monkey.

In addition to that, he had eaten some Enlightening Mangoes which helped him understand further, not unlike what he was going through right now.

Right now, Alex was nowhere close to learning a Dao, but thanks to the help of the scent that made him fall into a trance, he had the time and necessary mental ability to possibly understand some concepts and learn some Dao.

This made Alex think back to the time when he learned the Heat dao. That had come out of nothing as he simply thought about heat and hadn't taken a lot of time either.

Which was to say, Alex was worried that learning Dao with this system would take too much time, and it was much better to learn it on his own.

Still, it wasn't like he was simply going to say no to an opportunity.

Alex fell into another trance and his mind started naturally thinking of the many things that he had learned over the course of his life.

Alex started thinking of the different elements. Water and Wood were his worst spiritual roots, so he didn't have any chance with them.

He tried to think of the various Dao that might be related to Earth but somehow came up empty. He simply wasn't too involved with earth, to begin with.

Next was Fire, which he was plenty involved with. Being an Alchemist, Fire was one of the most essential elements you always dealt with.

However, Alex had already learned what he could about Fire from there. At least in regards to how he used it. He already had the conduction and heat dao, so there wasn't anything that jumped out to give him some information.

Next up was Metal. Despite having Supreme Metal roots, Alex had for some reason not bothered to experiment more with them. He did learn all the techniques, but nothing that could be said to be about learning metal itself.



As for Yin and Yang, they were higher elements and didn't easily give away their secrets to Alex.

He knew they represented light and darkness, life and death, hot and cold, sun and moon, day and night, active and passive. However, even knowing this there was nothing he could do to further understand them, and thus could not gain a Dao.

So, Alex stopped thinking about the normal elements and moved on to the more nontraditional elements, such as blood.

Unfortunately, he hadn't trained in the techniques from the Blood God's Manual for over 10 months, so he wasn't very knowledgeable about that.

Another nontraditional element, or rather an aura that Alex had come to know about recently was Space.

Space and Time were more things that could be manipulated to a certain extent. He had seen this with formations and scripts that did it such as the various teleportation formations, or the time-dilating and constricting formations in the White Tiger's palace and the cultivation caves and the Timeless palace in the Demon realm.

Still, he was unable to get much out of either thought as he simply wasn't proficient with them. It would take a long time before he understood either of them.

Alex's mind next moved to weapons, and as a Sword user, there was nothing else for him to think about.

Alex tried thinking about the sword, learning its Dao, but for someone who hadn't even improved his intents or Sword Qi, it was simply impossible to understand swords as they were right now.

Alex's mind went through the many things he knew other than these. He thought of talismans and formations and finally ended up on Alchemy.

Alchemy was such a vast topic that Alex didn't even know where to start thinking about it.

Did he think about it with the fire? Or the cauldron? Or the ingredients that went into it? Or did he start somehow sooner and try and think about the recipes that went into making a pill?

Or maybe he should go to the end where the pill is formed. Could he learn a Dao regarding it?

Alex let his mind think what it could while he was under the effect of the scent. His open mind could think of many things at once and at a level that simply wasn't possible without the trance he was in.

As Alex thought of the various things, his mind caught onto something that he had more idea about than anything else when it came to alchemy.

He honed in on that knowledge and started thinking of it, and potentially even expanding on it from what he understood it.

Alex was thinking about the elements again. Only, this time he was thinking of how they interacted with each other.

Empowerment, Control, Weakening, Overwhelming, and Ruination. Each element that interacted with another element showed one of the 5 effects depending on what element they were and how strong the energy itself was.

This was something Alex had learned over 14 years ago and had been using in his alchemy. During this time, he had also come to learn more about how they interacted.

He not only learned how two energy reacted, but multiple ones, and how they all came to result in a single collective element. After all, that was the essence of alchemy.

As such, when Alex started thinking of it, he once again caused the world to stir and the worldly laws to descend.

The elders, none of whom had managed to show any signs of learning another Dao were beyond shocked when Alex brought down the laws again.

The month was coming to a close, so the elders were ready to leave at any moment, but seeing the worldly laws descend made them wait.

They kept watching for a whole day before the worldly laws ascended back to the skies and Alex learned the Dao of Five Elemental Interaction.

Alex opened his eyes, slightly happy, but slightly disappointed as well. He had learned a Dao, but it was for something he already had most of the knowledge about.

While the Dao did help him in some ways as he now knew that there was nothing more for him to understand about the elemental interaction.

At least amongst the five of them. The 2 higher elements, Yang and Yin barely ever had ingredients and thus Alex didn't know much about how they interacted mostly.

He was about to think more of what he had just learned when suddenly the elders around him sent their spiritual sense up to him.

"Young man, you learned two different Daos?" the green-robed elder asked.

"What did you learn, young man?" the red-robed elder asked.

"Not even a Saint and already knows two different Daos. So talented," the sect leader of the Blue Spring sect said.

"Makes me wonder..." the ancestor of the Heaven's Frost sect said. "Young man, are you one of these so-called players?"

Chapter 895: Leave

"Sorry... players?" Alex looked at the elder curiously. "What makes you say that?"

"Are you not?" the elder asked. "All the new and talented youngsters have ended up being players, which was why I asked. This young girl is a so called player too."

"Oh," Alex looked towards the girl in the veil, who was curiously looking forward to his answer too. "Yes, I'm a player."

"I knew it!" the Heaven's Frost ancestor said.

"Calm down, old man. We all knew it. It's obvious at this point," the red-robed elder named Guan said. "You must have been quite lost then. Being in a new world, sent away from the immortal realms. You were tricked, huh?"

