

Alchemy 1031

Chapter 1031: Squid

Alex absorbed it again and again, and every single time he felt the space aura from the silver thread.

"How is this possible?" he couldn't help but ask himself.

How long has this mountain been with him? It was a day before he graduated from the Tiger sect that he had gotten this.

All this time, he had wondered what it was. He had even stopped caring at some point because he wasn't getting any answer from anywhere.

And now he was learning about what it was? He grabbed some more threads and absorbed the Space aura in them.

It was weird, to say the least.

"Why now?" Alex wondered.

If he thought back, there had been some subtle improvements in Space since the very start for him.

The first time he had ever manipulated space was the day when he killed the girl that was teleporting in the Demon realm.

He had no idea what he had done there, but that was when he started showing signs.

The next time was when he noticed space being manipulated. It had been in the royal palace in the Radiant city where he felt something happening in the Beast realm.

After that, it was in the Beast realm when he woke up one day after absorbing a lot of these threads that he was consciously starting to notice the change in space.

After that, it had been a rather swift journey as he learned more and more about the space laws right until today.

"But why today?" Alex asked himself. He had been absorbing these threads for the last 25 years, so it didn't make sense for him to only just notice it, did it?

"When did I last absorb it?" he thought. It had to be a few days prior to when he made the final pill for the madman to heal himself.

"Something must have happened between that day and today," Alex thought. "What happ—"

Alex paused for a moment. "Ah! Space Dao. I learned the Dao of space after my last time. Is that it? Is that why I'm sensing this? I can sense it because I'm not just absorbing it, but I'm understanding it as well."

That made perfect sense to Alex. With the understanding that came with Dao of Space, he was able to tell whether or not there was anything Space related within himself as well.

"Still, this thing either must not be space or be very stable space for me to not notice until now," he thought. "Either way, if this is what has been helping me in understanding Space laws then I should continue absorbing the threads. I can't leave any behind."

With that thought, Alex went around his mental space, gathering all the threads that still floated in the sky.

It took him a while before he was done. Then, he came back outside to his body that was still cultivating the Undying physique.

The world got silent as night fell. The only sound was that of the trees rustling or the waves of the ocean crashing onto the island in the distance.

Alex continued cultivating for the entire night and only finished it the next morning.

He opened his eyes and got up. "5 days," he thought to himself. That was the amount of time required before he could cultivate again.

"Should I really go find my father right now? Or should I consider helping Godslayer first?" he thought.

There was another problem that he was starting to come across the more he got closer to the day he needed to leave for the wasteland.

"That's a massive place that I will have to fly through and scan every single person I come across," Alex thought. "Do I go around walking if I run out of Qi?"

There were two methods to not have this problem in the first place. One was to make some Saint rank pills which he could eat to gain some Qi.

Or, he could use some beast cores in the same way. For that, however, he would have to kill a lot of beasts.

"I was going to do that anyway since I need to provide Godslayer with some energy too," Alex thought. This was a good way to test his fighting capabilities after not being able to fight for the last 10 years.

He flew out of the island and went to the ocean where he had to fight the beasts. That was quite dangerous as he had no idea just what sort of beasts lay in here.

If he accidentally caught the attention of a strong beast, he would be in danger. So, instead of searching for beasts, Alex decided to let the beast find him instead.

He flew around the sky in a small area and soon enough a spiritual sense caught onto him. Judging by the strength, Alex was sure he could fight it.

A beast came out of the water, one which Alex had never seen or heard of before. The beast was massive at nearly 5 meters long. It looked to have crab hands with pincers, but its body was that of a trout.

The beast flew into the sky and snipped at Alex with its pincers.

Alex sensed the beast's cultivation base before even it came close, so he was certain that he could defeat the beast.

At the 8th Saint Condensation realm, he had the power of an 8th Saint Foundation realm expert. On the other hand, the beast was only at the 5th Saint Foundation realm, so fighting it was rather easy.

Alex dodged the pincers and pulled out at midnight. He poured Yin Qi into the sword and slashed at the fish.

In a single strike, the fish's body was gravely wounded with death and darkness aura entering its body. The wound on its body grew black as if infected and the beast cried.

"You damn bastard!" it shouted. Hearing a fish speak felt surreal to Alex, but only because this was the first time he was seeing an aquatic beast in the first place. Otherwise, he was used to seeing beasts be able to speak.

"I might have baited you here, but you came to kill me anyway. Don't go crying when you die."

Alex swung his sword again, and the fish was cut in half.

Space twisted as Alex pulled on the fish's remains and put them into his storage ring. For the beast core in the corpse, he could check that once he was done. For now, he needed to go find some more—

Alex saw a gigantic tentacle shoot out of the water as it rose to hit him. He teleported just in time and arrived some distance away, but it seemed the beast that was attacking him could teleport as well.

The beast wasn't using any dao, but rather skills that came with its bloodline. The tentacle came out once more from the water and shot at Alex.

Alex slashed as hard as he could, trying to cut the tentacle. However, when the tentacle slammed onto his sword, he knew that he had made a mistake.

The tentacle slammed onto his body, sending him flying into the sky.

Alex felt and sensed his broken bones. The attack just now from the monster was enough to harm his body which currently had Sword Qi and standard Qi protecting him on top of body cultivation.

Alex fell into an arc, and even as he fell, his wounds were already healing. The cut-up wounds had healed up and the broken bones were half-mended.

Just a few more seconds and he was going to be healed.

However, it didn't seem like he had much time. He teleported immediately, running away from the current location and back to the island that was in the distance.

Alex landed on the island and frowned slightly. There was no Qi in this place. However, that wasn't the problem he should be focusing on at the moment.

"Those beasts... will they come onto the land?" Alex wondered. He hadn't seen any beast come up to the land. If they could do it, the land would be filled with those beasts anyway.

However, as if to disprove his theory, a giant tentacled squid jumped out of the water and onto the land.

"You're quite strong," Alex said when he sensed the beast's cultivation base. "I guess I will have to play it safe too."

Blood poured out of Alex's body, pooling around him to form armor. At the same time, the blood dripped from his hand onto Midnight, forming a coating around it powered by blood aura.

The beast looked confused a bit. The beast wasn't used to seeing such a sudden difference in fighting ability, not to mention the blood aura itself was quite rare.

The beast slammed its tentacles once again, this time sending shockwaves through the air.

Alex struck back with his own sword. With the Sword aura and Blood aura helping him, the attack easily blocked off the Squid's attack.

Finally, he looked at the Squid properly and saw that it had rather hard skin with scales growing on it.

The squid had 2 eyes that stared at him viciously, with 2 tentacles and 8 different arms. As for its cultivation base, it was a Saint Core 4th realm beast.

'Shit!' Alex thought when he finally sensed its strength. 'This is going to be hard to beat.'

He had no idea how strong his blood aura was, but it was definitely not this strong. In which case, all he could do was pray that his understanding of Dao would be the thing that saved him in the upcoming fight.

Chapter 1032: Fighting the Squid

Alex teleported behind the squid and slashed it as hard as he could. The Sword aura from his sword struck the beast in closed range as his blood aura did the majority of the damage.

A thin blue line appeared on its back as a few lines of blue blood came out of it. At the same time, the squid's tentacle moved at an impossible speed and hit Alex.

Alex's blood armor stopped most of the damage, but he still felt the blow that sent him flying backward.

Alex stopped for a moment and at the same time teleported again. The place where he had been got destroyed by the Squid's attack.

He arrived somewhere else. Once he found his footing again, he jumped back to fighting the squid.

He arrived in front of the squid and quickly dodged through its 8 arms while stabbing it through its body.

However, it was so strong that Alex's sword barely went inside at all. A tentacle came flying from the side, so Alex left the sword and jumped back.

At the same time, a thin blood thread was attached to the sword which he yanked on to dislodge the sword.

However, midnight seemed to be stuck quite badly and it would need something else for him to get it out.

More blood poured out of him as he got ready to fight.

"I really do have to use my Dao or this is unwinnable," he thought.

Suddenly, a vast amount of blue color filled his vision. The water Qi that he was blue to his vision was slowly coming out of the beast's body and going behind it. At the same time, water flew out of the ocean and created multiple rings around the squid which seemed to be working as a sort of defense.

Alex tried sending a blood bullet toward the beast, but the spinning rings of water quickly destroyed it.

