

Alchemy 941

Chapter 941: Flame Mastery Scripture - Heaven Grade

"Young man, you'll— Don't sit there, it's hot!" the old woman cried out. She had to use her cultivation base to protect herself completely and was terrified that Alex would kill himself.

Alex, meanwhile, was fine. He sat on the hot ground, where he had to use his cultivation base, but only to protect his clothes.

"You can step back if it is uncomfortable, senior," Alex said to the woman.

"I... what about you? I'm here to look after you," she said. She would very much like to leave but seeing as she had to stay for his sake, she was conflicted.

"I will be fine. I will cultivate here for a while, and once I'm done, I will leave," Alex said.

The woman frowned, thought for a bit, and finally nodded. "I will wait for you a little below then. Don't do anything rash," she said.

"I won't," Alex said and looked away from the woman.

Now, there was only one thing on his mind. The Flame Mastery Scripture's 3rd level.

As he thought, the technique inside of it floated into his mind. The technique to improve one's Fire Spiritual root.

He mentally prepared for a while. Once he was certain he could do it, he decided to start.

Alex checked his mind, body, and spirit one last time before taking out the many treasures he had gathered on the way up.

He spread them around him, and once there was enough Fire aura around him, he reached into himself and started cultivating the technique.

His dantian shuddered for a moment as the Qi inside of it escaped through one side of the dantian. In fact, it all escaped through the Fire Spiritual root, turning the Qi that escaped into fire Qi itself.

As it moved up, going through one of the 4 different branches of the spiritual roots, it slowly called for more Fire aura from within Alex.

There were few, once he had unintentionally gathered on his way up, but those were far too few for the Fire Qi. It wanted to grow more. Alex wanted to grow more.

So, his body reached far outside of its own scope and into the atmosphere around him, pulling the fire Qi outside into his body.

As it did, the fire Qi went into his meridians, pulled by his fire Qi and it got denser. It was too dense and hard for his meridians to control.

And it was at that point that the Qi did a complete circle, reaching his dantian again.

To enter the Dantian, however, the Qi had to be cleansed as it was far too dense for the Dantian itself to do so.

As such, as the Qi went into the dantian, it had to do so through the Fire Spiritual root, where the excess Fire aura was absorbed by the Spiritual root, growing it the slightest bit.

Alex felt uncomfortable, maybe even a little painful as his Spiritual Root wasn't used to handling that much fire. However, since it helped it grow, he continued it.

This time when he pulled his Qi out from his dantian, he did so through the Spiritual root that was slightly better.

The Qi that came out was stronger by a little bit, but not enough for it to make much difference in the end.

Still, Alex continued the circulation of his Qi, pulling in more Fire aura that emanated from the treasures around him, and sent it back to his dantian through the other side. When he did that, the other Fire Spiritual root improved itself.

Once all the Qi was done, he brought out his Fire Qi again from the side that had just been improved.

He continued going back and forth between the two spiritual roots and felt it grow ever so slightly each time. There weren't any massive improvements at once like when he had eaten the Earth Spiritual root improvement pill, not to even mention how his 3 major spiritual roots had perfected themselves.

Still, there was a sense of infinite growth with his technique. As long as he had enough aura, his spiritual root would continue to grow until it reached the Supreme stage.

So, Alex continued circulating his Qi, improving his spiritual roots while the treasures on the outside slowly lost their Fire aura.

It took Alex 5 hours of circulation before the treasures outside of him lost enough of their aura to make them useless.

His Fire Spiritual root, which was already quite good had improved much further, reaching close to Superior grade.

Still, Alex wasn't done.

The old woman who stood a little away from Alex was surprised at how much Fire Qi he was sucking into his body while not letting the slightest bit out.

She could feel it disappear into him, but not a single one of it came back out.

'What is he doing?' she couldn't help but be surprised. Her surprise only furthered when she sensed the Fire aura around the atmosphere started moving, slowly going towards Alex.

A massive area around his body was now under the effect of his Qi as the fire aura in it started being pulled towards him.

The old woman could see visible embers made up of the Qi move towards Alex.

He had become a vortex for everything fire and sucked it into the deep abyss that was his body.

The old woman tried to figure out what was happening, but there was simply no way for her to find out at all. All she could do was stand and watch the spectacle from afar.

Alex had lost all other sense inside of him, focusing solely on the gathering of Fire aura. He continuously improved his spiritual root and at some point, it had reached the Superior stage.

However, he wanted to go further. He continued gathering fire aura for another 6 hours before finally, he could gather no more.

It wasn't that he could no longer gather fire Qi at all, but rather that the concentration of Fire aura that he naturally produced using his Fire Spiritual root had become the same or even exceeded the concentration of the fire aura outside of his body.

As such, he had reached the peak of what he could currently do with his Flame Mastery Scripture technique in this current place.

Alex stopped and opened his eyes. His senses drifted outward, searching for any location that might have a thicker fire aura, but he found none.

He sighed and looked into his own body again. His Fire spiritual root had either reached the same level as his Yin spiritual root or maybe even exceeded it.

However, it hadn't entered the Supreme stage that was the peak of all spiritual roots.

He would need a lot better source of Fire aura to improve even further, and he knew he could. However, he couldn't understand how much better of a Fire Aura he needed for his spiritual roots to enter the Supreme stage.

Even a ball of pure Yin Qi couldn't help his Yin spiritual root reach the supreme level, so maybe he needed something better.

'It doesn't matter right now. I should just celebrate the fact that my Fire spiritual root has entered the Superior stage, and quite far into it too,' Alex thought.

With this, his alchemy and even artifact forging would likely see some good improvements. However, the thing that would improve the most was definitely his fighting ability.

And with his True Fire Dao on his side, it was impossible to tell just how strong his attacks could become now.

The old woman went back up after seeing him get up from his seating position.

"Young man, are you alright?" she asked hurriedly. She sounded very worried after seeing him absorb so much of the Fire aura around them.

Alex turned around to see the old woman standing behind him. "Oh, senior. I'm fine," he said. He dusted off his robes and started walking down.

"Are... are you truly okay? Young man, you took in so much of the Fire aura in the surrounding," she said.

"Of course," Alex said. "That was what I came here to do in the first place," he said. "Now that I'm done, we should leave."

The old woman wanted to say something, but Alex simply walked down from the volcano without even batting an eye.

In the end, she sighed and followed him, ignoring everything she had just seen. Compared to learning 8 dao in a single month, this was nothing in her eyes after all.

On his way down, Alex gathered a few more of the Fire treasures he could find. While he himself didn't need it anymore, he intended to have Whisker use it when he entered the Saint realm himself.

By that point, however, Alex didn't see himself remaining in the Northern continent anymore.

After all, in less than 7 years of time, the Demon realm would open up on the other side in the Western Continent, at which point he would be able to teleport back to the other side... hopefully.

If not, he would just have to become strong enough to fly over the entire ocean.

When he truly thought about it, if he went to the westernmost land of the Northern Continent, surely it wouldn't be much of a journey to get to the Crimson Empire, right?

After coming down the volcanic mountain, Alex and the old woman used a script that was on the ground not far away to escape out of the mountain and into the valley surrounded by the 12 mountains.

Once they were out, the two of them returned back to the Blazing Earth sect.

Chapter 942: Returning

Alex and the old woman returned to the sect. As soon as they returned, the old woman left him and walked away.

She was likely planning to discuss what she had seen with the other elders.

Alex returned back to his aunt, and after letting her know he was back, he went to his room.