Alex was a little surprised at the woman's words. "Sent away by an immortal?" he asked.

"Of course," the older woman said. "It's obvious really. You were some talented group of people that didn't know about cultivation, so the immortal sent you here from the heavens so you can train in a relatively safe environment."

"Well, at least that's what we think, based on the information we have," elder Xuan said. "After all, your world is so different from our own that it simply has to be one of the higher realms."

"I never thought about that," Alex said. "So we were sent here by an immortal? What would the immortal want from us?"

"Who knows, kid? For all we know, the immortal could have just been bored," the elders said.

"Anyway, can you tell us about the Dao that you learned?" one of the elders asked.

Alex didn't even have to think about if he should speak or not because Elder Xuan spoke on his behalf.

"No, he won't say. Why don't you reveal what Dao you learned?" she asked.

"Tsk! You don't have to attack me like that. You could've just stopped at no," the elder said and stood up.

The water didn't cling to him at all as he stood, and not a single part of his cloth was wet.

At the same time, the other elders started standing up too. "Let's go, young man. The scent has already disappeared for the most part, so it is impossible to learn dao now," one of the elders said.

"Oh, yes," Alex said and stood up.

One by one, they exited the hot spring and slowly started descending down the mountain.

Alex took Pearl back into his beast space and descended along with the elder.

The elders tried to talk with him, but Alex was lost in his own thought. He wasn't thinking about the Dao he had learned, but the ones he hadn't learned. There was something about them that simply didn't sit right with him.

He answered a few questions here and there, most mostly Alex simply kept to himself, thinking of many things.

When they finally arrived at the gate, Alex saw many people that were already outside. There were no more boats as those were already taken by the other disciples to go back to the sect.

"Whose job is it to handle the closing this time around?" the Heaven's Frost sect's ancestors asked.

"I believe it's the Frozen Heart sect's turn," Tai Guan, the Blazing Earth sect's female ancestor said.

"Yes, it is ours. You may leave if you want to," elder Xuan said.

"Good, My disciple and I were going to leave anyway. Come, little Zhu," the elder said and the red-veiled girl walked away with the elder.

Alex watched them fly away and then saw the various other sect leaders and ancestors try and find some of their elders to fly back with.

Elder Xuan stood there and looked back at the gate as many started climbing down on their own to leave.

"Every year, one of us is tasked to make sure that everyone has left and then seal the mountain. This turn, it's ours so I will have to stay here for 2 more days," she explained to Alex who was standing next to her.

"I see," Alex said, still a little lost in his own thoughts.

"So you can go back on your own if you want to," the elder said. "Or you can wait for a few of the elders and disciples to come out so you can leave with them."

"Elder, I wish to leave," Alex said.

"Okay, you can go back on your own. You can do that right?" she asked.

"No, elder," Alex's voice grew more stern. "I wish to leave."

The elder paused and turned around. "You don't mean to say..."

"Yes," Alex said. "I wish to leave the sect."

Elder Xuan frowned. Her face grew somber as she asked, "does it have anything to do with how we treated you?"

"No, it had nothing to do with that," Alex said.

"Wait, did one of those elders give you a better offer? Those bastards, trying to take—"

"No, elder. It has nothing to do with what you did or what anyone else did," Alex said. "It has to do with me."

The elder was now confused. "What do you mean?" she asked.

"Here's the thing, elder. When I was trying to understand the dao, I came to learn that there were so many different Daos that I could potentially learn. However, I simply cannot because I haven't been giving them enough time for a long while now."

"I have been couped up in that small room for over a year doing nothing but making pills. While I am happy that it has helped me improve my pill-making skills, I have also regressed in other ways."

"I haven't trained in a long while. The sword skills that I should be improving on aren't being improved in the slightest, and the many techniques I should practice have been something I simply don't have the time to spend on."

"As such, I wish to leave the sect and go explore the world and try and understand everything I can," Alex said.

The elder stayed quiet as she listened to it. "You learned more than just Dao up there, huh?" she spoke. "I must tell you this before you make any further decision. If you do leave the sect, there is no way for you to enter this mountain ever again, until you enter the Saint realm."

"It's fine, elder. I don't think another visit to the mountain next year can help me so quickly anyway, and by the year after that, I will have entered the Saint realm, so I will make it here," he said.

"Even then, given how many important figures we will have to go through, if there are more than 2000 figures that want to enter this mountain, you might not get a chance to," she said.

"That's fine too, elder," Alex said. "If we are to go through importance, then I can simply make myself an important figure."

The elder thought for a bit and spoke. "You learned two different Dao today, and you know even more of them. Logic suggests that I should keep you however I can."

Alex's eyebrows narrowed in fear. "Elder, you gave me your word. I can leave the sect whenever I want," he said.

"I did, but what if I wanted to keep you? What if I didn't want to let you leave the sect?" she asked.

Alex was starting to get scared of the elder. Could he escape if a Saint Soul cultivator wanted to keep him there?

"Then I would resent the sect, Elder. And more than anything, I would resent you," he said. He got ready to use Heaven's Impact and then the Earth Devouring technique when suddenly he stopped.

The elder burst into laughter as her chuckle was heard all around the mountain. "Yeah, I definitely can't afford that. And I'm not twisted enough to destroy that which I can't have," she said. "If you truly do wish to leave, then leave. However, I hope you can make an oath."

"An oath?" Alex frowned. Oaths were powerful binding that would force him to do something or destroy him if he didn't.

"Yes, an oath. Make an oath that if you ever learn that the Frozen Heart sect is in danger, you will come to help it as long as you can," she said.

Alex thought for a moment and shook his head. "I'm sorry, elder. I cannot speak the oath. It isn't a bad oath, but I do not wish to bind myself into doing something compulsorily."