The beast's tentacle moved again, coming towards him. Since he was looking directly at the beast, his eyes could clearly follow the tentacle's path toward him.

His blood turned into a sort of dagger that he slowly moved upwards as if trying to cut something that was there. At the same time, space aura gathered around his blade and both the Dao of Space and the Dao of Cutting worked at once.

The powerful blood blade cut right at the time as the tentacle arrived and cut the tentacle right through the center.

The tentacle split up vertically into two different halves, and one-half of the tentacle still landed on Alex. He felt the force behind the attack as even his armor found it hard to stop all the pain.

Alex spun through the air, falling onto some bushes near the beach of the island.

At the same time, the beast attacked once more, this time sending a gust of water toward him. The water came at him like a pillar thrown at him.

He managed to dodge at the last moment by teleporting and the beast still attacked him mere moments after he appeared.

The split tentacle slammed at him.

Alex didn't get a chance to dodge as he had dodged just now. Instead, his blood armor opened up like vines that grabbed onto the beast's tentacle, latching himself onto it to not get thrown far away.

Alex coughed up blood, but he was right next to the beast. That was all he needed.

Using the moment of surprise, Alex used his True Fire dao to create a ball of fire right in front of the squid's face.

There was no Qi on this island, so he had to use his own remaining Qi to make the fire far away.

The water rings around the squid immediately got to work to protect itself from the fire, but Alex gave it no chance. He pushed the Qi from inside of him and shouted,

"Explode!"

The explosion rang loud as if it were a tribulation lightning coming down to strike someone that the heavens feared.

Alex felt his own explosion send a shockwave back at him as he was sent flying away backward. Trees were uprooted and the ground cleared up.

A massive crater was left at the center of the explosion with both Alex and the squid sent flying to either side.

Alex slowly tried to get up, but his body was too broken to move. He had to wait a few moments. He spread his senses and looked for the beast, only to find it down on the ground like him.

The explosion had truly been very strong and it seemed the squid which was closest had suffered a far worse fate.

One of its tentacles was nowhere to be found, along with 3 of its arms. The front of its face was burnt and charred with blue blood spilling out from some of the burnt locations.

The water rings that were protecting it previously were nowhere to be found at all. They had all been destroyed by the explosion.

Alex found Midnight a few paces away from the squid, which had seemingly fallen off during the explosion.

"Urggh! It's losing too much blood," he thought as he tried to get up. "I shouldn't use the explosion again. I need its blood."

The squid also moved at the same time, but the wounds on its body were quite severe. So, Alex was quite faster than it.

Alex was still bleeding from many places, but the important parts of his body, mostly his bones had been healed, so he was ready to fight again.

He teleported next to the beast and grabbed midnight before swinging at it.

The beast used what little strength it had to send its barely functioning tentacle at him, which Alex easily cut apart with how weak it was.

Then, he jumped on top of the beast and jammed his sword into one of the open wounds the beast, the only one that he could attack and not have to worry about having his sword stuck.

The squid struggled for a moment but Alex started creating a massive amount of death aura directly into the squid's body, delaying its regenerative properties a lot.

The squid's remaining arms tried to grab onto Alex, its Qi trying to use some technique, but it was feeble right now. Suffering from the full brunt of the explosion, the squid was already at death's door.

The squid wouldn't die from the death aura itself, but it would be so incredibly sick that if not healed soon and it would get worse and worse by the day. At the end, it would die from untreated and unhealed wounds.

That was later in the future though, and Alex neither had the time to think about the future or any will to let the squid go until it was strong in the future.

He jammed the sword deeper into the Squid before carving it open with all the Space and Cutting dao he could use.

The squid's head was wide open as blood gushed out. Alex quickly took the squid into his storage ring and finally sighed as relief filled him.

"That was a close one," he thought to himself. If not for the timely explosion, he would've lost today's battle. Had that been the case, he wasn't sure he could defeat the beast so easily.

"Well, that's that," he thought and got up. As he did, he looked away from where he was towards the center of the mountain.

During his battle, he had noticed something up there that had surprised him. However, now that he was thinking about it, it made perfect sense for something like that to be here.

Alex stopped his Qi from being wasted anymore and kept the wounds on his body as he walked towards the center of the island.

When he reached there, in a small cave with an opening at the top, there was a multicolored fire burning at the center.

"There's Phoenix flames here too, huh? I wonder how it got here," he thought. He didn't think it was the tribal folks as they could never come here. So it had to be the cultivators then.

"So that's why this place doesn't have any Qi," he thought. "Thank god I still have some or I wouldn't be able to leave here at all."

Alex stayed by the fire as the wounds on his skin slowly healed from being next to the phoenix flames. It was neither as fast nor as painless as when his undying body was healing him, but the fire was still healing him quite well.

Within half an hour, all the wounds on his body was gone and he was fully healed. He moved around a bit to confirm it, and once he was sure he sat back down as he remembered something.

"Does that count as body cultivating?" he wondered. To cultivate one's body, one needed to get beaten up badly and then heal from it.

Alex had known that, but he had never really thought about body cultivation as it was something that simply happened on its own with Pearl around.

However, with Pearl gone, he was starting to see many things in different light. Body cultivation was one of those very things.

"Wait, I can heal very easily here though," he thought. "Not only is there fire here, I also have my Undying body to heal me back from any of the wounds."

As the thought grew in him, he couldn't help but get more and more excited. "Doesn't that mean that I can body cultivate easily?"

Chapter 1033: Blood Squid

Alex left the island with the Phoenix fire. While Phoenix fire was good, it wasn't as helpful for him at the moment since his own Qi could heal him far more effectively.

He did wish to try and learn how to make Phoenix fire, but even with his True Fire Dao, he could see absolutely no way of creating the fire.

He could create a fire that burned blue, purple, red, and orange simultaneously, just like a Phoenix fire would, but it would not have the all-burning trait that the Phoenix fire did and did not heal at all.

Alex wasn't disappointed by the result, however, as it would be impossible for him to do something that a heavenly beast could only do. He would have been disappointed if he had Phoenix's blood in him, but since he didn't, there was still a chance for him to be able to make Phoenix fire just yet.

All he had to do was follow his bond with Scarlet to the Sunborn Sanctuary and see if any of the Phoenixes there were willing to supply him with a bit of blood.

However, that was still a while in the future. For now, he had other things to worry about.

Alex flew through the ocean, searching for another place to stay at. The islands on the eastern side of the wastelands were all spread far apart and going from one to another wasn't as simple as beasts roaming the ocean very frequently.

Alex had to fight 2 different beasts before he reached an island where he could use Qi again.

As soon as he arrived, he found a place for himself to stay.

This island was one of the bigger ones and had some beasts, but none were strong enough for Alex to fear them.

He jumped onto the crown of a giant tree where he would be staying for the next few days.

Alex brought out the Sun's womb and the first thing he did was cut up his own arm to fill it with his blood. The Squid core was too good to not use as a Blood beast.

Once he was done filling the cauldron partially with his blood, he proceeded to bring out the four beast corpses that he had placed into his storage ring.

He quickly took out the beast cores from all 4 of them and let the body continue bleeding. Once it fully bled, and the ground where it was placed was muddy with blood, Alex stepped down and started absorbing the blood.

Blood Absorption took a few hours for him to complete. By the end, the blood on the ground was barely producing any aura for him to use.

Once that was done, Alex's blood became slightly stronger. He went back to the tree and started cultivating his Eyes. He would have to wait a bit longer before he could cultivate his body, or use more blood.

Night fell and halfway through the night, Alex switched back to using the Undying Physique again.

The next day, Alex did the same thing. He gathered a bit of his blood again and went back to cultivating again. He would take some breaks to go around the giant island and find some alchemy ingredients, but mostly he would just cultivate his eyes or his physique.

His Undying Physique had already reached a point where he could heal cut-off limbs, but it still took a few minutes to do so. Anyone that had learned about that would be quite jealous of him, but Alex knew he could go for more, so he wanted more.

He wanted to reach a point where his body parts could regenerate mere moments after being cut.

4 days went by and Alex spent it all doing nothing but the same thing over and over. By now, he had barely any Qi left in his body.

All of his Qi was used up by his Undying Physique as it regenerated his blood quite quickly too. He could've restored it by eating a beast core, but he wanted to wait until he had some Qi.