He then cultivated, while constantly experimenting with his skills and abilities to see how much they had improved.

From what he could see, they were around the same level as his Metal and Yang skills, maybe a little worse, but far better than anything else.

Alex was happy to see it improve and couldn't help but look forward to finding better Fire treasures so he could improve it more.

Now that he had done it, Alex needed to think of what else he wanted to do exactly. There were a few places he wanted to visit such as the Intercontinental Teleportation formation. He wanted to go there and see for himself if it really was out of commission for the moment.

Even if he couldn't go back to the Western Continent with it, given that the Intercontinental teleportation formation there was ruined during the war five thousand years ago, he could still use it to go to the Southern Continent to find his father, or the Eastern Continent to find his sister.

Aside from that, there was also the Nine Wells of Time, which was said to show a person his past and future. Alex was truly curious about this and wanted to know what it could possibly show him.

However, while these two things were fun places to go to, they weren't essential for him at the moment.

The place he really had to go to was one he had been to already. So, after contemplating it for over a day, Alex went back to his aunt and let her know about his thoughts on leaving.

"You want to leave? Already?" she asked worriedly. "But it's only been a month since you came back."

"I know, but I need to grow stronger," he said. "So, I'm planning to return back to the Ancient Battlefield."

"Do you have to?" she asked.

Alex shrugged. "I don't see what else I can do right now," he said. "As far as I know, it will open up in half a month again, so I want to go there. Actually, why don't you come with me? Surely you can train there too right?"

Liz thought for a bit and sighed. "I can't. Now that I think about it, you should go there actually. I will be leaving here for a while too, so you will just be alone," she said.

"You're leaving?" Alex was surprised. "Where are you going?"

"To an island in the Forever Isles. Master will take me there and help me train in real combat. Until now, I'm only ever fought in tournaments and such, so she wants me to learn it for real now."

"Oh," Alex thought. "How long will you be gone for?"

"I don't think there's an exact number to that yet, but I should be there for a few months at least," she said. "Maybe even a year or more."

"I see," Alex said. "Then I will go to the Ancient Battlefield again. When will you be leaving?"

"In a few days," she said. "You should speak with my master and the sect master to let them know you're leaving too."

"I will do that," Alex said. He went over to speak to the old woman and the sect master, who after a bit of hesitation agreed to let him leave.

They wanted him to take a few people with him, but Alex refused. He didn't want an entourage with him when he trained to become stronger.

Once they accepted the fact that he was leaving for the Ancient Battlefield soon, Alex returned to his room and prepared himself to go back.

He found soon enough that there was about a week remaining until the Ancient Battlefield opened again. There was far less time than he had expected there to be.

4 days later, Alex said goodbye to his aunt who was taken away by her master to train and become stronger. Now that she was gone, Alex had no more reason to stay behind in this sect anymore.

After staying there for one more day, Alex made his slow journey north. He called both Pearl and Whisker out so that they could enjoy the scenery as well.

Alex took careful notice of all the beauty in the Northern Continent, one that he had missed because he had to speed up to go everywhere.

Pearl loved flying on his own, and Whisker was slowly learning to do so. With a True realm cultivation base, he was more than strong enough to fly on his own. Still, since he had no proper practice before, Alex took his time letting Whisker fly slowly.

There was a whole day before the battlefield opened up, and since it was so close to them, Alex was taking the utmost time possible.

However, even slow, the distance was truly small, and as such, he arrived close to the Ancient Battlefield half a day before it was to open.

Alex looked at his own clothing and frowned. He still wore black robes and a white mask, and while it had become his identity, he didn't want to be surrounded by people that wanted to do nothing but talk to him.

He thought of changing his clothes but decided not to. It wasn't like he could always run away from his own fame. At some point, he had to accept it and instead use it for himself.

Alex stayed away from the gate as more and more people started gathering in a bunch.

He could hear the occasional chime coming from the ringing bells inside the battlefield, letting people know that it was time for them to leave.

Half a day later, the gates opened and thousands of people rushed out of it. Alex saw them leave, and finally, the people that were gathered outside saw their chances to enter.

Alex saw the horde of people enter and finally, he too went over to enter.

"You will have to try and survive it, okay? Even if it hurts, you have to fight back," Alex said.

Whisker nodded with a firm expression and readied himself. Pearl walked freely by his side, not caring much for whatever was happening around him.

As they entered, Alex felt the familiar feeling of slowed-down time as Air, aura, and everything in between refused to move on their own accord.

'Everything that was here during the battle was affected by the slowed-down time,' Alex thought to himself.

Whisker flinched from the aura, but unlike last time, he could handle it. The intent made his head hurt as well, but as Alex had said, he tried and fought back against it.

They were in the area that was supposed to be without much aura and intent, but that was still too strong for Whisker.

"Train the best you can," Alex said. "If it gets too strong, just go back to your space, okay?"

Whisker nodded and put on a fighting face this time as he told Alex to move forward. Alex chuckled and the three of them went ahead.

Alex stayed away from any place with a strong aura. This time around, he was freely using his spiritual sense on the ground area as he looked at every place he should not go for the sake of Whisker.

As he did, he started thinking about what place he should go to after Whisker was done in a few days.

"Should we return to the gorge with the sword cut?" Alex asked. "You need to learn the Dao of Sharpness too, right?"

"No," Pearl answered him through his spiritual sense. "I already learned the Dao of Sharpness."

"What? When?" Alex asked.

"In the mountain, while you were busy learning your big dao," Pearl said.

"Why didn't you tell me?" Alex asked. He was astounded that Pearl managed to keep this from him for over a month.

"Well... you never tell me everything you learn. So I thought I should do the same too," Pearl said.

"I..." Alex hesitated. "Fair enough, but you need to let me know these things, okay?"

"Okay," Pearl said.

"Right then... so maybe we should skip on the gorge for now and go to the next place," Alex said. "I do want to learn some more space dao."

Chapter 943: The Crack

Alex walked through the aura-less path, letting Whisker handle as much as he could. He was noticed by a couple of people during the times, and while some thought to come and approach him, Alex's cultivation base made them reconsider.

They had learned how strong he was before he had even entered the Saint realm, so trying to fight or challenge him right now was simply idiocy.

After a few days of walking, Alex arrived at the location of the spatial rift where the aura of space was the most potent.

After arriving, Alex waited on the outskirts where he could barely feel the aura, and started cultivating. He was waiting for Whisker to be done, so he had to remain out here.

However, Pearl had no such restriction at all, so Alex sent him inside to feel the stronger spatial aura. He warned Pearl not to go too far in, but other than that he could do whatever he wanted to.

However, Pearl said something that Alex felt was absolutely ridiculous in Alex's eyes. Apparently, Pearl couldn't feel the space aura at all.

"What? What do you mean you can't feel it? You learned the Teleportation Dao," Alex said. If someone was capable of learning such a dao, there was no way they couldn't feel Space Aura right?

"But I really can't feel anything. This is nothing like the aura from when you broke through," Pearl said. He tried sensing it a little more, but he couldn't feel anything.

Alex frowned. 'What's going on?' he wondered. Was Pearl not accustomed to the Space aura enough to recognize it? Or was teleportation somehow different from everything single other aspects of the Space properties?

He didn't think of that to be true, which was to say that there was likely another reason why Pearl couldn't sense Space aura. Or maybe even another reason why he could only sense Teleportation aura.

In the end, since Pearl was useless here, he called him back and let Whisker stay with him while he himself went in and tried to understand the Space aura.