"Is that so?" the elder's eyes turned downwards as a sad little expression appeared on it. "I guess I asked for too much."



Alex nodded and then spoke. "While I cannot speak the oath, elder, I will give you my word. If I ever learn that the Frozen Heart sect is in trouble and that I can help it, I will definitely come to help the sect. That is the least I can do."

The elder smiled. "Thank you," she said. "I expect a lot from you."

Alex nodded and bowed toward her, ready to leave.

"Before you leave, can you tell me what Daos you learned?" she asked. She was quite curious about it as well.

"Sure," Alex said. "I learned Dao of Plant Growth, and Dao of Five Elemental Interaction."

"Dao of... plant growth? And elemental interaction? Isn't that...Hah!" the elder exclaimed. "As expected of an Alchemist. I should have known you would learn something related to that."

The elder rummaged into her bag to bring out something that she tossed to him. Alex caught the thing and realized that it was a small badge.

"Frozen Heart sect Affiliation badge?" Alex asked as he read the words on it.

"It means you have some connection with the Frozen Heart sect. While it might not help a lot, it should help you get out of some sticky situation," the Elder said. "Still, I hope instead of having to use such a badge, you would use one that belongs to an elder. If you ever do plan on returning, the Frozen Heart sect will accept you with open arms."

"Thank you, elder." Alex stored the badge and bowed once more.

Then he turned around and flew off to start a new adventure of his own.

Alex stopped cultivating early in the morning and left the tavern room. His white mask still hung on his face as he walked through the crowd of people that looked at him with peculiar expressions on their faces.

Of course, not just anyone walked around with a mask on their faces.

The black robe he wore made it impossible for people to guess just what faction he belonged to. Not that it belonged to any faction as this was one of the few robes that his mother bought for him because she thought it looked good on him.

The city of Snowsoot was located near a volcano, but unlike the other cities that were located near a volcano, this one didn't get affected by the heat of it as the Spirit vein below the city was never ripped off.

Because of that, the city was clad in white snow, as well as some volcanic ash from time to time, giving it the name Snowsoot city.

The city was south enough that people could start growing crops in the summer, but it was still north enough that snow plagued most year-round.

There were no gates to check for exit or entry, so anyone could come and go as they wished.

Most cities that did this would have to start charging newcomers immediately since every year the mayor had to provide a tribute to the Frozen Heart sect in exchange for having their disciples protect the land.

However, this city was exempted from having to pay tribute, so the mayor did not bother setting up any form of entry fee.

Actually, setting up one would hurt them more than anything, so there weren't even any gates around the city.

Alex walked past a store that sold weapons and simply shook his head at the thought of the costs he had seen at the store when he first got there. He shook his head out of the city through one of the roads and arrived at the outskirts which lead to the mountains.

He continued up the pathway, which was filled with people coming and going as well. At the top of the road was a group of people lined up outside a cave that was either entering or leaving.

The ones entering needed no time to enter as the only thing they needed to do was to take a talisman with them.

The ones exiting, however, had to bring out a lump of stone and hand it over to the Frozen Heart disciples that were working there.

Alex entered the cave and looked at the giant opening that was filled with sparkling metals on either side. He followed the tunnel and made his way through the tunnels to one of the many forks that were created by the people here and were still being cleared.

However, none of those paths would ever come to an end. At least, not for a very long time as no one had any intention of ending the tunnel.

Which was why this place was known as the Endless Tunnel.

Even inside in the dim light, Alex could see the sparking walls and ceilings. Even the floor sparkled. The scenery, however, had already lost its novelty as Alex had come here for nearly a week now.

After leaving Dao mountain, Alex had a single thought in his mind. He needed to find a place where he could both cultivate, train, and be free to do whatever he wanted.

Of the information he had, Alex could think of only one place where he could improve himself by training.

That was obviously the Ancient Battlefield, where the aura and intent of ancient times were still available and one could train against them.

So, Alex had made his way south to go there. However, when he entered the Snowsoot city and learned of the Endless Tunnel being right next to it, he realized that it was a brilliant coincidence as he was in quite urgent requirement of a sword.

Given how good the weapons made up of Starfroged Tungsten seemed to be, he wanted to buy one, but the cost seemed too extraordinarily high. So, he wanted to mine some of it to make a sword out of it. It turned out that he could also buy the metal in the city, but why would he do that when he could simply mine it for free?

Besides, he didn't just want to make a single sword. With the 21 Sword Array technique with him, he would want at least 21 different swords to be used.

Since swords here were expensive and buying was out of the question, Alex had a different idea in mind. If possible, he would like to start getting his hands into artifact forging as well.

That way, he would be able to make any sword he wanted without having to worry about finding a forger or worry about having money for it.

With that in mind, Alex had started going into the mines to mine some of the ores. He had in mind how much he would require for 21 swords and then maybe a little extra.

Since it was just some mining, he had expected it to be done in a day or two. However, it was only after the first day that he realized just how stupid his expectations were.

There was a reason why Saint realms had to stop working on this mine. There was a reason why for the last 2500 years they had barely made such little progress.

The reason was simple. Starfroged Tungsten, even as just an ore, was incredibly tough. So tough that the Frozen Heart sect didn't even take any ore from the True realm cultivators that entered. They only took Spirit stones.

It was only for Saint realm cultivator that they asked for 50 Kilograms of Ore for every day they spent in the mine.

50 Kilograms was quite an evil number for first-timers as it brought in waves of happiness and despair.

50 Kilograms was just a lot to simply give away after mining for a whole day, which would be what most newcomers would think, which would be their first wave of despair.