He didn't want to use the core on himself, but rather use it for Godslayer.

On the 5th day, Alex placed the squid's beast core into the cauldron that was filled to the brim with blood and activated the technique.

The blood churned as it moved around the cauldron, like waves in the ocean. The power in the blood and the soul in the core fought each other for a good while before the blood aura simply overwhelmed the core.

Then, the core absorbed the blood aura, slowly forming a massive beast that came out of the cauldron.

The Blood Squid that formed from his blood was just as large as the real one, looking down on him at 5 meters of height.

It had all the same features as the real one, and now all Alex had to do was test to see if it has the strength of the real one as well.

A while later when his blood aura was improved again, he called out his blood armor and asked the Squid to hit him.

When the attack did land, Alex noticed that the squid was not as strong as the real one. It was slightly weaker, maybe by half a realm's worth.

Given how badly he was hurt when fighting that beast, a slightly weaker squid was still quite strong. Alex understood the reason for it being weaker was because his blood aura was weaker than the Squid's cultivation base.

He was already lucky that the Squid's core didn't fail to form a blood beast. After all, cores that were stronger than one's blood aura had lower and lower chances of forming a blood beast.

"I guess absorbing those blood before starting helped me even if it was just a little," Alex thought.

Now that he was done with the Squid, he moved on to another beast core. However, he wasn't planning on making a blood beast out of this one, but rather eating it.

Alex cleaned up the core and quickly swallowed it. As it reached his stomach, he felt the Qi in the core slowly dissolve. However, the Qi was still held together by a spiritual force that was but the remaining will of the beast he had killed.

At the same time, Alex's mind was assaulted by the same beast, so he went back into his mental space.

A crab-like fish flew in the air, the first beast of the 4 he had killed recently. The beast started fighting back as soon as he got in, the fight was anything but hard.

In the mental space, all one could use was their spiritual energy, and a dead beast's spiritual energy was rarely as strong. Not to mention, Alex's own spiritual energy was absurdly stronger than anyone in his own cultivation realm.

Alex beat up the beast enough that its mental strength faded and what little energy had formed its consciousness here dissipated away. Normally, Alex would absorb this energy as it would add to his own mental energy slightly.

However, right now, he needed to let Godslayer absorb this.

He flew next to Godslayer's body and grabbed it to bring it back. He moved his body around where the beast's body had dissolved and hoped that worked.

Surprisingly, it did. Godslayer's body naturally attracted such energy which he absorbed to improve upon. However, the absorption process was too slow.

Alex left the crystal sphere hovering around as it absorbed what was around him. However, after a while, yellow fog emerged from the sea below to consume it all.

"I don't know if it will do me good leaving it all like that. Seems like a waste," he said to Godslayer.
"Don't worry, I will be eating more soon to help you."

Alex came out of his mental space and felt the Qi that was being held back start to flow through his entire body. Most of the Qi found the shortest path to the dantian, but some still make it to all the parts of his body.

"I feel so full," he thought to himself.

To move his body a little, he called out to the Squid and started fighting with it. At first, he tried fighting without any Blood armor, but soon he realized just how bad an idea it was.

He was getting beat up so hard that it felt worse than when he fought the real thing. At least for the real one, he could attack back. He couldn't even attack this blood beast for fear of ruining it.

However, as he got beat up, he also healed, which slowly improved his body. It wasn't long before Alex realized that not only was this a good training session, but it was also a good way to hurt his body before it healed.

As long as he asked the blood squid to hold back a little, it was just the right amount of force to hurt him without going overboard.

He fought with the squid for nearly half a day before he was bloody and blue. He had stopped his Undying physique from working just until now, so when he allowed it again, his body visibly healed at a very fast rate.

Since he had no missing body parts, it took no more than half a minute to fully heal.

However, he had spent quite a bit of Qi while healing, so he had to go cultivate again.

He sat on the crown of the tree once again and took out the 4-veined pill from before as he got ready to cultivate all over again.

Chapter 1034: Searching Continued

2 Days later, Alex finished his cultivation. He was getting closer to his goal of breaking through to the next realm.

After finishing his cultivation, he went out to fight again. He had the squid with him this time around, so he wasn't very scared about meeting something strong.

In the worst-case scenario, he could sacrifice the blood beasts to go and fend off his enemy while he ran away.

Alex fought a few different beasts that were strong, but not as strong as the Squid he killed. If he wanted to fight some stronger beasts, he would have to move away from the main continent where the Qi was siphoned off to burn the Phoenix flames eternally.

"I can find stronger beasts later," he thought and went back to the island again. Since he couldn't cultivate for the next 5 days or so, Alex cultivated the Demon Eyes and Undying physique for the next two days while gathering blood.

2 days later, he felt his right shoulder plate buzz a little as Whisker came back out.

Whisker jumped out from behind him and onto his palm.

'Did it work?' Whisker asked with his spiritual sense.

Alex smiled. "Yes, it worked. You did great back there," he said. To Whisker, the last thing he had done was destroy the formation flag that kept the lightning formation running in the Lightning Peninsula, a moment after which he died at the hands of the madman.

"It's been about over 3 months since then," Alex told him. "A lot of things have happened."

Alex told Whisker everything that happened after his fight with the madman.

Whisker worried for Pearl, but Alex was sure that Pearl was fine. At the very least, he was alive.

Alex spent the next 3 days either fighting or gathering materials. He also had his beasts beat him so he could body cultivate a lot.

"Do you want to do it too, Whisker? You can heal easily so you'll get stronger," Alex said. However, Whisker did not like fighting or being hurt so he refused to take part.

Alex made another two pills, of which only one came out a 100% pill. He upgraded it up to having 4 pill veins, but given how his blood aura was getting steadily better, it wouldn't be long before he could reach 5 pill veins as well.

Alex spent another 2 days cultivating, which was worth 40 days of normal cultivation.

"My cultivation base is reaching close to peak," he said to himself. "A few more of these and I can break through."

However, he couldn't wait around for that. He would have to cultivate when he could, but for now, he needed to go look for his father.

"Let's go."

Alex flew from the island and immediately turned invisible. Whisker rode inside of his robes and as a result, he became invisible too.

With no cultivation aura or any other aura for the matter, the beasts in the ocean didn't find him so easily.

However, a few spiritual senses did cross him from time to time. A few beasts sprang up each time to kill him for food, but a single hit from Alex was enough to kill most.

The stronger ones rarely bothered coming out for something they weren't sure was even worth their time.

Alex arrived at the edge of the Wastelands and continued flying through the coast, sticking to the region that was right at the edge of the small body of water that separated the Wastelands and the rest of the Southern Continent on the map.

As he flew through the sky, he stopped from time to time to check on any group of people he found. Tribes and Oases took longer to search as there were a lot of people to search through.

He was by the mountain ranges where the barrier to stop the tribal people was set up, so from time to time, he would sense cultivators as well.

However, most that were stationed there were too weak to notice his spiritual sense, so Alex could continue his search without any pauses in his journey.

Due to how slow he was, it took him way more than just 5 days to search through everything in a single line from east to west of the southernmost locations of the Wastelands.

Alex had to do it east to west, or west to east so that he could stop to cultivate on either side of the Wastelands which was the only place to find Qi.

If he spent too long in the Wastelands, he would most likely miss the optimal time to cultivate, while also having to unnecessarily eat the beast cores, which reduced in effectiveness the more Alex ate them.

Unfortunately, Alex did not find his father in search, so he had to do it all over again. This time, his searched range was a single straight line from west to east, slightly away from the place where he previously searched.

Before that, however, he had to spend some 3 days cultivating again.

Alex found a random piece of land to the west that had Qi in it and started making some pills.

This time around, he made nearly 5 4-veined pills using the ingredients he had previously prepared while he was on the other side of the continent.

He cultivated using one of those pills and spent another day cultivating his Undying Physique and his Demon eyes.

Once done, he got up to go back to search for his father again.

However, before he did, he flew up into the sky and looked towards the west.

"Just how far away is it? I can't even see anything that far away," he thought. He remembered having the same experience outside of the Demon realm when he tried to look for the Southern Continent and didn't find anything.

While he should have been able to see something that was far away, his vision was still blurred by all the white haze and light refraction that was caused due to the ocean water heating up.

"Well, it's not like I can just fly there even if I did see it anyway," Alex thought and turned around. With just how weak he was, he was never going to be able to make it even halfway there.