He spent the next few days trying to remember everything he had learned about the aura here and compared it with what new things he was learning.

Unfortunately, he didn't see any difference. Which was to say that he had learned everything he could from the aura itself. If he wanted to learn more, he needed to change his environment. He needed to change his surrounding.

"Pearl, Whisker, you guys will need to hide for a bit," Alex said. Pearl stood up and walked back to Alex before jumping into his beast space. Whisker went back a second later as well.

After they both were back, Alex stood up and walked in closer, closer until he was up and close to the crack in space.

The last time he was here, he remembered the crack, seeing it wide open and his senses never making anywhere in it. He remembered the fear he felt when he stood in front of the open crack, even though nothing of harm ever came from the crack itself.

He wondered why he feared it. Was it instinct? Was it the fear of something he could not see or feel? Did breathing the fabric of space put in him fear of the unknown?

Alex didn't know, and this time, he wanted to find out.

He stood before the crack, that was visible to his naked eyes as well if you knew where to look. The light shifted at just the right angle around the crack, giving it a glass-like refraction capability, making it visible to him.

Alex moved his hands towards the crack but stopped. There was no reason he should be putting his arm at risk here. So, he brought out a random sword from his storage bag and slowly moved it toward the crack.

As he got closer, Alex felt a slight suction coming from the crack, one that slowly tried to pull on his sword. He easily resisted the force, but he was still surprised there was anything.

However, Alex didn't feel any movement of the air around the crack. So he wondered why his sword was the only thing being dragged in. Or was it that the air that was around the crack had already gone in?

Maybe the fact that time slowed down drastically for the air in the area had something to do with it as well.

Alex took the sword and instead of moving it close to the crack, he moved it around the crack. More specifically, he tried to see how sturdy the wall was.

Previously, the slightest use of Qi had made the crack wide open, so this time he wanted to see if it was just as easy to open it. Or maybe, hitting it from the side even made the crack disappear altogether.

Alex slightly nudged the side of the crack and was immediately shocked. For something that was supposed to be made out of nothing, the silver lines of the crack were incredibly sturdy.

He pushed with slightly more strength and was even more surprised how he wasn't capable of forcing it to budge at all.

'How is it so strong?' Alex wondered and used more force to move the sword through the crack in space. However, when even that didn't work, Alex used his entire cultivation base and body to force the sword to move.

To his surprise, it worked. His sword moved through the crack and... one-half of the sword fell to the ground. Alex watched in surprise when he realized that he hadn't moved his sword through the crack, but rather the crack through his sword.

'How can this be?' he wondered. 'How is this so sharp that it can cut my sword?'

While his sword wasn't made up of the best material, it was still quite great. Especially after his perfect tempering, the sword was a lot stronger than other swords made up using the same materials and design.

'Space can cut through items too?' Alex thought for a bit. That was a massive piece of information he had just learned.

He tried meditating on that fact, ignoring his broken sword, but he reached nowhere. Cutting space was already something that he was barely capable of doing. Using Space to cut was not something he could hope to do anytime soon.

Alex got back up and looked at the silver crack that somehow shined even in the night light, most likely by refracting the silver light of the moon itself.

He hesitated for a bit, but there was nothing else he could do here that would help him learn more. There was only a single thing left, so Alex did it.

He took a deep breath and sent his Qi into the crack with the intent to open it up. Space aura emerged from him along with his intent and Qi, and when it landed on the crack, the crack opened up.

He sucked in even more air from the instance of fear he could help but feel. However, he quickly lost that thought as the majesty of what lay in front of him enamored him.

In his sense, the open crack in space was dark and turbulent. However, to his eyes, it looked beautiful. Like a work of art, the inside of the crack was ever-shifting with purple and silver colors along with some dark parts that constantly seemed to move around.

For some reason, Alex's eyes, despite the fact of how good they were, couldn't focus on anything in front of him. The silver and purple mixture looked as if it was right in front of him at one moment, and in the next, it was so far away that it looked tiny in comparison.

Alex didn't know much about space, but even he could tell that the space inside the crack was ever-shifting, ever-changing.

Alex felt his spiritual sense crumble within a moment after entering again, and this time he thought he knew why.

When his spiritual sense entered the crack, it would be close to him. However, at the next stage, it would be hundreds of thousands of kilometers away and thus no longer work.

If what he realized was true, then there was more in this world than he thought he knew.

Alex took the broken top piece of the sword and took it close to the crack. He held it firmly so that the space crack didn't suddenly swallow it in, but he also held it loose enough so that if there was any strong suction force around the crack, it didn't drag him along as well.

When he did bring the blade close enough, he was surprised that the blade wasn't sucked in at all. There was still some suction force, but it was of the same strength as when the crack was nothing but a splinter in space.

Still, he wanted to see what would happen to a blade if it did go into the crack, so after reaching close enough, Alex tossed it in.

The blade floated in the air right where Alex had tossed it, not going anywhere at all. It wasn't affected by gravity, it seemed. Nor was it affected by time.

Alex was confused this time around. The space inside was definitely shifting, so why didn't the blade move along with it?

He thought for a moment and wondered if it was stationary because he had opened the crack here. What if the blade was away from the crack?

He wanted to do some experiments with the crack now.

Chapter 944: Experimenting the Crack

Alex looked at the floating piece of the blade just next to the crack in space. It was so close that he could just reach in and pull it out.

Qi didn't seem to work there, so if he wanted to pull it out, it had to be done by hand.

However, that was not what Alex intended to do at the moment. What he wanted to do was instead push it further. So, he took the other half of the blade that was still attached to the hilt and used it to push the floating blade deeper into the crack.

For a while, nothing happened. However, at some point, the blade suddenly vanished from his sight, gone somewhere never to come back.

Alex waited but that was indeed the last time he would ever see that sword. "So it disappears if it goes any further huh?" he thought.

"Never put anything in there that you don't want to lose," Alex made a mental note for himself and tossed the rest of the blade inside. It hovered within his reach again and would disappear if he sent it any further.

But this was going to be a different test. Instead of doing anything to the blade, Alex was going to manipulate the space itself.

He wondered, what would happen if he were to close this spatial crack. Would the item inside remain right here? Or would it disappear?

There was only one way to find out.

The spatial crack disappeared and closed as much as it could. The crack itself could not disappear, but the gate could. Alex hoped that was considered the same thing as his experiment would fail quite a bit if it wasn't.

He waited for a while before opening the crack again. No longer was the blade there anymore. It had disappeared to someplace far away inside this... different dimension.

He tried once again, this time with a random branch. He kept the branch right by the crack and waited a full day while it was open. In the entire time, it was open, the branch remained right where it was.

Then, he closed the crack, just for an instant, and opened it back up. The branch was still there. Then, he closed it for a little longer and the branch was still there.

However, when he closed the crack for more than 3 seconds and opened it back up again, the branch was gone.

Alex tested with various things and realized that the space inside the crack, while it was open, was quite stable. However, once he closed it, within seconds, the space inside would follow the chaos that was everywhere else, rendering whatever was inside it permanently gone.

Which was to say he should never get in there and risk having the crack close up on him.

But... what if he did? What if he did go in? Would he die? Was there air inside he could breathe? There certainly was no Qi, at least not one he could feel.

'What happens if I put in something long and push it as deep as I can?' Alex wondered. He searched in his storage ring for what he could find and brought out a bamboo that was a few meters long.

The bamboo was a True rank ingredient, but he didn't care for the moment. For now, he was too focused on his task at hand of figuring out if the space inside shredded anything that went in there or not.