However, for Starforged Tungsten, even just a fist-sized ore weighed at least 20 to 30 kilograms. Two fist-sized ores were enough to pay the daily cost. So, when newcomers learned of that, they would get their first wave of happiness.

However, not long after, they would realize just how much energy they had to put into mining the ore for even just a fistful-sized ore. That would be their second wave of sadness.

Still, they would work on the mine and gather some ores and take it to sell. When they did sell the ores and learned that each fist-sized Ores cost around a thousand spirit stones, they would get their next wave of happiness.

The work was hard, but it paid well if you could do it. This was why this location was quite popular amongst those who were looking to make a quick buck.

The first day Alex mined, he barely managed to get about 150 kilograms of ores. At first, he was happy, but when he remembered the staff that was used by that one disciple he fought, he was depressed.

That single staff was about 5 tons in weight. So, if he wanted to make a single sword, he would need a weight that was close to that, which would be around 2 to 3 tons.

In comparison, the swords he had seen that weighed around this much were tended by a Saint realm cultivator and cost about 300 thousand Spirit stones or items of similar value.

On top of that, the sword wasn't even fully made up of Starforged Tungsten as it was usually an alloy of sorts where only 50% to 80% of it would be the actual tungsten.

Given how hard the tungsten was to work with, a sword that was entirely made up of the tungsten would go around to sale for over 500 thousand True spirit stones.

Alex definitely wanted a blade made up of 100% tungsten since he knew how tough it could be.

If Alex continued his first day's speed. He would need an entire week to get 1 ton of ore. When refined, that 1 ton of ore would change to about 400 kilos of the actual tungsten.

So, he would have to work about 5 to 8 weeks to have enough ore for a single sword.

That was incredibly tough for him as it would take 3 and a half years of constantly coming here to mine just to get enough ore for the 21 different swords.

That was without calculating how much time it would take to take the metal out of the ore, and then further processing would be required to turn a solid block of metal into a sword.

At some point, Alex thought it would be better to simply sell pills and earn enough money to have someone else do it all for him.

However, on the 2nd day, he found a method that worked really well and stuck with that for the whole week now.

Alex spread his spiritual sense as he searched for a place with not many people in it and walked there. When he arrived, he looked for a relatively empty spot where he put a small formation to cover up his portion of the working space so no one would be able to see just what he did there.

Once it was all set up, Alex began mining by first training his various techniques.

#### Chapter 897: Understanding the Basics

The walls of the Endless Tunnel that were made up of the StarForged Tungsten ores were without a doubt one of the best places to train his attacks in.

They were tough and durable, and Alex didn't have to worry about holding back his powers at all. In fact, it was advised that he didn't hold back at all, or he wouldn't be able to dislodge or break open any of the ores at all.

And that was what Alex wanted in the end after all.

His attacks began with his punches and palms. The Iron Fist punch and the Palm of the Sun were techniques that he had learned from the very beginning when he was in the Tiger Sect.

They weren't the strongest skills he had, but because their elements were Metal and Yang, they did end up being one of the strongest skills for sure.

Next was the Flame Mastery Scripture. Alex created a fiery bird using his will and sent it to strike the wall in front of him.

The wall resounded with a massive boom, but aside from a little dirt, nothing came off the wall.

Alex practiced the three techniques for a few minutes before moving on to his next skill which didn't use a sword.

The Infinite Heavenly Ice Spears.

Alex created an icicle out of thin air and attacked the wall in front of him. The icicles, although weak because of his Water Spiritual root, ended up being quite strong when Alex used his Yin Qi for it.

Although, it could never end up being as strong as his Metal or Yang attacks.

Once he was done practicing that, He switched to the next set of techniques by taking out a single sword. Then, he started training on his sword skills.

Alex had various sword skills, but at this point, only 2 were usable given how weak the others he had learned were. The Penta-Sword technique and the Elusive Heavenly Sword were what he considered the two best Sword techniques that he learned in the Tiger sect, not counting Sword Intent itself.

Alex attacked the wall as well as he could using both techniques, and clearly one was superior to the other. Being a person with a very weak Wood Spiritual root, Alex simply could never bring out the full strength of the Elusive Heavenly Sword.

After he finished training with the two techniques, Alex moved on to the next sword technique as he brought out 20 different swords out of his storage ring.

The swords flew in the air and immediately got into their place as they hovered with 3 swords at the front, 6 in the middle, and 12 at the back.

Then, the 21 swords started spinning altogether as Alex used the 21 Sword Array skill.

Alex had come to learn a bit about the technique after having used it for quite a while now. First of all, the technique used up quite a lot of Qi to use it. However, similarly, it was also very strong.

Alex didn't have an opponent to check the strength of the attack, but he could guarantee that the attacks were always stronger than his strongest Metal technique.

And that was without infusing any Sword Qi or Intent into it.

The technique's strength seemed to also rely on the swords that were in the array. The better the sword, the better the strength would be.

However, just because he got a chance to use Celestial-grade swords didn't mean he could suddenly kill Divine realm cultivators. The swords only provided so much power.

Still, he couldn't imagine that they wouldn't do a lot of damage if each of the 21 swords weighed above 2 tons and were made of one of the most durable metals in the whole world.



Alex had another thought about the technique as he practiced it on the wall. Each time the swords struck the wall, and he heard the reverberation, he wondered... what would happen if he were to add more swords to the technique.

Given the pattern of 3, 6, and 12. The next set of swords to be added had to either be 21 or 24. However, even when he tried both the amount, for some reason he simply couldn't use the technique at all.

Because he added the swords, he had to make alterations to the technique. However, for that, he needed the Dao of Techniques.