"I need to continue becoming stronger!" he thought.

He then turned around and left back towards the Wasteland.

He spent another week trying to find his father, but once again, he was unable to. He would have to keep on searching for a long while.

Alex went back towards the west a few days after reaching the east and once again didn't find what he was looking for. He arrived on an island where he could cultivate and decided to take a bit of a break.

He spent a few days cultivating and then a few more days fighting. He fought some sea beasts to help himself train while also gathering some more beast cores and blood to absorb.

He also had his own blood beasts fight him so he could improve his body cultivation as well.

Whisker on the other hand wanted to do nothing. He didn't have to cultivate, and neither did he have to learn how to fight since he was never going to.

Seeing that, Alex gave him a task. Whisker was to make True rank pills and make it so that they were Heaven grade each time around.

Whisker hadn't had many chances to make pills, so it was a bit hard for him to just go back to making them. Even when Alex was confined by the old man, Whisker rarely got to make pills.

Most of his time was spent on learning about the ingredients, and the recipes, or simply learning how Alchemy worked in general.

After a week or so, Alex finally left the place again, sweeping through new parts as he made his way to the eastern side of the Wasteland again.

This was already the fourth time, and even so, he couldn't find his father at all. At this point, he was starting to worry that something might have happened to him.

What if...

"No, don't think about that," Alex told himself. "He is fine."

Alex arrived at the eastern seas again and cultivated for a while. After 2 days when he stopped, he didn't immediately get back.

First, he would have to break through.

He sat in the grasslands of a small island and closed his eyes as he heard nothing but the waves and the winds.

He slowly pulled out the Qi from his dantian as it moved around his body through the various meridians, becoming denser at each turn.

As he made the Qi even denser, at some point it was simply so thick that it had difficulty moving around in his dantian.

As a wave of energy rushed through him, Alex realized he had broken through to the 9th realm of Saint Condensation.

It had been 14 years since he broke through to the Saint realm, and in just those few years, he had somehow managed to break through 8 different times.

5 of those had been hasty cultivation due to the madman's urging, but the rest had been stable cultivation which Alex was very proud of.

Around the same time, Whisker had also broken through to the True Disciple 9th realm and was just a little far away from reaching the True Master realm.

"And I can reach the Saint Foundation realm very soon," Alex said to himself. "We will have to keep working hard, Whisker."

Chapter 1035: Anxiety

5 months went by and Alex did not find his father at all.

He scoured the entire Wasteland, going from east to west, from north to south, from the Maroon bay to the Sun's End bay; he scoured every single place in the Wasteland that had humans in it, and he did not find his father at all.

There were a few places in the northern part of the Wastelands where the entire tribe was actually just filled with beasts that had killed them or made them leave, and that made more fear grow in Alex.

His anxiety about his father was increasing day by day and even while he knew that was a weakness that his Inner demon would use against him, he couldn't help but worry.

What else could he do but worry anyway? This was the place his father had come to and he wasn't here.

After 5 months, Alex had to stop searching. Since he had gone to every location, twice even for a few, he had to give up on finding his father at the moment.

The fear in his heart grew day by day to the point where he was going to hurt himself while cultivating if he continued. He needed to take a small break from it all and spend some time on himself.

He secluded himself on an island that was more north than any place he had been to on the eastern side of the ocean.

He was so north that if he flew up a hundred meters or so, he could clearly see the Central continent in the far distance.

Alex did not cultivate during this break of his. He instead spent his time making pills or teaching Whisker how to make them.

He fought a few beasts here and there, but most of the time, he would just sit somewhere to work on his own mental state.

While he worked on calming his heart, Whisker would be on the side trying to use everything that Alex had taught him before.

From time to time, he would open his eyes to answer Whisker about some problems he was facing or teach him some new things, but most of the time, he spent meditating on his own problems.

He tried to make sense of what had most likely happened to his father after coming to the Southern Continent nearly 3 decades ago.

His father had apparently arrived at a place without any plant or human life, which would have to have been definitely in the Wasteland. After that, since he was told to find a city by his mother, his father would've found a tribe.

Even if he didn't know what to do, there should have been many other players here that would have taught him.

They would've certainly helped him. Although, there was a chance they too were helpless since the 'game' had ended just the day after his father joined it.

Even then, Alex was certain he would have joined a tribe. His father had a natural tan from working in the sun all day long, so he would've been accepted by any tribe without question.

Given how hard-working his father was, he would have definitely worked to become stronger, especially so he could find himself and his mother.

'It's not just him,' Alex thought. 'Many other people would have wanted to find their families too, so they would have done something right?'

Alex thought of what he would want to do in that case.

"They would try to go to the south certainly," he thought. Even in the case that most of them weren't aware, there would be people that would tell them about the south and how people could cultivate there.

"Did my father go to the south too?" he thought.

Alex wondered what would happen if his father had wanted to go south in that condition. Wouldn't they just reject him? He saw no reason why anyone would let his father go anywhere out of the Wastelands.

"What if somebody helped them?" Alex thought. He had seen a few ships around the Maroon bay and the Sun's End bay, which implied that people knew about ships.

Could they have taken the ship through the ocean to go south when they were rejected? That was the thought that Alex was starting to get.

"He must have," he thought. "So... he must be somewhere south. But on which side? And when?"

So many years had passed that even if they did go south, they most likely hadn't simply remained at the closest locations like the Eastwatch city or some other similar places.

"Finding them will be hard even if they are indeed there," Alex thought.

Unlike the Wastelands, he couldn't just go searching for his father around the rest of the Southern Continent. The number of people, the number of cities, the laws and regulations as well as just basic human decency would not allow him to go looking through everyone in the rest of the Southern Continent.

He just wouldn't be able to do what he did with the Wasteland. He needed to change his approach to finding his father.

He thought of a few ways. He thought of getting the Insight Pavilion on his side for finding his father or having a couple of other people help find him.

He even thought of employing a painter to find his father by drawing a portrait of him.

But, Alex didn't like any of the ideas.

The Insight pavilion only gathered information and did not go out looking for it on its own. There was no way they would change their stance just for him.

And finding people to help him wouldn't work quite as well since no one would know what to look for exactly. Alex himself didn't know what his father would look like now that 30 or so years had passed since he last saw him.

That was the same problem with finding a painter too.

All in all, the more he thought about it, the more impossible it seemed for Alex to be able to find his father.

"So I will have to change my method," he said to himself as a thought came to him. "If finding him is impossible for me, then I should work to make it possible for him to find me."

There was only one thing he could do now. Be such a big name in the Southern Continent that no one living there would not know about him.

When his father did eventually find learn about him, then he would come to find him on his own.

"So... Alchemy it is then," he thought. That was the only way to make a name for himself in the least amount of time possible. The only other way would be to show his capabilities as a cultivator, but that would cause more harm than good.

It was easy to offend people when you showed off your strength since there needed someone you showed your strength to. As such, Alex decided to stick with Alchemy where it was nearly impossible to offend someone directly.

"Still, I'm a bit too weak," Alex thought. "I will need to become stronger than I am right now if I want to make a name for myself just for the sake of security."

He finally stood up from where he sat. "I will need to confirm something first," he thought to himself.

"Come on, Whisker. Let's head over to the South. I need to go to the Insight Pavilion."

It took Alex 2 days to fly in between the islands as he made his way through the ocean while dodging the many beasts that would be out to kill him the moment they saw him.

He also stopped around to fight some beasts if they were just around his own strength or weaker and gathered them up. He would absorb their blood later to improve his own.

He arrived at Hiddenbay city and quickly went up to the Insight pavilion.

"How may I help you, fellow Daoist?" the girl at the soundproof booth asked him.

"I want to learn about tribal folks coming from the north using boats," Alex said.

"What exactly do you want to learn about it?" the girl asked.

"I want to know all the details there are to it. I want to know if they do come or not, and if they do, I want to know when they did, and where. I want all the details," Alex said.

"Sure," the girl said and started searching through their information bank. A few minutes later she acquired the information and put it on a talisman. "This is all the information available for you."

The price for the information was merely 140 True Spirit stones. When Alex heard the price, he frowned. He wasn't frowning because the price was high, but rather it was low. Which most likely meant that the information there wasn't very much.

Still, he walked outside and read it all.