He slowly poked in with his long bamboo and watched how far it could go. After about a meter in, Alex suddenly felt an incredibly strong force pull on the bamboo.

Alex held his ground and didn't let it go, but the force was so strong that he would certainly get dragged in if he kept it up any longer.

The bamboo snapped in two outside of the crack while the piece that went in was lost, dragged in by the ever-turbulent space inside.

Alex finally felt the fear that he had been keeping aside until now. The beautiful silver and purple cacophony now looked like a terrible mixture of colors that were solely created to destroy anything that dared touch them.

With how easily the bamboo broke off, he wouldn't be surprised if it turned out that the space inside the crack could turn everything to shred.

"Wait, but no," Alex thought. "The bamboo broke outside, not inside. If it was torn to shred, then the one I'm holding wouldn't have remained intact."

Alex fell into thought when he realized that he had come to the wrong conclusion. "So did the space inside not destroy the bamboo, but just pull on it so hard that it had to break outside?" Alex thought.

If that was the case, then he just needed to pull on it harder, right?

Alex decided to try again but there was nothing else with him that was this long. He had sold all the different weapons already and the ingredients were mostly small by comparison.

"I still have the whip," he thought, but using the Saint Whip felt just wrong. It didn't feel right to use his whip on something that might destroy it.

"Ah, I don't have to," Alex thought and pulled out a bunch of clothes he had. These were clothes he had bought and kept for himself.

He soon tied the robes together to make a lengthy rope that was at least 5 meters long. Then, he tossed one end into the crack and immediately felt the pull.

It was like a vacuum sucking on everything in the area onto itself, or a great gravitational pull that was hard to move away from.

Alex pulled on it as hard as he could, and finally, after pulling on it long enough, the rope of robes came back out of the crack.

Alex checked the robe as soon as it was out and was surprised. "Space Aura? Of course, that place should be ripe with aura," he said to himself. He wondered if he could train in there, but he wasn't going to try that anytime soon.

He thought of putting his hands in to check as well, but he didn't want to get pulled in of course.

He sat around, experimenting with some more minor things as he kept on closing and opening the crack as much as he could.

After some time, Alex realized something he hadn't caught up on.

"The crack is getting smaller?" he thought in surprise. He had been using it so much that he didn't realize that the crack itself was on the verge of disappearing.

Instead of looking like a shattered glass pane, it now looked like a thin piece of crack on the glass, and it would continue to fade if Alex kept using it as he was now.

Alex moved away from the crack and frowned a bit. If the crack disappeared, he wouldn't get to learn much about it. And he really wanted to learn more about it.

But he couldn't continue using the crack as it was. What he needed was a new crack altogether.

A new rift in space, which Alex very soon realized that only he could create himself.

"Well, time to learn how to properly cut space then."

Chapter 945: Cutting

Alex moved away from the location with the space aura and went outside where he couldn't feel space at all.

He was still capable of using the dao to teleport, so he did so and appeared quite a bit far away.

He called out both Pearl and Whisker in this location with barely any aura or intent and had the two of them train by themselves, while he trained on his own thing.

Alex then brought out a sword, his sword, and prepared himself. He closed his eyes and visualized cutting space to open the crack.

The act of cutting, the act of separating one thing into many was something Alex clearly understood. That was how he learned the Dao in the first place.

However, to cut something, he didn't just need to know how to cut but also what he was cutting. And as of yet, he didn't entirely understand space as an entity, or otherwise, he would've already gained a Dao.

Still, he tried. He opened his eyes and swung his sword in front of him with no Qi or aura aiding him except the Dao of cutting.

The air in front of him split into two and refused to join back until Alex let go of his intent, but the space was forever intact.

"Once again," he thought and tried again.

He took a deep breath and prepared as well as he could before cutting, but the cut simply didn't touch space at all.

'Wait, can I not cut space at all? Sure I'm not too familiar with Space as well as I would like to be, but I should have improved by now right? I could cut space already before, so why am I failing now?' he thought.

One thing was obvious why he was failing. Before, he had an already manipulated space with which he interacted. However, now he had to cut a solid space that was very stable and that he found impossible.

If he wanted to cut it, then he needed to find a way to make it unstable.

“Hmm... can I use the same space aura I used before?” Alex thought. He closed his eyes and reached deep within himself, the place where, for some reason, he had space aura.

He had been using it unknowingly this whole time, but after coming to the Ancient Battlefield, he had understood its existence. He was still unsure why it existed, but that was a mystery he would solve some other time.

He pulled out some space aura from himself and it landed on his blade. Then, he opened his eyes and swung the sword.

Suddenly, Alex felt it. The feedback on his sword as it passed through something other than air. It cut through space itself.

Alex saw the space cut in half, separated from itself. However, when he looked inside it, there was nothing to see.

He frowned. He had somehow cut the space in two, but that had only resulted in the space being separated. There was no crack in space.

Alex frowned. The space rejoined to become whole again once he let his intent disappear and tried again.

Once again, he tried to cut space to create the crack, but he was incapable of doing so. Somehow, he could only cut space and space alone.

Alex tried seeing what the difference was and realized that the cut space had a thickness to it that Alex could feel. When viewed by the side, Alex could see nothing different, but when he touched it, he could feel his hands refusing to pass the barrier without some effort.

Once the space reforged again, his hand passed through as if there was nothing there, to begin with.

“Why can’t I create the crack though?” Alex wondered. He returned to the crack’s location and spent a week or so trying to understand it again.

However, no matter how much he cultivated there, he couldn’t understand why he wasn’t able to create a crack himself. Was he missing something?

After trying for a while longer, Alex decided to stop this fruitless endeavor and decided to leave for some other place where he would be more successful.

He wondered if going back to the gorge was any good or not. After all, he had already learned Sword Aura. Anything else he would be doing there would be trying to handle the intent, which there was plenty of everywhere, especially in the sky.

“Although it might be better to go there just in case I learn more about Sword from there,” Alex thought. So, along with Pearl and Whisker, he made his way back towards the gorge.

Along the way, Pearl practiced his teleportation skill. He was capable of teleporting only up to 150 meters away, as opposed to Alex’s over 500 meters.

Alex concluded that the difference was because of his Intent. If Pearl improved his intent more, then he would definitely be capable of teleporting further.

Whisker teleported around to show off his skill too. Alex praised him quite a lot for what he was doing. Whisker had gotten quite good at using the Flickering Shadows technique.

As they walked, Alex was surprised when something suddenly entered his limited spiritual sense range. He hadn’t increased its range as it felt intrusive to everyone that he came across.

So, when the thing that came into his vision did, he couldn’t help but be surprised.

There was also the fact that this place had static air that barely transported sounds and aura, so he couldn’t even hear or feel the thing entering.

Alex's eyes saw the thing before his senses could figure it out. His hands started moving in response, almost automatically, as he lift them up to catch it.

He caught the eagle that was sent flying towards him and saved it. The eagle cried out in pain, and Alex thought he had held it too tightly, but it turned out that it was simply in pain from the wounds on its body.

"Where did you come from?" Alex asked the wounded beast. The eagle tried moving around, but it was too hurt.

The eagle tried to speak, but the pain only made it screech further. Alex quickly brought out some pastes and applied it on the beast.

The eagle felt immediate relief and could finally speak up.

"My master! He's in trouble. Please help him," the beast said. It was only then that Alex realized that the beast was in the Saint realm.

'A saint realm beast huh?' he thought. He wondered when Pearl would enter the Saint realm too.