There were other techniques he had, that he needed to improve and needed Dao of techniques for that too.

His hands could be covered in Metal Qi, turning into golden fists or claws at his demand, but they were rather bad techniques as their efficiency wasn't something he had managed to improve.

Even his own skill to create a sun that he had created by simply adding Yang Qi to a ball of fire was quite bad.

Shen Jing had told him long ago that they were bad, however, it wasn't until now that he was starting to give thought to his words.

He was starting to think of how he could change a technique to improve them.

To use a technique, one needed 3 things. Qi, a route through the meridians for the Qi, which was also known as the Path, and Intent.

With a combination of these three, one would be able to use any techniques. Most people failed, however, because they weren't always able to fulfill the 3 conditions.

A man without a Fire Spiritual Root could never use Fire techniques as they didn't have a way to produce Fire Qi.

Similarly, if one's meridians were hurt or blocked, they couldn't use a technique at all.

Finally, without the proper intent to use a technique, the technique wouldn't ever come out.

For the techniques that were Heaven Grade or even lower, Alex had both the Qi and Intent for them. His Five Elemental Yin-Yang spiritual roots made sure that he would have access to every natural element out there, albeit they started off as rather weak set of Spiritual roots

Since he also had proper intentions for each of the techniques as he was already capable of using them, the only way to improve on a technique was to improve the pathways.

He needed to find a different path for the Qi to flow out through his meridians. If he could figure that out, he could improve every technique he had.

However, he didn't know where he could begin with altering a technique. As such, Alex decided to start with not altering but creating a technique.

He closed off his senses to nothing but himself and let a tongue of fire burn in the air in front of him. As the fire burned, Alex used his authority to call upon the Dao of Explosion to explode the fire in front of him.

The world acted on his will and the Qi moved into his fire. However, at the same time, Qi also moved from within him to go into the fire.

Alex was waiting for exactly that. He sensed the many meridians that existed in his body and then searched for the ones through which the Qi moved out.

The fire exploded in front of him, but Alex didn't give a single thought to that. He continued thinking about the movement of Qi within him and then decided to copy it.

Qi streamed out of his navel area and Alex forced it to flow into the exact same meridians instead of the thousands that he could choose from.

The pathway was perfect, so as they came out and reached his hands, they streamed out into the open air where a tongue of fire was waiting for it.

Finally, Alex needed to add the third part of the technique, the Intent.

The intent on what he wanted to do didn't seem as important as the other two, but there was no doubt that it was equally important.

So, from the start to the end of the technique, he had been continuously adding it. The intent to explode the fire in front of him.

He didn't use his authority over the explosion at all, simply just intent.

The moment the Qi touched the fire, the fire suddenly turned violent and exploded in a massive boom.

The explosion was weak, much weaker than when he used his Dao, and there was an upper limit to the strength of the explosion based on the strength of his own Qi.

However, Alex cared for none of that. A smile appeared on his face as he successfully created a technique that wasn't in his arsenal before this.

This meant that his understanding of the basics behind every technique was correct. And what was better was that this gave him the confidence to be sure that if he tried, he could definitely improve his techniques.

The Saint realms in the area were too weak to sense this, but worldly laws had stirred just now when Alex had understood the basic concept of the Dao of Techniques.

However, they were only basic, so the worldly Daos wouldn't descend with just that. He needed to understand a lot more in-depth about techniques in general before he actually acquired the Dao itself.

Alex did plan on improving with it, and he began trying. He began testing by bringing the Qi out through the various different paths, but there were too many for him to simply learn about it.

This needed more time than what he had in the cave, so Alex stopped improving that for now and started training on something that needed a lot of training on his end.

Blood Manipulation.

Chapter 898: Mining

Blood suddenly poured out from every single pore in Alex's body as he covered him up in intricate armor.

The blood armor was the easiest way for Alex to bring out blood from his body, so he did just that.

Having just learned a little about the Dao of techniques, Alex got a little confused when the armor appeared from his body. How did that happen?

He understood that one needed Qi and a pathway for a technique to work, but the blood didn't follow that surely.

The Blood Armor disappeared back into his body as Alex carefully brought it out again. It was only then that he noticed something.

Qi was indeed being used to bring out the armor. Most of the work was actually done by Blood Aura itself, but Qi did indeed help a bit. Qi also helped strengthen the armor.

Considering that Blood Aura was the equivalent of Qi, it did make sense that it would be required in forming the armor too, alongside intent.

However, that still left out a pathway for the aura to go through to use the technique. Or was it that Qi itself was enough and Blood Aura didn't need to be counted in this technique? It would make some sense when he thought about it.

In fact, going a bit ahead, Alex turned the blood into a sword as it landed on his hand.

The technique on the second page of the Blood God's Manual, Blood Manipulation.

Alex used the technique to pour Qi into the blood around him to fluidly change its shape.

"So, even if it is not one of the 7 elements, it still uses Qi to move, huh?" Alex thought to himself.

However, he immediately remembered something that made his assessment wrong, or at least he believed so.

Back in the Demon realm, when he was being forcefully ejected out of the realm by the escape talisman, he had somehow made the teleportation power disappear.

Or more accurately... he had made the space to stop being affected.

"Wait, I didn't use Qi those times when I killed them while they were covered in Space aura, and I don't have a Space dao," Alex thought. "Then the only reason I could have moved space back then was through... wait, do I have Space aura?"

He had a basic understanding of half of what was going on, so everything that felt similar was in no way the same at all.

Space aura and Blood aura were two different things, sure, but they should somehow act similar, right? There had to be a rule.