People did come from the north using boats from time to time and they were usually sent back through the gates towards the south.

The talisman had information on where and when most of the boats had arrived, but aside from that, there wasn't much information.

There was also a good number of boats that did arrive but simply were never recorded because they managed to escape the authority and live here.

As such, the talisman wasn't very helpful for Alex in finding his father.

What it was helpful for was letting Alex know that there was a huge chance that his father did come here and was not sent back. So, everything he had planned until this point was worth it.

"Time to work towards it then."

Chapter 1036: Weekly Routine

Alex arrived back on another island, free of any human meddling as he was going to cultivate until the Saint foundation realm.

For him, that was the stage at which he could consider himself strong enough to do what he wanted without others blocking his path.

He would love to get stronger too, but he needed to start making a name for himself so that his father could find him.

"Come, you should watch me make some pills to learn from me," Alex told Whisker who was by his side.

He brought out a bunch of ingredients, all of which he had prepared during the many months he hadn't cultivated.

Then he brought out the Sun's Womb and started making pills.

Whisker watched from the side as every single time Alex finished making a pill, a storm would gather in the sky and strike down on them.

Whisker knew that this was happening because of Pill vein but he would still run away from time to time just in case the lightning struck him too.

This continued for about 4 days with some pauses in between where Alex had to restore his blood aura as well as his Qi. Once done, he would continue until he couldn't.

5 days later, he now had a total of 27 95% harmony and above pills as well as 32 4-veined pills. Thanks to the occasional double lightning strikes, he had managed to make quite a bit.

'With these, I should be able to go for over a year easily,' he thought. Then, he ate one of the pills and started cultivating.

The pill helped him improve quickly, which was exactly what he needed. Time passed by day by day and soon weeks went by and then months.

Alex's weeks were separated as thus. For the first 2 days, he ate the pill and cultivated.

Then, he would spend the 3rd day focusing on Undying Physique and Demon Eyes.

For the 4th and 5th days, he would go out and fight beasts to get their beast cores and corpses.

On the 6th day, he would use the blood he had gathered throughout the week to form a new beast. On the same day, he would also absorb the blood aura of the dead beast's blood and get stronger with it.

Finally, on the 7th day, he would let his blood beast beat him up as badly as it could without killing him.

While he healed, he would teach some new things to Whisker, which he would use to train his own Alchemy knowledge for the rest of the 6 days.

Over a year passed doing just the same. Alex ate the final pill he had and started cultivating once again.

The next 2 days went by in a breeze as he absorbed every bit of Qi from the air. By now, his Qi had reached a point where it was so thick that even viscous would no longer define it as well.

If Alex didn't know any better, he would've thought that he must have made some sort of mistake during his cultivation. But, since he knew that this was a normal process before one reached the Saint Foundation realm, he wasn't worried.

2 days later, when he finished the cultivation, he went straight to cultivating his Undying Physique and Demon eyes, which he also finished in a day.

Then, he left the island to go fight some beasts. Instead of moving towards the continent, he moved away from it, going towards the ocean where stronger beasts were.

Since his blood aura had gotten stronger, and since he had so many blood beasts with him, he felt safe.

Still, he did not go very far away just so he could remain within enough distance to run away if needed.

Alex pulled out Midnight and waited for some beast to take the bait. Once they did, he started fighting.

This was where most of his training came for the last year and a half. He used many different techniques while constantly trying to improve his own sword.

Since he knew that it was intended that he needed to improve more than anything, he worked on that. Once his Sword Intent got stronger, the rest of it, which was the sword Qi and sword Aura, would also get stronger as a result.

Alex's sword aura was now slightly stronger than his Qi, still falling quite a bit of way behind his blood aura.

He even used mental attacks, usually the spiritual sword, but that wasn't very useful against the beasts he was used to fighting. Most of them could simply shrug it off.

As for the ones it did work on, normal attacks alone were enough to beat it.

However, while everything improved, his body cultivation lagged behind quite a lot. When he realized that he could hurt himself and heal himself over and over to improve, he was quite happy.

However, only now was he understanding a normal body cultivator's pain as he was only just realizing just how long he had to keep it going before he even improved a bit.

From time to time, Alex even wondered if he was wasting time on it. All he had to do was find Pearl and he could get everything he was working for right now just by staying next to him.

However, same as right now, there would be times in the future when he couldn't stay with Pearl and would have to cultivate on his own. At that time, he would most likely be disappointed by the speed given just how slow it was.

As such, he found it better to continue training his body right now. It's not like it was useless anyway. It was just slow. He could work with slow if it meant improvement at some level.

Alex returned back to the island to see Whisker still working on his pills. He was starting to make Heaven-grade pills using Alex's recipes and lessons. There were still ways to go as he couldn't make them every single time, but this was still far from what anyone would expect a mouse to be able to do.

Alex left him be and moved on to make the new blood beast. For today, it was a Saint Core realm 2 beast he had killed 2 days ago.

He placed the beast's core into the cauldron and started forming another blood beast.

An hour later, there was a Blood octopus standing before him with its wide head and 8 long tentacles.

Alex kept the octopus and started absorbing the blood from its body and various other beasts he killed during the last 2 days.

Once his blood had advanced just the slightest amount, he pulled out the Blood God's Manual and brought out 5 of the strongest beasts he had been keeping in there.

"Come one Whisker, time to fight," he said and moved away.

Whisker, who was ready for this, walked out to the field as well. Since Alex was going to focus on getting beat up while also trying to improve his own fighting method at the same time, he needed Whisker to control the beasts to fight him.

Due to their bond, Whisker had plenty of control over the beasts, his authority only beaten by Pearl or Scarlet, and their's by Alex himself.

Pearl and Scarlet had initiated the bond on their own while Alex was unconscious, so as a result their bond was one of mutual, unlike Whisker, whose was one of a servant.

Still, in the other two's absence, he was the only authority that could help the blood beast's limited intelligence understand what they were supposed to do.

Whisker commanded the Squid to start attacking with its right tentacle. Then the bird was to fly at Alex with its talons.

The snake monster moved at the same time to slam its tail on Alex, who was already busy with the Squid and the bird.

The octopus also attacked with multiple tentacles, trying to grab Alex if it could.

The flying fish threw its entire body on Alex, trying to make use of its physical strength.

Alex fought the beasts empty-handed while keeping most of his attention on dodging rather than fighting back.

His evasive abilities were getting stronger by the day and if it continued, it would be hard for the beasts in the ocean to attack him.

That was of course until they got tired of using their limbs and decided to use their Qi. Since the Blood beasts held no abilities of their own, there was no training Alex could do with these beasts on that front.

Still, he enjoyed the current training. Getting beat up hurt, but the happiness that came afterward when his wounds healed was something he was so used to that he was almost addicted to it.

After the battle was over, and Alex was beaten black and blue, he stayed next to Whisker to teach him about Alchemy, while he himself slowly healed.

He taught Whisker a few different things today and hoped he took in mind everything. He watched Whisker make a few more pills before ignoring him for the most part.

Then, the next day arrived, and with it, the entire weekly cycle refreshed again.

Except, this time he was out of Qi and had no way to get some more such pills quickly since he was lacking in money as well.

But, the good news there was that he would no longer need any such pills on this island before.

Alex sat down and closed his eyes to begin cultivating as he prepared himself for the breakthrough that was going to happen any hour now.

Chapter 1037: Foundations

The air rippled around the island as the Qi rushed into Alex from all directions.

The Qi in his dantian was ever so thicker, and now it was reaching the level where it was starting to turn solid even.

The Qi was starting to crystallize to form small flakes of crystal in his dantian that he had never seen before. But Alex still kept going, pulling more and more Qi from the surroundings to improve his cultivation base.

As he pushed, the points of crystallization helped the other Qi crystallize as well, forming a structure.

The structure soon found its way to the walls of the dantian, attaching to them. Those crystals soon touched each other, forming a complex web of crystals like a house filled with spiders next.

At the crystal pillars formed, there remained a massive gap in the dantian as most of the Qi had gone into developing those very pillars.

Alex had done it. He had formed the foundations of his cultivation base, which was the requirement for one entering the Saint Foundation realm.

Having formed the foundations, it could be said that Alex was in the Saint Foundation realm.

He could see the gaps in his dantian where he could store more Qi, but before he could see if that was possible, Alex lost himself to a dark world where his mind muddled and his thoughts ran astray.