"Alright, where's your master?" Alex asked.

The eagle moved its wings in a direction and Alex flew there immediately. Whisker got on top of Pearl and followed as fast as he could as well, but he lagged a bit behind.

When Alex flew for a bit, he saw something far away. 4 people surrounded a single man on the floor that was already bloody and bruised.

He went even faster, and the others noticed his arrival.

Alex stopped not far away from the battle and looked at the group in confusion. After all, both the attackers and the victim wore the same purple robe.

They were all from the same sect.

Chapter 946: Ma Tianxin

The 4 men in the Saint realm looked towards Alex, who had arrived with the eagle. They immediately frowned when they recognized trouble.

Alex looked at the group and was likewise surprised. "Blue Spring sect?" he spoke out. Pearl and Whisker arrived at the scene, but Alex thought it was too dangerous to keep them out, so he immediately sent them back into their beast space.

He stayed there carefully assessing the situation. Should he help the man on the ground? He felt pity and thought of helping, but then again, this wasn't his place to interfere. He didn't even know who these people were.

For all he knew, it could be that the bloodied man was a vile criminal that deserved what he got.

Still, his inner belief told him not to let a man die without ensuring he deserved it. So, Alex slowly trod forward, looking around for any hint he could get.

The wounded eagle immediately dropped from his arm and flew to its master.

"Fellow Daoists, may I ask what is happening here?" Alex asked the 4 men in front of him.

"It is none of your business, leave!" one of the men said. From what he could tell, the man was quite old and stronger than the man on the ground.

There were almost 5 realms of difference between the two. Which made Alex confused because the man on the ground would have died already if the others wanted that to be the case.

"You are true that this is none of my business, but this little bird asked me to save its master. I would feel terrible if I left here without helping the poor man, should he deserve it." he said. "May I know what crime he has committed for him to deserve this sort of punishment?"

The man on the ground coughed up blood and made a loud noise as he took in some air to his blood-filled lungs.

He grabbed onto the sword by his side and used it to pull himself up.

Alex looked at the bloody man with a bit of surprise as he hadn't imagined him to have as much life in him anymore.

The man spit a mouthful of blood on the ground next to him and spoke, "you may try as much as you want, but I will not cancel my marriage proposal. That was something awarded to me as a prime disciple. If Ren Xiuyin wants to break off our engagement, then I will accept her request, but I won't do it because some jealous bastards threaten me."

Alex was a little taken aback. 'This whole thing is because of an engagement?' he thought.

"You don't seem to understand, Ma Tianxin," the man spoke. "You're on death's door. You will either cancel your engagement with fairy Xiuyin and speak an oath to never talk about what happened here, or you will die here, along with your pet and this witness."

The man named Ma Tianxin noticed Alex too and sent a message directly to his mind. "Run away. They won't dare kill the Sect master's disciple like me, but you may die," he said.

Alex smiled. He was more so surprised that the group here didn't recognize him at all. 'Maybe my fame isn't as big as I had thought it to be,' he thought.

He slowly walked forward. "I might have walked away had it been anything else, but it seems that you guys are very intent on killing me along with this young man, so I'm afraid I will have to side with him here," he said.

He arrived next to the young man.

"No, go away. You can't win against them. You will die," the young man said.

Alex turned his head towards the young man and shook his head. "I'm afraid if I let you be, you will be the one that dies here," he said. The young man was already starting to emit a bit of death aura around him as he was on death's door already.

"These bastards," the strongest man of the 4 suddenly used his technique to create a flame serpent that launched towards Alex.

Alex didn't even turn as he snapped his finger. In an instant, the flame serpent dissipated into the air with not the slightest amount of fire aura remaining in the air anymore.

"I'm afraid you'll have to use more than just fire in front of me," Alex said.

The four men and the wounded young man in front of Alex were all shocked at the sudden turn of events. They didn't see Alex use any technique, and yet somehow he had dismantled the flame serpents.

"Take care of yourself. I'll take care here," Alex said as he pat the young man on the back twice.

With the first pat, he took away all the death aura from the young man, in which instance the life aura that was natural to every living being took over, improving the young man's healing.

That was something Alex had learned was possible from the memories of the Fourth Undying God who had also learned a Dao of death, and had instead used it to heal the wounds of the war victims.

For the second part, he poured in his Qi and suddenly used the teleportation dao to send the young man over 500 meters behind him.

The young man jumped at the random change in scenery. When he saw that he was quite far away from where he was before, he couldn't help but be stunned.

"What... just happened?"

Alex stood in front of the 4 men and brought out a sword. Then he asked, "Are you still going to kill me, or are we going to go our separate ways?"

The group of men looked concerned. Not because Alex was strong, but because if they let Ma Tianxin leave, he would certainly tell the Sect master what had happened here, and at that point, they were as good as dead.

"Let's kill him quickly. We can go after that bastard Ma afterward," the leader said.

"Yes!" they all agreed. Suddenly, 10 different beasts appeared out of nowhere, 5 of which were in the Saint realm. That was quite a large amount in Alex's eyes.

He got ready to fight and the humans and beasts started preparing their techniques to fire at Alex.

Alex saw the attacks being prepared and sighed. "Didn't I just tell you? No fire," he said. In the next second, the fire ability that was being prepared by one of the men suddenly exploded, sending everyone flying in a different direction.

The man who was preparing the attack lost half his arm as well.

Alex sighed when he saw that, but it wasn't as big of a deal as it would've been for True realm cultivators.

Saint realm cultivators just had to go on a few years of closed cultivation to wait for their arms to grow back.

"Anyone wanna go again?" he asked.

"Brother, he knows some weird dao. We can't fight against him," one of the men said.

"But... can we really leave like this?" the leader asked.

"We can get him next time," another man said.

"Argh! My arm. I need to heal," the wounded man said. The beasts behind them were also in pain.

The leader showed a complicated emotion before turning around to leave.

Alex watched the leave and teleported right next to the young man that was applying for some medicine on himself.

"Geez! You scared me," the young man took a deep breath.

'Geez? A player?' Alex thought.

"Are you okay?" he asked.

"Yes," the young man said. "Thank you for saving my life. I can't thank you—"

The young man stopped speaking mid-speech. Now that the threat had disappeared, he finally got to look at Alex carefully, and what he saw surprised him.

"It's you!" he said.

"Yes, yes, it is me," Alex said. He was used to it.

"I didn't think I would meet you again, senior, let alone you would save me," the young man said.

"Again? Have we met before?" Alex asked.

The young man quickly wiped his face of all the blood and looked back. "Do you not recognize me? We met back in the Endless Tunnel," the young man said.

Alex looked at the face and at the Blue Spring sect robe. "Ohh! It's you," he finally remembered the group he got into a fight with back in the endless tunnel.

This young man was the one leading that group.

Chapter 947: Small Journey

"Are you okay? Can you heal?" Alex asked the young man.

"Ah, yes. I-I will be fine. I just have to... um..." the man fidgeted around, looking for something of his own.

"Well, if you will be fine, then I will leave," Alex said. "Take care." He stood up and turned around to leave.

"Wait!" however, the young man wouldn't let him go.

"Do you need anything else?" Alex asked.

"Um... I will need some time to heal, and... um, those people will most likely come and attack me again, so... would it be alright if I stayed with you for a while?" the young man asked.

"Hmm, I'm not sure if you can stay with me with where I'm going, but it would be very remiss of me to leave you here wounded after I just saved you," Alex said. He hated himself for not having any healing pill on himself.