"Hmm, you can in fact manipulate space with Qi," Alex thought. "That's how I teleport in the first place. That's how formations work, that's how runes work."

"Then... is what happened that time in some way similar to what I am doing with blood aura?"

"Wait, Sword Intent, Qi, and then Aura. They don't need a pathway either, just like Space, in my case. Then... is blood different somehow?" he thought.

"I can see how Sword and Blood aura can be different. One I'm using with a technique I found from a book, while the other is something I'm gaining through my understanding of it," Alex thought. "Then, going by the same logic, does Space somehow fall under the same category as Sword and not blood?"

That only meant one thing. "Am I understanding Space somehow? How? Why? How could I learn something without knowing I'm learning it?"

Alex was left scratching his head.

"This is confusing, I will have to think about it later," Alex stopped thinking about it and continued his training.

The blood sword struck the wall in front of him and didn't even make any sparks despite how strong it was.

There was barely a dent in the wall, so Alex struck again, and again, and again. He switched it up from time to time.

He would freely transform the shapes the blood was in. Sometimes it would be staff, sometimes a spear, sometimes a scythe, and sometimes a hammer.

He tried every other weapon, but he wasn't very good at them, so he returned to a sword every so often.

Aside from that, also tried ranged attacks. He copied what Song Shing had done to him and created droplets out of his blood to shoot out like bullets.

Those were quite strong attacks if he did say so himself.

Since all of the attacks were powered using blood aura, the attacks themselves depended on just how strong the blood he was using was, and if his body could handle such a strong blood aura.

The Qi was there to supplement the blood in case it was weaker than the Qi itself.

Alex practiced every variation of the attack he could think of, but he was limited by his imagination and experiences. As such, his blood art would only improve as he learned more about cultivation in general from the many Saint realms of the Northern Continent.

Alex continued his training for a little while longer before stopping it.

He had spent nearly 5 hours on his training, so it was time for him to actually mine the ores.

While Alex hadn't used his strongest attacks or had even planned on mining at all, despite attacking the walls so much, all he had managed to do was dislodge a single fist-sized ore of the metal, which he put into his storage ring.

Now that he was seriously going to mine it, he needed a much better system than just attacking the wall with all he had.

During the first 2 days, Alex had thought of renting a hammer outside the gates for not a lot of price. However, he had come up with a way better technique on the third day.

Alex brought out a sword. The sword.

It was the strongest object that Alex had ever seen. He couldn't be sure who forged it, or how such a metal could even exist, but there was nothing in this world that was stronger than this sword.

However, that was perhaps to be expected. After all, one wouldn't simply bind someone like Godslayer to an everyday sword. Alex couldn't even imagine the origin of such a sword.

Alex used his Saint realm body and his Sword Qi to drive the sword into the wall. Only the tip of the sword was in, but Alex didn't need more than that.

Once the tip was in, Alex took out a massive ore from his storage bag that was the size of a human head and weighed about a hundred kilograms.

Then, he started hitting the sword from the back like he was putting a nail in the wall.

He hit the sword until it was more than halfway into the wall, then it started hitting it sideways to slowly push the sword horizontally on the wall.

Every so often, he tilted the sword so that instead of going just horizontally, it would also go upwards in an arc.

By the time 2 hours had passed, Alex had barely managed to make a quarter of a circle whose radius would be around a meter.

He needed about 5 hours before he was fully done with the city. By the end of it, Alex's muscles started burning with pain.

Given how little he knew about the various other methods of Body cultivation, Alex would bet that this would certainly make someone very strong if they kept it going for a long time.

Alex stopped for a while to cultivate and heal his body. The Undying physique easily healed him, but the fatigue still remained and that was what he was trying to truly get rid of.

After a couple or so hours, he got back up and started mining again. Now that he had made a deep cut on the wall, all that remained was for him to start carving away the walls.



He struck the sword diagonally on the wall and started hitting it again until the sword came out of the circle that was cleared away.

Once again, he started striking sideways until he carved the wall to the point that there was nothing holding that piece of the wall anymore and it just fell off.

About a ton of ore fell off just like that. Once he put the ore into his storage bag, he continued with the rest of the ore, in what would certainly be over 20 tons by itself.

#### Chapter 899: Break from Mining

Night had fallen outside, but Alex didn't give any thought to that. It wasn't just him that worked here endlessly. Even the other Saint realm cultivators remained inside as long as they could to make the most of their time.

Alex continued cutting up the wall for the next 5 or 6 hours until nothing much remained left to be cut after he was done.

However, that did not mean he could leave just yet. Given how sharp most of the edges were, people would realize that he was cutting up ores here after he left.

So, he needed to make the hole appear more natural, something that would appear after a saint realm had worked on this portion for a long time.

Alex released his blood armor again and used the blood from there to strike at the wall all over again.

He took a few hours of break in between to cultivate and get back his Qi. In the meantime, while he didn't do anything, Alex brought out Pearl and let him train on the wall.

Pearl's skill sent attacks flying left and right as he began training as well.

His shockwave technique didn't work as well against the wall, but the paw strike did work well. The skills Alex had bought a long time ago were being put to good use finally.

Many hours later, he was finally done. He was quite tired and felt drained, but he was done. He also earned quite a few more in the process.

By the time he had spent 2 days in the mine, he had gathered around 25 tons of ores, which would be about 10 tons of Tungsten.

That was good enough for 3-4 swords.

Considering he had already gathered around 50 tons in the last week, Alex was good for over 15 swords now.

A few more days and he would have enough for the sword. However, he didn't simply watch metals for just the 21 swords. Now that mining was so easy, he wanted metal for the 45 swords that he would add to the technique to improve it.