He forgot what he was doing. He forgot where he was. Everything he remembered felt like mere information to him, rather than memories.

At the same time, a voice spoke to him, one that felt eerily like his own.

"How does it feel to be fatherless?" the voice asked.

Alex felt a sense of anxiety hit him when he heard that. His father... was his father dead? Didn't he deduce that he was gone to the South?

"That is just you lying to yourself. You know deep in your heart that no one that goes there stays there. He is dead."

Was that true? Was he lying to himself? He was lying to himself, wasn't he? But, there was still a chance his father was alive.

"Give up. He is dead. You are better off trying to find a way back to Pearl. But then... by the time you reach him, he will die too, ripped apart by the winds you left him in."

"No... that's not true," Alex finally spoke. But instead of confidence, his voice was filled with hesitation and denial.

"You know it is true. Your little White Tiger will die soon, and there will be nothing you can do about it."

"You are a weakling who always has to run away. You ran away from the Western Continent. You ran away from the Northern Continent. What will you do next? Run away from the Southern Continent too? Where will you go next? The Eastern Continent?"

"You are such a weakling that your little Vermilion bird left you the moment she could. She did not want to be associated with someone like you. Just wait, a few months later, she will bring back her family and force you to destroy your bond."

"Where will you go next when the Immortal Phoenixes come for you?"

"You lost your mother, then your aunt, the Pearl, and now your father. Hell, you lost everything you have ever owned too. Soon, you will lose the little birdie too. What will you have after that? Just that little mouse that's even more of a coward than you."

"Whisker is not a coward!" Alex spoke back in anger. "He is a good child that gives it his all to learn what I teach him. So what if he doesn't want to fight? If he doesn't want to, then he doesn't have to. Not as long as I am here."

"As you said, I lost a lot of things, but those are only temporary. I will get them back. What do I really need to get them back? Just a bit more of a cultivation base right? I can get that easily. If you think I will remain weak forever, you underestimate me."

"And yes, you are right. I did run from those two places. But not anymore. I do not know who you are, but I will tell you this. From today onward, I, Alex, will never run away from a foe, no matter how strong they are."

The darkness remained silent for a bit before laughing. "Hehehe~ and what about you dead father?" it asked.

"There is a good chance he is not dead," Alex said.

"There is a good chance he is dead," the voice replied.

"It does not matter whether he is dead or alive. It does not change what I must do. If he is alive, I will find him and reunite our family. If he is dead, I will find his corpse and give him the burial he deserves."

"His death will not stop me. I am his son, and as his son, it is my duty to do what he has always told me to. I must always keep moving forward."

The voice did not speak anything else and slowly, Alex's mind cleared up. The realization that it was his Inner Demon talking to him came to Alex just as everything was starting to grow hazy.

Soon, he forgot all of what he talked about with his Inner Demon, but the conviction he felt was not gone from his heart yet.

He could tell what he wanted to do.

He opened his eyes just as the breakthrough was completed. He had now entered the Saint Foundation realm.

The crystal web of solid Qi in his dantian was proof that he was in the Saint Foundation realm.

The yang and yin orbs that were in his dantian continued floating around each other in one of the larger pockets between the structures. It was too much of a coincidence for that to happen, so Alex was sure that the Qi couldn't attack itself around them.

Alex continued looking at the pillars and wondered, "how does it work exactly, now that I don't have any moving Qi?"

He used a simple technique and saw that the crystalline structure melted to give him the Qi he needed.

"Oh, that's how," he thought. He tried a few more times, but for some reason, it got progressively harder to use his Qi. Also, for some reason, it felt to him as if he didn't have any Qi at all.

"Am I perhaps not supposed to use the pillars?" he wondered. That would make sense as you wouldn't want to destroy the 'foundation' of this realm.

"I should continue cultivating a little more."

Once he started cultivating again, Qi flowed into him, some turning into the crystal pillars again, while most remained out in the open as the dense Qi they were.

"Will they not crystallize or do I wait for the next realm for that to happen?" he thought.

He finished cultivating not long after and stood up. "Come on, Whisker," he called to Whisker who was not far away from him.

"It's about time the Southern Continent knows my name too."

The Central continent was close, or at least it looked close to where Alex was at. If he were to fly for half a day, it was possible he would reach it.

However, he wasn't sure just how far he could even make it. Even forgetting about the beasts that roamed the ocean that would not let him get anywhere close, the Qi wall that surrounded the central continent itself would be another obstacle the answer to which Alex did not have at all.

He didn't know how big the wall of Qi was, so teleporting in would not be helpful either. Alex would have to find some other way once he could.

For now, it was time to leave.

He flew away late at night and arrived at Hiddenbay city early morning. He quickly went to the Insight Pavilion and asked for every bit of info he could find on the Southern Continent.

He wanted to know its geographical feature, its political system, and even where the bigger cities were and what they were famous for.

Once he learned all of that, he decided on a place to go.

Towards the bottom left of the map, Alex could see a giant lake right by the edge of the ocean. If not for the small strip of land, one could mistake it for a bay as well.

The lake was known as the Floral lake, and the city next to it was the Many Flower city.

The lake was surrounded by flowers, and as such the name was given that.

Alex saw a small piece of land at the center of the lake and realized there was something there. "Oh, so that's where it is," he thought and flew over to the closest city.

Once at the city, he could make use of a Teleportation formation to go to the City of Many Flowers. He had to go through multiple teleportation formations before he finally arrived in the city.

The moment Alex walked out of the city, he was immediately met with a fresh smell of flowers. He looked around and saw flowers of all sorts growing in every part of the city.

The sides of the roads, the empty plots, and even the roofs of many houses had flowers growing on them. And to Alex's surprise, most of them were actual Alchemy ingredients.

"No wonder the information said this was the best place to practice Alchemy. There are so many ingredients just lying by the side of the road. Do people not care?" he thought and he walked to the side to pick one of the flowers.

"Hey! What are you doing?" someone spoke up just before he could pluck any flower.

Alex stopped and looked around to see a light-green-robed man look at him with hateful eyes. "Sorry? Do you need something?" he asked.

"What do you think you're doing? Don't you know that is the Flowerhall sect's property?" the man asked.

"The Flowerhall sect's property? This flower?" Alex asked with surprise. He had read about the Flowerhall sect. They were one of the 5 sects whose ancestors were in the council of 10.

Their presence alone was one of the reasons why this city of Many Flowers was considered one of the biggest cities in the entire Southern Continent.

That, and the thing at the center of the lake.

"Sorry, brother. I didn't know that. I just arrived at this place," Alex said and moved away from the flower to another patch away from that place.

"Stop!" the man said again. "Why are you trying to do it again?"

Alex paused. "I thought you said that flower patch was the Flowerhall's property. Is it that this patch of flowers is also their property?" he asked.

"Of course, it is," the man said. "Every single flower you see in here that is not growing on someone's property belongs to the Flowerhall sect."

"That's... quite selfish," Alex said as he stepped away from the flower patch.

"It is what it is, brother. Now please don't pick any flowers or you will have to pay a large fine," the young man said.

Alex nodded. "I'll make sure to do that," he said and looked around. "I'm looking for the Alchemy Association that is apparently here in this city. Would you happen to know about it?"

"Oh, do you want some pills made? Can I help you with that? I'm an alchemist too," the young man said proudly.

"Oh, I'm sorry, but I'm not looking to make any pills. I simply want to join the association to make pills," Alex said.

"Are you an alchemist too, brother?" the young man asked.

"I am," Alex said. "Would you mind showing me the way?"

"Sure, I was going there right now," the young man said.

Alex walked alongside the young man as they went through the city.

The city was massive, nearly 3 kilometers wide in every direction and that was just the main market. Outside the main city was the residential area that went on for so much more distance.

Alex looked at the map again and noticed that the Flowerhall sect was right at the corner of a narrow piece of land that was next to the Floral sea.

"You must come from quite far away," the young man said.

"Uh... yeah. I did," Alex said as he continued looking around. There was a small plot of land that they walked past that didn't have anything built on it. And coincidentally, there was another plot of land that didn't have anything made on it either.

The land went downhill after that, and as a result, Alex could see the massive lake in the distance that would be called a sea in its own right.