He believed he didn't need it, so what few he had, he had given to his aunt before she had left for her training.

'I seriously need to start making pills soon. I will do so immediately after I leave here,' Alex made a mental note of that.

He would have to find a place where they wouldn't hate him for making pills, which for now felt was only the State of Dong.

As Alex thought that, the young man brought out a pill of his own and ate it himself.

"Huh?" Alex looked confused. "You have pills?"

"Uhh... yes," the young man said with a confused look on his face. "I don't have many, but if senior wants I can give them to you."

"No, I don't want your pills," Alex said. "What's the Blue Spring Sect's official stance towards Alchemy?"

"Uhh... nothing? They let you be but won't associate with you or save you if you get into trouble," the young man said.

"Alchemists get into a lot of trouble?" Alex asked.

"I don't know," he said. "I only know what the sect says."

"Aren't you the sect master's disciple? I thought I heard someone say that," Alex said.

"Yes, I am," the young man said. "However I don't have much footing in the sect besides being the sect master's disciple."

"So you don't have any information about why they try to dissociate themselves from alchemy?" Alex asked.

"I'm afraid not, senior," the young man said.

Alex sighed. Just when would he be free to practice alchemy the way he wanted to?

"Well, eat your pill so we can leave," Alex said. He brought out Pearl and Whisker, and once the young man was healed enough to walk on his own, they left.

The young man looked at the white cat beside him, then at the man in front of him who wore a black robe and a white mask.

"Senior, are you the one I hear people talking about?" the young man asked. "They say you learned Sword aura in a single day, is that true?"

"Oh, you heard about me from somebody else?" Alex asked.

The young man nodded. "They use your name to encourage people to try and learn something in here. You are also famous for being incredibly strong without being in the Saint realm, although I see that has changed."

"Well, it's good that people are using me to encourage others, but this fake information might actually end up demotivating them instead," Alex said.

"Fake information?" the young man asked.

"I didn't learn Sword Aura in a single day. I had all but a single thing to produce Sword aura for the last 10 years. It was only after 2 months of meditation next to the gorge that I understood what I was missing."

"Once I knew that, I produced Sword aura in a day," Alex said. "People see what I did there and say I did it in a day, when in fact it was a decade-long work. If others come here expecting to learn what I did in a few days, they will leave back demotivated to try it ever again."

"Oh..." the young man was surprised. "Thank you for enlightening me, senior."

Alex chuckled. "Don't call me senior. I'm neither older than you nor have a higher cultivation base than yours," he said.

"Eh?" the young man looked at Alex. Sure his cultivation base wasn't truly at the 1st Saint condensation realm, right? Even if it was, how could he possibly be younger than him?

"I'm actually only 35 years old, senior," the young man said proudly.

"Congratulations," Alex said. "I'm 34."

He was technically 31, but he liked saying his age based on how long time had passed for everyone, rather than how long he had lived.

"No way," the young man said. He didn't accept it for even a second and was pretty sure Alex was lying.

Alex let it be that way. "Anyway, let's talk about what happened back there. Why were those people after you exactly?" he asked.

"Sigh, you heard them, didn't you? They want me to break off my marriage pact with my fiancée," the young man said.

"Is she so pretty that many men would kill you for her?" Alex asked.

"Of course, she's very pretty," the young man said passionately. "But that is not the reason why they were trying to kill me."

"My fiancée, she... she is the daughter of the sect leader, my master, and as such she will inherit the bond to our Sacred protector in the sect, making her the next sect leader. In the instance where she doesn't want to be a sect leader, the signs of which she's showing at the moment, the bond with our Sacred beast will move onto her husband, which if everything goes well will be me."

"Ah," Alex finally understood. "So they wouldn't have tried harming you had shown more interest in being a sect leader. However, since she's not, they want to be her husband very badly and would do anything to become the sect leader."

"Yes," the young man said.

"Have you spoken to your master about this?" Alex asked.

"I did not," the young man said. "None of these men showed any signs of greed beforehand, not even through their eyes. I should have known what they were up to when they decided to come here all of a sudden to train. I wouldn't have come had I understood that."

"You're safe now, so you can complain to your master afterward," Alex said. "For now, since you are here, focus on getting stronger. Come on, let's pick up the pace."

The two of them walked even faster as they made their way forward. Along the way, Alex slowly tried to send his spiritual sense into the sky to see what aura there was.

He was ready to pull it back if the intent was strong, so he felt less fear doing so. As he did, he couldn't help but wonder... why were there so many immortals fighting here?

Immortals would immediately be struck down by the Heavenly Judgement if they fought here with full power, and yet they did so. Did they have some way of concealing themselves while they fought with all their power?

As Alex wondered about this, his group of 4 reached the location of the gorge, where Alex was ready to train his intent even further.

Chapter 948: New Destination

Alex saw the gorge for himself for the first time. He had never seen the gorge, not even through Whisker's eyes.

After seeing it finally, he was surprised at how clean the cut was, how deep the slash had cut and how far it reached.

Alex could see 3 different cultivators past the 10-meter range of where the gorge started and that was where Alex was intending to go as well.

"Are you a sword user?" Alex asked Ma Tianxin.

"Not really. I use them, but I use other weapons as well. I never found myself particularly interested in any specific weapons," he said.

"I see. Then will you stay out here? It will be dangerous for you to go in there. It's full of sword aura and intent," Alex said.

"Okay, I can stay out here," the young man said as he looked around at the many people that were meditating there. "I should be fine with this many people around me."

"Alright, stay safe."

Alex went towards the gorge with Pearl while Whisker was already back in his beast space. As he went forward, Pearl started feeling the effect of the intent around here, but he could still continue.

Alex walked until he reached a certain distance away from the gorge at which point Pearl had to stop. "Take your time adapting, I will be a bit further ahead," he said and continued on, leaving Pearl behind.

Alex arrived within the area of the gorge where the intent was the strongest. He felt a slight mental headache from the constant badgering of the intent, but he handled it as he tried to find a good place to sit around the gorge.

About 3 meters beyond the start of the gorge, right next to where the land was cut in two, Alex sat down and started fighting the headache he was having by fighting against the intent that lingered on the cut itself.

Alex could tell that it was Sword Intent, which made him excited about how strong his own Sword Intent could grow to become in the future.

Alex kept his spiritual sense on Pearl who was less than 30 meters away from him at all times and then concentrated on his own honing.

For the next 2 months, he did nothing but sit around in the intent and overcome the headache. Slowly, his headache was getting easier and easier to handle, so Alex added on top of it by activating the 1st stage of his Mask.

After breaking through, he could handle even 3 stages, but with the intent here, he didn't go above 1 for now.

Combined, the two attacks slammed against the wall of his mind, threatening to tear it down. However, Alex had enough will and intent to fight it back.

It wasn't just him either. Pearl was slowly improving too, getting closer and closer to the start of the gorge. Within the first month, he was outside of the 10-meter range, and stayed there for the next month and trained.

Ma Tianxin hadn't intended on doing anything other than waiting for Alex to train here. However, seeing everyone improving, he felt the urge to train himself as well.

So, he sat down where he felt was best for him, and started tempering his intent. He had come here to try and gain some insight into whatever dao he could, but it looked like he was going to have to push that aside for now.

2 months later, Alex was finally able to sit where he sat without having the intent there affect him at all. He did have to constantly fight it back, but what else could he do? This was an Immortal's intent after all. He couldn't just ignore it as if it were nothing.