So, he was going to get as much out of his time here as he could.

Alex closed the formation behind him and left the mine, slowly making his way outside. He paid the fee for two days' worth of mining in Spirit stones and left the area.

He made his way back to Snowsoot city, which seemed to have gone through a considerable amount of ashes in the last 2 days. He saw people sweeping the ground and... collecting?

"Are they collecting soot?" Alex thought for a moment. "Ah, must be for the plants."

He ignored the people and went back to the tavern where he had rented the room for the entire month.

As soon as he returned, Alex went into his room and started cultivating endlessly along with Pearl and Whisker.

Alex only stopped when the sun rose from the window behind him.

He put Pearl and Whisker back into their Beast space and went into his mind to check on the situation inside there.

The silver mountain still hung in the sky and there were quite a lot of silver strings floating in the air as well.

'They're starting to increase in number now,' Alex thought. He wondered why that was. However, he knew he wouldn't find any answer just mulling by himself, so he started absorbing all those into his body.

Once done, he looked towards the Godslayer that was staying on his own.

"Hey, are you doing okay?" he asked. "I know you haven't gotten any food for a while, but since I've left the sect, I might go back to being forced to eat beast cores again."

"Hmm? Oh, good for you," the sword spirit said and went back to not speaking.

"Is something wrong?" Alex asked.

"I don't know," the spirit said. "It's like something had been awakened within me and it's calling for me."

"Calling for you? You mean like you found your body?" Alex asked.

"No, not that sort," Godslayer said. "More like... I don't know how to explain it. I'm sure I've had this feeling before as well, but I had been able to ignore it so easily since I was in control at the time."

"However, now that I'm here, stuck, with nothing to do but mull on this feeling, the reaching levels it has never reached before," Godslayer said. "It's like I want to do something, but I don't know exactly what it is that I want to do."

Alex was quite curious too. "When did it start exactly? This feeling I mean," he asked.

"A week? A month? I can't tell how long has passed in here," the sword spirit said.

'Could it be because of the Dao mountain?' Alex thought. With the worldly laws falling down twice, did the sword spirit sense something?

'Wait, can artifact spirits even learn Dao? Given that they have so much intelligence, that should work, right?' Alex thought.

"Well, let me know if you have any idea," Alex said and got back out of his mind.

He took a few minutes after that to reapply the medicine for his eyes. This was the 16th month in a row now that he had done this.

8 more months and he could stop. Hopefully, his eyesight returned after that.

Alex left the tavern and walked out into the city. This time, however, he wasn't planning on going to the mine at all.

Instead, Alex took another road to arrive in front of a rowdy place with a massive board that written 2 words.

Snowsoot Blacksmithing.

He walked into the blacksmiths and was beyond surprised to see that the ones that were hitting the metal with all they could be almost all Saint realm cultivators.

They all seemed to belong to different factions, but they were all working there.

One of the blacksmiths, a huge, muscular man walked up to Alex.

"What do you want, Junior?" he asked.

"I was wishing to learn how to smelt the tungsten ore, senior," Alex said.

"Hah! You True Realm cultivators will never be able to smelt such a metal. The heat alone will be something that you won't be able to survive."

"Give me your ores and I can do it for a few thousand Spirit stones," the man said. "It will be profitable if you bring a larger batch of ores at once so that it won't cost you as much."

"Thank you for your words senior, but I wish to learn how it is done myself. Would I be able to do that?" Alex asked.

"Don't waste my time if you're not going to have anything made, please leave," the man said and turned around.

"Senior, wait," Alex said. He hesitated for a second and slowly brought out about 100 kilograms of Ore.

"I have 100 Kilograms of ores here that you can refine, and I will pay you. However, if you let me view the process, not only will I pay you, I will let you keep the metal too," Alex said.

The Saint stood there, contemplating for a few seconds. The conditions weren't bad, but he just didn't like the idea of having some True realm cultivator being there while he—

Alex brought out the Frozen Heart affiliation badge and kept it over the ore. "I hope I can persuade you with this," he said.

The Saint's eyes narrowed. "You're affiliated with the Frozen Heart sect?" he asked.

"Yes, I've had dealings with them," Alex said. "We're on good terms. We're on quite good terms, I should say."

The Saint stared at him silently for a bit. "I don't like people who hide their faces. I believe they are hiding something," he said.

Alex took off his mask and showed his face. "I'm afraid the only thing I have to hide here is this medicinal paste I use to heal my eyes," he said.

The man got curious. "How do you see then?" he asked

"Through this little guy," Alex rubbed Whisker's head in his robes. "Also, I have spiritual sense."

Alex sent out a wave of spiritual sense that passed through the Saint.

"You... you truly are something," he said. He didn't see any more reason to disagree right now.

"Fine, come with me. I will only show it to you once, so if you run away from the heat, don't tell me I cheated."

Chapter 900: Smelting Tungsten

The man took Alex behind the smithy, to a place that was quite separate from all others.

"Where are we going?" Alex asked.

"The furnace for melting this metal is over there in those buildings. You can't just melt it anywhere you want because of how much heat it produces," the man said.

"I see," Alex said. He looked around the snow-filled backyard of the smithy and saw quite a few people working on parts of artifacts that didn't require much physical work.

The basic furnace-related work was done in the front shop.

They arrived at a location from where Alex could feel intense heat without even entering any of the rooms. "The furnace is here?" Alex asked.

"Yes," the man said. "Scared? I'm not returning your ores even if you want to quit now."

"Oh, it's fine. I don't plan on quitting so easily," Alex said and waited for the man to open the door.

The man shrugged and opened the door. Alex felt the hot air hit him, but the heat barely registered in his senses.