The view passed quickly, but it was nice knowing just how far away from the lake he was at currently. It wouldn't be too hard to pinpoint himself on the map now either.

"By the way, what's your name, brother?" the young man asked. "I am—"

Before the young man could finish his words, a massive bell rang through the entire city.

DING~ DONG~ DING~

Immediately, the people that were walking around on the street started running away. Some walked into random houses, while others simply took off.

The markets that were open either closed their doors and windows or used formation barriers to protect their shops and houses.

Alex looked around confused and a little worried. "Should we... run away or something?" he asked.

"Are you allergic to something?" the young man asked.

"Not that I know of," Alex said.

"Then you'll be fine. The most that will happen is you'll get dirty, but the Association has a place where you can clean up," the young man said.

"Clean up... from what?" Alex asked.

At the exact same moment, the entire world turned yellow.

Alex looked in awe as millions upon millions of pollen flew through the air going everywhere at an incredibly fast speed.

It stopped just as quickly as it came, but when it did, the world was entirely yellow with the pollen covering everything in a thick layer.

"What... what was that?" Alex asked with a confused look.

The young man dusted off what he could and spoke. "That was the Forbidden Orchard spilling out its pollen."

"Pollen from the Forbidden Orchard?" Alex asked as he looked toward the direction of the lake because that was where it was.

At the center of the lake was a small piece of land, and on that land was the opening to the secret realm known as the Forbidden Orchard.

"Does it do this all the time?" Alex asked.

"From time to time. The time frame gets smaller the closer it is to the opening of the secret realm," the young man said.

Alex dusted himself off as well. "The Forbidden Orchard is about to open?" he asked.

"No, it opened 2 years ago, so there is still a year or two before it opens up again. You will have to wait for the pollen blast to get more frequent before it fully opens up," the young man said.

"I see," Alex said. He had no idea there was such a thing. "Do people go in when it opens? They do, right?" he asked.

"They do, but not everyone is allowed to," the young man said.

"As its name implies, it is forbidden for most people to enter the realm. Only the Flowerhall sect has the authority to send in whoever they want, and by some association, the Alchemy Association is allowed as well, albeit in a limited number," the young man said. "If you are thinking about going in, it might be better if you give up. Only the best of the best Saint Alchemists have a chance to go in from the Association."

"I should be fine then," Alex said.

"Oh, do you consider yourself a good alchemist, brother?" the young man asked.

"No, I consider myself the best," Alex said.

The young man showed a surprised look before laughing. "Haha, I like your confidence, brother. I was interrupted before, so I forgot to introduce myself."

"My name is Harry Summers, what's your name?" the young man asked.

"Oh," Alex showed a surprised look when he heard the name. "I didn't expect you to be using your real name."

"I never had a fake name like most people here," the young man replied. "Are you a player too?"

"I am," Alex said. "My name is Alex, Alex Benton. It's a pleasure to meet with a fellow player."

Chapter 1039: Registration

Alex and Harry soon arrived at the Alchemy Association. Alex was immediately surprised to see that similar to a sect, this place had a gate before having to go inside.

He walked in with the other young man and looked around. There was a massive open space with people in there that were being lectured by someone.

On the other side were people that were playing around with each other. There were multiple buildings inside, each of which seemed to be for different departments of Alchemy.

"What... exactly is this place?" Alex couldn't help but ask. The information he had gotten told him that it was the best place for Alchemists. Aside from that, there was nothing written on the talisman he got.

Alex hadn't specifically asked for anything on Alchemy either, so the fact that he had learned of this place from the other information was already something. Now that he was here, he wished he had asked a little first.

'This is nothing like any guilds back in the western continent,' he thought.

"This is the Alchemy Association of course," Harry said from the side. "Why are you surprised? Did you not know about it?"

"No," Alex said as he looked around. "I just came here because it had alchemy in the title really."

"Haha!" Harry couldn't help but laugh. "Don't worry, it's not that hard. Just... imagine a school where the students can get employed to work there. That's what this is. Kinda like those medical colleges back at home."

'School... how the hell is that supposed to explain anything to me?' Alex thought and shook his head. "So what exactly is done here? They teach only Alchemy or medicinal pastes too?"

"No one needs to learn about medicinal pastes to know how to make it. You can do that normally with just a recipe and the ingredients. Here, you are taught about the various aspects of making pills. Even those that are not exactly apparent to aspiring Alchemists," Harry said.

"Things that are not apparent? Can you give me some examples?" Alex asked.

"You're a Saint Alchemist, so you should know that making pills drains your spiritual energy. Most of these newcomers don't know that, and they end up pushing themselves too far," Harry said. "Or, the fact that there is such a thing as a specialty when it comes to making pills. Pills whose energy aligns with your spiritual roots are easier to make, that sort of thing."

"I see..." Alex said. He did not know the last bit of information at all. How could he though? He never got an opportunity to experience that.

"I will need to go to the pill-making hall soon, so let me go take you to the registration room," Harry said and took Alex to one of the buildings.

"Senior, I have someone that wants to join the association," Harry said as he pushed Alex up to the front.

"Hmm? A new student?" the man at the registration looked up at Alex. He was an older gentleman with a higher Saint Condensation cultivation base.

"No, not a student," Alex said. "I'm looking to work and make pills."

"He's a Saint Alchemist, senior," Harry said. "He doesn't need to go through learning."

The man looked at Alex from head to toe. and asked, "You're a Saint Alchemist?"

"Yes," Alex said.

"How good?" the man asked.

"Very," Alex replied.

"What would you say is your average Harmony when making a pill?" the man asked.

"Average... let's see," Alex thought for a bit. "If I'm not given time to prepare, I would say somewhere between 60% to 70%. If I was given a bit of time, 80% and over, and if given a very long time to prepare and some extra ingredients, then over 90% each time."

Hearing Alex's answer both the man at the registration and Harry were slack-jawed. "Ha... Ha, brother, nice joke," Harry said meekly. "However, you should be truthful when answering while registering."

"I am not lying," Alex said and looked at the man that was responsible for registering him.

The man shook his head. "You should answer for Saint rank pills," the man said. "I will ask you again, what Harmony do your pills, Saint Rank pills, reach on average?"

"My answer is still the same, senior," Alex said to the old man.

The old man frowned a bit. He wasn't sure what he could do at the moment. What did one do when someone exclaimed that they could do the impossible?

"Either you are the worst liar I have ever seen who will very quickly humiliate himself, or I am going to see a miracle that I have never seen before in my thousand-year life. Either way, today is not going to be boring it seems," the old man said as he put aside the register in front of him and stood up.

"Come with me," the man said and walked away.

Alex walked along with the old man.

"See you later, brother. I'll be in the Pill-making building," Harry said and turned around to leave.

"No, you come with us too," the man called Harry.

"Huh? But I need to go do my job, senior," Harry said.

"You were the one that brought him here. It's your responsibility to see it through to the end," the man said. "Besides, on the off chance that whatever he said is true, I need someone else to witness it alongside me so I don't have to test him once again with some other people."

Harry sighed when he heard that. "Sure, why not?" he said and walked over.

The three of them went over to an Alchemy room with quite a few formations laid around.

"Make a pill in front of us," the older man said.

"Sure, where are the ingredients?" Alex asked.

"You are to use your own ingredients," the old man said. "If you don't, then you can buy some from us."

Alex frowned. "I have neither the ingredients nor the money for it. What do I do now?" he asked.

"You don't have any ingredients or money? That's quite problematic," the old man said. "We can lend you the ingredients, but you will have to pay us back somehow if you fail. Do you have anything that I can use as collateral for the time being?"

Alex thought for a bit and nodded. He brought out midnight and held it next to the old man.

When the old man moved his hands to grab it, Alex pulled it back a little. "Let us talk about what I need to do first before I give away my sword," he said.

"Sure," the old man said. "You are going to have to make the best pill you can. Depending on how good the pill turns out to be, you will get employed by the association."

"What's the minimum I must get?" Alex asked.

"25%, but it is encouraged that you make a really high-grade pill because we advertise your name by writing the names of the various pills you have worked on along with the highest harmony you've reached in each," the old man said.

Alex thought for a bit and asked, "Do I have a choice in what pill I get to make right now?" he asked.

"Depending on whether we have the ingredients or not, yes," the old man said.

"Good," Alex said as he handed Midnight to the old man. "I want the ingredients for the Fairy's Touch pill."