Before leaving, Alex took one last look into the sword aura that was still in the air there. He ignored the insights that remained there regarding dao of cutting and sharpness and such, and instead solely focused on the sword.

He tried to see if the man who made this gorge had any clue about what the next stage after Sword Aura was. From what Alex could see, he most certainly did. There were mysteries in the aura that was more than just about Sword Aura.

Unfortunately, Alex had no way of telling what they were. Even if he spent the following year in here, he wouldn't be able to tell at all. After all, the man whose Sword aura this was himself hadn't learned the next stage of the sword.

So, with nothing else to look forward to, Alex took one last glance at the gorge and turned around to leave.

He took Pearl who was starting to get used to the intent as well and walked away. Ma Tianxin noticed him leaving, so he too followed him.

Alex wanted to say something about him following, but decided not to. The poor guy was most likely scared for his life already.

"Do you know how long it has been since the last bell rang?" Alex asked the man as they walked on to find a new destination for themselves.

"Hmm... 4 months? Maybe close to 5, I'm not sure," the young man said after spending a second with a thoughtful expression.

"You will be leaving in a month or two then, right?" Alex asked him.

The young man gave an awkward smile. "Am I that much of a headache for you, senior?" he asked.

"You're not really a headache. I just like being alone is all," he said.

"I see," the young man said. "If possible I would like to stay with senior for a while, but if I am really causing you any discomfort then I will leave on my own."

"What about your safety?" Alex asked. "Those men certainly won't let you go just like that. They're still here beyond that hill, spying on us."

"What?" the young man turned towards the hill. "They're still here?"

"Yeah," Alex said. "They are staying outside my spiritual sense's reach, but they are still standing plainly out in the open so that I can see them."

"Woah, even through the mask?" the young man asked.

"It's not a simple mask. Of course, I will be able to look through it. Why else would I be wearing it all time?" Alex asked.

"Is that so," the young man said before his eyes drifted towards the hill. "They will kill me. Either that or force me to make an oath not to reveal what happened here."

"Well, whether you want to leave or not, it's your choice I guess," Alex said. "I'm sorry, but I can't babysit you as much as I would wish to. I have my own needs to take care of."

Alex looked towards the sky. The aura and intent there was the strongest of all in this realm, and he was planning to start learning about it.

He had tried before, but it was too strong for him. He wondered if he could do it now that he was a little bit stronger.

"Brother," Pearl called out to him from behind through their spiritual sense.

Alex paused and turned around. "What is it?" he asked.

Pearl looked confused, almost dazed, as he tried to understand what was happening to him. As the aura in the air thinned, he was finally starting to realize what was happening to him.

"I... I think I'm ready to break through," Pearl said.

"Are you sure?" Alex asked with a hopeful look on his face. Pearl had already entered the True Emperor 9th realm over a year ago, so it was about time for him to break through to the Saint realm.

"Yes," Pearl nodded. "I'm sure."

Ma Tianxin looked at the two of them talk through their bond and wondered what they were talking about.

Then, out of nowhere, Alex turned to look at him and said, "It's your lucky day today."

"Uh... it is?" the young man asked.

"In less than two months' time, we will be leaving the battlefield. You can leave at the same time too," Alex said.

Confusion turned to happiness as Ma Tianxin's lips curved to a wide smile. "Really? Are you really going out?"

"Yes," Alex said. "You can rest assured."

Ma Tianxin was about to say something when his happy emotions disappeared when a thought emerged in his head. "But... that's just until the outside right? I still have to go back to the sect on my own."

"Well, normally you would," Alex said. "However, circumstances have made it so that I must visit the State of Shuang, and as a result will have to pass by close to the Blue Spring sect."

"Circumstances? You have some business with our sect, senior?" the man asked. He was excited about the prospect of having a guard all the way through to the end.

"No, I have no business with your sect," Alex said, disappointing the young man. "Unless..." He thought of something.

"Unless?"

Alex looked at the young man. "Who owns the Demonic forest?" he suddenly asked.

"The demonic forest? No one. If anyone, it would be the beasts," the young man said. "Do you wish to enter the Demonic forest?"

Alex looked at Pearl. "My beast will be breaking through once we go out of the battlefield. Afterward, I will be needing some beast cores and was hoping to get it from some Saint beasts in the forest, what do you think?" he asked.

"I... I don't know senior. I've never seen anyone killing saint beasts to use their cores for their own beasts," the young man said. "Although, I have heard of such things happening in the past, so I don't see how you can't do it."

Chapter 949: Pearl's Concerns

Alex went along with the young man to the rest of the places where he could potentially learn something new.

He visited new places he hadn't been to before and even fought a few people that came to challenge him.

He tried looking into the aura of the Immortals high above him, but while he learned that he could handle it to a certain extent, the mysteries there were too vast for him to learn in just a month. He would have to spend at least a few months just like he did with the sword and space.

Alex also trained in trying to cut up space to reveal the crack, but all he could do was cut up space so they separated.

At least, he was getting good at that. His cuts were getting larger and larger. Soon, he would likely be able to cut the space in such a way that everything he cut up would not be in contact with the rest of the space from any direction.

Essentially, he wanted to be able to create his own secret realm whenever he wanted to. Only, this one wouldn't be compressed like the other secret realms were. At least, not without learning the dao of Space Compression.

The young man sat down beside Alex whenever he tried to learn something and tried it himself. He failed to even feel the aura half the time, but he still tried.

Then, after more than a month, the bells rang and it signaled their time to leave.

6 months had passed once again... so easily. This time around, Alex didn't even think much time had passed.

'It's only going to be worse as my lifespan increases, isn't it?' he thought to himself. The slow passage of time would stop mattering to a cultivator as they went on.

Alex and the young man walked over to the gate where a lot of people were waiting to leave. They even saw the group of 4 that wanted to kill the man.

However, they just weren't able to now. They were incredibly frustrated, and the young man noticed it.

Alex however couldn't care less about those men and had only a single thought in his mind.

That was to help Pearl with his breakthrough.

Once the gate opened, Alex and the young man went out. However, when the young man found that they weren't immediately flying away, he got confused.

"Why aren't we leaving?" he asked.

"I need to prepare Pearl before he breaks through," Alex said.

"Prepare? I thought the young cat was ready," the young man said.

"Yes, his cultivation base is ready," Alex said. "But his mind is not. Stop worrying, we'll only be spending a month or so in the Silvermoon city before we leave."

"I... okay," the young man said. He had zero grounds for complaints after all.

Alex got himself a room in the city for a month and called out Pearl. Pearl was ready to break through, but this was going to be hard.

After all, since he had learned Dao, he was going to meet an Inner Demon for the first time. Even without thinking about the Lightning Tribulation that would come afterward, the Inner Demon alone would be enough for Pearl to struggle.

So, Alex spent the next whole month telling Pearl what should happen and resolving any hidden negative feelings he could have been festering.

Only now was Alex starting to realize just how much he had been ignoring Pearl's thoughts. Ever since he came to the Northern Continent, he had worried about his mother and the others back in the

Western Continent, but not once did he realize that Pearl too would have been feeling the same anxiety that he had been feeling.

In fact, for Pearl, it was even worse. Not only was he worried about Helen, he cared about his people in the Beast realm too and was worried about them.

He worried that his great-grandmother might be dead. He worried the jaguar might be hurt as well.

He worried about his own future. He was supposed to be the Ruler of the Western Continent, but he was still a child. Could he do it? Would he be strong enough to do that?