He was more surprised about the size of the furnace. "It's quite small," he said without thinking much.

"It can fit up to a ton of the ore at once, so it's not really that small," the man said.

The furnace looked like a cauldron, except it was long vertically with barely half a meter in diameter.

"That's where we'll melt the ore?" Alex asked as he looked at the material of the hot furnace. "That looks like it's been made from the same metal as well won't it melt?"

"No, that's an alloy, made by mixing different metals. It's not really strong, but has a high melting point," the senior said.

"Oh, what metals? Are they as good as the Starforged Tungsten themselves?" Alex asked.

"No, just 3 parts Ice Iron, 1 part Pale Onyx, 2 parts Violet Obsidian, and 10 parts Starforged Tungsten. You can easily make that furnace too," the man said.

"I see," Alex then turned to look at what the man was doing. "Are you not going to put the ore in?"

"Not yet," the man said and placed the ore in a giant platform and activated some sort of formation.

Instantly, everything was blocked by the platform. The man then brought out a giant hammer, clearly made from the same metal, and watched golden energy flow into it.

The man raised the hammer up high and slammed it down on the ore.

A deafening boom resounded all over the room as the formations on the wall lit up to block the sound from escaping.

Alex felt the force behind the attack. That was definitely in the Saint Foundation realm.

The man pulled the hammer up another time and slammed it down. He continued doing that for a while as the ores turned into even smaller pieces.

'Oh, he's making it easier to melt,' Alex understood.

After a while of beating the ore, the man finally stopped and took the broken ores out of the platform. The platform itself, however, wasn't damaged at all.

The formation there was most likely connected to the Spirit vein that lay below the city.

The man took a giant drum of water and poured the ore into the water. After mixing them for a bit, he threw out the water.

"That gets rid of a lot of the dirt," he explained and continued. He then took the drum of material and poured it into the furnace.

Then, all that was left was to heat it up.



"Tell me immediately if the heat causes a problem, okay? We need this thing to reach over 4000 degrees, and that's not something you should be able to handle," the man said.

"4000? That's quite high," Alex said. He thought back to his own pill-making sessions and never did he have to go over 1500 degrees. Even those didn't last for more than a minute or so before lowering the temperature immediately."

'Not even lava gets that hot, right?' Alex thought.

He stayed to the side and watched as the man suddenly poured his Qi into the furnace.

Alex sent his senses into the furnace and saw that the temperature in there had reached very, very high.

He was also quite surprised to see that the Qi to heat up the metal was being pulled from all around the room, meaning that the Saint Foundation realm cultivator in front of him also had learned the Dao of Heat.

As the man said, the heat really did have nowhere else to go but outside and soon the room started heating up.

The man sent his spiritual sense back at Alex to check if he was okay, but he didn't need to worry at all. Alex was perfectly fine with the heat.

Just because the metal was heating up at 4000 degrees, didn't mean that all the heat that reached Alex was that high as well.

It wasn't even 400 degrees, and that was an amount that Alex could easily navigate through.

Alex watched everything happening as he remembered the methods to smelt metal.

The first task was to pulverize the ore as best as you could. Powdered ores worked the best, but no one would expect the Starforged Tungsten to be powdered.

The second task was to remove as much extra stuff from the ore as possible, such as dirt, minerals, and even other metals using whatever method possible.

Finally, the third task was that you melt the remaining metal and use some reducing agents to remove whatever it is that is still available in the molten metal that didn't float to the surface or sink to the bottom.

Alex waited for a bit and saw the man pull out something from his storage bag.

He poured the bag into the furnace from the top where the hot air was blowing out.

"You're still fine?" the man asked with a confused face.

"Yes, I'm fine, senior," he said. "By the way, what did you put in there just now?"

"This? This is the soot that falls from the volcano. We use it to purify the Tungsten," the man said.

"Oh," Alex thought. 'So that's for the third task.'

Alex felt the molten metal in the furnace move as the soot was immediately mixed into the metal. He watched the soot react with the stuff in the molten metal and float to the top as slag.

The furnace burned for a while longer as the temperature in the room continued to increase. Finally, the man stopped pouring in his Qi and stepped back with a face full of sweat.

"You handled that quite well," he said.

"I was quite far from the furnace," Alex said.

"Still, I've seen Saints run out because the heat was too uncomfortable for them. Are you sure you're not a Saint realm cultivator yet?" the man asked.

Alex smiled. "I'm afraid not," he said. "However, I have been around volcano peaks a lot, so I'm used to being in high heat"

"Oh, is that so?" the man said. He dragged a mold for the metal and opened up the furnace at the bottom as the molten tungsten slowly flowed down the side of the furnace and into the mold.

The mold didn't last very long as it could barely hold the heat from the tungsten, but the man was already working on cooling it down the moment it poured down, so even when the mold broke, the shape of the metal remained.

He further cooled it down and finally, the metal was possible to handle.

In the end, the metal was barely big enough to make a single formation flag if one wanted to. However, that formation flag alone would weigh about 40 kilograms.

Alex watched the rest of the stuff in the furnace begin to flow, which the man let pool on the ground. Once it was cold enough, they would pick it up and either throw it away or repurpose it for other stuff.

"Here, you happy?" the man asked. "Now give me my spirit stones and you can leave."

"Thank you, senior," Alex said and brought out his spirit stones. However, before handing it over, he looked at the man and asked, "Do you think I can learn how to forge artifacts here?"

"You want an apprenticeship?" the man narrowed his eyes.

"Just for a few weeks, to learn the basics," Alex said.

The man thought for a while and snatched Alex's spirit stones. "Fine, but you'll have to pay me a lot."