He was already lagging behind Alex. Even though he had been ahead of Alex on multiple occasions, he had still ended up behind him. Was his potential that bad? Would the ritual to help him evolve even help him at all?

He worried that soon enough he would be useless to Alex and would get left behind.

Alex felt a pain grow in his heart that he didn't expect to feel at the moment. He never realized just how oblivious he was to Pearl's feelings, never even asking him how he felt.

It was only now he was starting to realize that the cat in front of him, regardless of his small size, was no longer a kitten at all.

He was no longer the naive little kitten he found in the forest who hadn't even realized that his mother had died protecting him.

He was someone that had lived for nearly 14 years and thus was mature enough to have his own thoughts and anxieties.

Alex spent as long as needed to help Pearl understand that it was alright. Everything would be alright and he had no reason to worry.

He helped remove as much anxiety as he could from Pearl and in the process improved their own bond.

After a month had passed, Pearl was finally ready to do it. He was ready to break through.

So, Alex left the city along with Ma Tianxin who had been staying in the city as well. They went east, towards an open area with not many people once again.

"Hmm..." Alex sensed someone staring at them for a moment from far away, but they quickly went out of the range of his spiritual sense so he couldn't be sure if there was malicious intent behind that stare or not.

"We should be careful," he told the young man and continued his way to the east. Very soon, they entered the State of Shuang.

Along the way, Alex and the young man came across a small city, which let them know where on the map they exactly were, so all he had to do was go a little northeast from there, and he would arrive at a place where the mountain ranges will be full of snow and without any human settlement in a vast area.

After arriving at the location, Alex took out some beast armor he had bought for Pearl and had him wear it.

Pearl stood wearing the golden armor, looking intimidating. Alex smiled and said, "Good luck."

Then, he moved away from the location and let Pearl start concentrating on his breakthrough.

"Why are we moving back?" the young man asked. He didn't understand why they had to move over a few kilometers away.

"You will see soon," Alex said. His senses still reached Pearl and were way beyond it as he kept a constant eye on the things that transpired with him.

Soon enough, Pearl's cultivation got into a rhythm as he began to crack the shell around his Beast core to make it stronger.

Chapter 950: Senior Bu

Alex started fidgeting. He didn't know what was happening with Pearl, but he knew that he was fighting his inner demon at the moment.

Pearl was done breaking through the hard shell on his beast core.

Similar to how a human had a dantian, beasts stored their Qi in their core, which was attached to their spiritual roots. Alex could feel the significant improvement in Pearl's aura, so he knew he was just two steps away from actually breaking through.

However, it was exactly these 2 steps that were the hardest and that was what made Alex so worried.

This was Pearl's first time trying to fight against an Inner demon. If he failed, he would face a backlash that could severely harm his progress and even drop it a considerable amount.

That alone wouldn't have been much of a problem, but Pearl had also learned the Dao, which meant that he had to fight against the lightning that was ready to come for him as a weaker version of himself.

Alex wasn't sure if he could do that.

"What's... going on?" Ma Tianxin asked when he noticed a change in the aura. The bright white clouds that dropped snow were slowly turning darker and darker by the second while releasing a rather ominous aura.

"Make sure not to get close," Alex said as he looked at the sky. "The heavens will smite you for it."

"What? Why? What's going on?" the young man asked, but Alex didn't answer. Explaining Lightning Tribulation would take too much of his time and he was too focused on Pearl at the moment to do so.

Pearl's expression said that he was struggling against the demon. Alex wished he could tell him it was alright, but he couldn't. Pearl could hear no one at the moment.

Just as he was thinking that Alex suddenly saw someone enter his spiritual sense from the north to his right. The man that entered was wearing a purple robe and seemed to be coming exactly toward them.

The man's spiritual sense passed through him and Ma Tianxin not long after as he flew towards them quite fast. He would arrive near them at any minute now.

Alex frowned. He didn't care who the man was or why he was coming towards them. He was going to disturb Pearl if he came any further and Alex didn't want that.

He flew off without any notice and went over to the man, meeting him about 2 kilometers away from where Pearl was breaking through.

The man stopped when he noticed Alex arrive in front of him and smiled. He was a middle-aged man that looked to be in his early 50s with his streaks of white hair and beard.

"Would you mind stepping as—"

"Leave!" Alex said without waiting for the man to finish his words.

The man's smile vanished a little, but he still kept it up the best he could. "Junior, You are quite rude—"

"Leave," Alex said. "You are disturbing my beast's breakthrough. If you want something, you can come after he's done breaking through."

"Oh!" the man said and turned his head to look towards the mountain range to his right. "The white cat, huh? I've heard a few things about it too. It should be going through a lightning tribulation soon huh?"

"Yes," Alex said. "So, leave."

The man finally lost his smile. "I've been trying to be friendly, but you continue being rude. Do you really think you're strong enough to be this rude?" the man asked as he let out his cultivation base aura.

Alex stood there without a single reaction to the man's Saint Foundation 2nd realm aura.

"Senior Bu? What are you doing here?" Ma Tianxin arrived next to Alex and asked.

"Ah! Junior Ma, there you are. I came to escort you back," he said. "I heard you had a rather rough time on the battlefield."

"Oh, yes I did," Ma Tianxin said with a confused look on his face. "But how do you know that?"

"They told me, of course," the man named Bu said.

"They?" Ma Tianxin's face became gloomy when he understood what was happening. "You too, senior Bu?"

"Haha, they just paid me a lot, that's all. I don't really want the sect master's position anyway," the man said. "So, let's make it simple, shall we? All you have to do is swear an oath to not reveal whatever took place in the Ancient Battlefield and I will return right now. Hell, I will even escort you back just like I said."

Ma Tianxin frowned. The senior in front of him was a strong one that he couldn't fight against. He glanced at Alex and had a suspicion that he wouldn't be able to fight against him as well.

"I—"

"What if he doesn't?" Alex asked. "Are you going to cause trouble?"

The man sneered when he heard Alex. "Young man, don't get overly cocky just because you learned a few Dao here and there. Dao alone won't make you powerful," he said.

"I'm not in a mood for your sect's petty quarrel. Even if he will never reveal what happened, due to my acquaintance with senior Xinyi, I will still tell him everything when I reach your sect. What will you do then?" Alex asked.

The man in front of them frowned. "You know our sect master?" he asked.

"I've met him twice now during the Dao mountain's opening," Alex said. "He's been quite friendly with me, and I wouldn't want to see vultures eying his spot once he stops being a sect master."

The man frowned. He thought for a moment about how information about Alex was spread, and most of the information about his Dao had come from the sect master. "You're not lying, are you?" he asked. "Shit! That makes things complicated."

"Why would it?" Alex asked. "You say you don't want anything with the sect master's position, so all you have to do and return and give back the money you took from the betrayers and wash your hands of any rules of the sect you might've broken."

The man frowned when he heard that. His not wanting to be a sect master was obviously a lie. Even if he didn't care about the position itself, being the husband of the woman who contracted the sacred beast of the sect was something no man would want to miss.

Besides, if he did nothing here and the news got back to the sect master, it wouldn't take long before they figured out that he was the mastermind behind this whole operation.

"Fine then," the man said as his cultivation base flared and he shot out some green wolves made up of air.

"Step back," Alex said as he took out a sword and cut the wolves before they arrived.

Ma Tianxin started getting worried, but he was useless here anyway so he turned around and left as far as he could.

Alex checked Pearl's situation one last time and noticed that he was still fighting his inner demon. It would take a while to be done with.

"I will need to get done with this quickly."