"Going with a healing pill, huh? Not bad," the old man said as he took Midnight. The moment he grabbed the hilt, the sword dropped to the floor, and the old man along with it.

"Aaagh! What the hell?" the old man cried out as he tried to pull the sword up, but he couldn't. "Why the hell is this thing so heavy?"

Alex quickly pulled Midnight up and freed the old man. "Are you okay?" he asked with a confused look. How was a saint realm expert finding a mere 16 tons of metal heavy? Sure if he was unprepared it would make sense, but not after still falling.

"Do you have some cultivation problems?" Alex asked.

"Of course not. Why is your sword so heavy?" he asked.

"It's only 16 tons," Alex said as he moved it around.

"The hell it is," the old man exclaimed. "That's close to 100 tons."

"Uh... no?" Alex said.

Suddenly, a thought came to him. A memory of a sword that was too heavy to pick up. He remembered the truth behind its heaviness. It wasn't heavy because it had a lot of weight to it, but rather because the nascent sword spirit inside of it did not recognize the person holding it as its master.

'Is midnight acting up because it doesn't accept the old man as worthy of holding him?' he thought. That was a fascinating thought to Alex. He couldn't help but smile when he realized that Midnight was growing so well.

If only Memory was here, it could have grown just as well. Alas...

"I'll just keep the sword here for collateral if you don't want to hold it," Alex said. "Now please bring me the ingredients of the Fairy's Touch pill."

"Okay," the old man said and sent a message. Within 2 minutes, a young man came running with the ingredients.

The old man took the ingredients and handed it over. "You can start anytime you want. Any pill you make will be sold, and 50% of the profit will be given to you for this pill if you succeed. Afterward, you can negotiate for what you want."

Chapter 1040: Making the Fairy's Touch

"Do you have a time limit or can I prepare some things before I start making the pills?" Alex asked.

"I would prefer if you start right away. I don't want to spend my entire day here in this room waiting for you to prepare," the old man said.

Alex looked at the 12 ingredients and turned towards the old man. "It will take an hour at best to prepare. An hour and a half at most to make the pill," he said. "If you can give me that, I can make a 90% pill."

The old man hesitated a bit. On one hand, that was a lot of time. But on the other hand, he really wanted to see if the young man in front of him could do something like that.

"Fine, go ahead. We can wait," the old man said. Harry wanted to object to the decision. At the very least, he wanted to leave the room to go make some pills of his own. However, he too was very interested in where Alex got all of his confidence from, so he stayed behind.

Alex got to work immediately. He brought out one of the ingredients and started improving the energy inside of it. The Supreme Elemental Accord worked its magic and made the ingredient as good as it could possibly become.

The two alchemists to the side watched Alex work with confused looks on their faces. They had absolutely no idea what he was doing, but they found it awkward to just ask him.

An hour went by and Alex finally finished improving the ingredients. He brought out the Sun's Womb and placed it on top of the burning flame.

"Oh, is that the Sun's Womb?" the old man asked with an amused look.

"You know this cauldron, senior?" Alex asked.

"It's a cauldron with some fame," the old man said.

"Oh... that must be a good cauldron then," Harry said.

"Not... really, no. I mean, it is good, but that's not why it's famous," the old man said. "It is said that a couple dozen thousand years ago, one of the alchemists from that time was a massive fanatic of the Phoenixes and wanted to learn how to create and control Phoenix fire."

"He did whatever he could for that, and even made this cauldron resemble the color of the Phoenix flames. It is said that to please the Phoenix, he vowed to make a pill that would resemble the sun itself," the old man said. "To birth a sun, he named his cauldron the Sun's Womb."

"Woah! What happened to that senior? What about the pill?" Harry asked.

"He died of old age, I believe. As for his pill, he was obviously never going to be able to make one," the old man said. "He did make a glowing pill, so that's something I suppose."

"I see," Alex said and looked away. He needed to focus on the pill. His hands moved and the ingredient in it disappeared. The two Saints looked at him with shocked looks and were even more shocked when they noticed the ingredient appear inside the cauldron all of a sudden.

"A teleportation technique? Woah, that's so useful. I should learn that," Harry said softly.

"I... don't think that was a technique," the other man said softly.

"Not a technique? What do you mean?" Harry asked.

The old man turned around. "Have you learned about Dao yet?" he asked.

"I have," Harry said before his eyes went wide. "No way! That was Dao just now?"

Unlike the Northern continent, the other continents had no easy method of learning Dao. As such, knowledge of Dao wasn't as widespread as it should have been.

Alex put in more ingredients and followed the recipe in his mind. One after another, the ingredients turned into powder, releasing an absurd amount of energy.

"That's bonkers. How can there be so much energy in those ingredients?" Harry asked.

"I... I don't know. I've never seen anything like this," the old man said. "It's like he somehow got the most freshly plucked ingredients all around. That too of the best age."

"Senior... I don't think he was joking about it when he said he could make those high-grade pills. He might actually do it," Harry said.

"There are still places where he could falter," the old man said. "He could make some mistakes while trying to form the pill or when putting energy into it. For his sake, I hope he doesn't fail."

As the two talked, Alex moved on to the next stage.

He Qi reached out from his body and touched the powder in the cauldron. At the same time, Alex's spiritual sense focused on the minute particles and their shape. He knew what shape he had to go for, so he quickly used the Qi he released to form a small, packed combination of particles.

Once Alex told his Qi what exactly to do, the Profound Revolution of Myriad Combination worked to find the same types of particles and combined them in the same way as well as they could.

Alex waited for the process to end on its own. Once it was over, he removed the lid of the cauldron and brought out the pill from inside.

He held the pill in his palm and smiled slightly when he sensed it.

"There we go, just as I said," he said and looked towards the old man to the side.

The old man was extremely curious at the moment so quickly rushed up to Alex. "Quickly, place it on the formation. I want to see just how good it is," he said.

Alex nodded and put the pill on top of the formation. Harry got a little curious as well and came in closer to check.

When he did, the number finally showed up.

94%.

Both the old man and Harry lost their minds collectively. "That's... just how is that possible?" the old man asked.

"I... don't know. Can someone even be that good?" Harry asked.

The old man quickly brought out a pill tester. "Here, place your pill in here," the old man said.

Alex nodded and placed the pill into the pill tester. The result was still the same. He had truly made a 94% pill.

"Dear lord... I can't believe it, but it's true," the old man said. "You really did it."

"I told you I could, senior," he said as he slowly stood up. "I can register now, right?"

The old man shook his head in amazement. "If you can't, I don't know who can," he said as he walked out. "Come, I will need you to register yourself."

Harry followed behind Alex with a dumb look on his face while Alex followed the old man to the registration table.

Alex was made to fill out some information, including his Qi aura. Once done, he was now officially an Alchemist of the Alchemy Association.

"Here, can you fill this up as well?" the old man handed him a talisman.

"What's this?" Alex asked as he read what was written inside.

"It's a small list to curate the type of pills you want to make so that we can get you the proper customers. Here is a list of rules and regulations about the association. Let me know if you want to stay in the association, I can get you a room as well, but it will cost you," the old man said.

"Okay, let me fill this up first," Alex said and looked into the talisman. The talisman asked many detailed questions regarding his pill-making expertise.

For example, Alex could list out the pills he was familiar with and could make it well. It also asked him to list out the types of pills he could make or the type of energy he was most comfortable with when making a pill.

Alex ignored the rest for now and only listed out all the Saint rank pills whose recipes he had improved back in the Northern Continent.

"Here," Alex handed the talisman back.

The old man checked the talisman and nodded. "The customers have no proof that you can make these pills, so they will be taking a risk when they reach for you to make one of these pills. Make sure you are not overestimating yourself as that would actually harm your own reputation," he said.

"Thank you for the advice, senior, but I have indeed only listed out the pills I am good with," he said. "As for the other pills, I might eventually learn... I can add to the lists later, right?"

"Of course, you can always change this list. But to deter alchemists from making the changes too frequently, there is a substantial fee to do so," he said.

"I see, thank you for the information," Alex said.

"I suggest you just make the pill itself instead of trying to manually update the information," the old man said. "You can learn more from the talisman I gave you earlier."

"I will do so, senior," Alex said and clutched the talisman. "About that room, I would like one."

"Great," the old man said and handed Alex his room's key. "Don't worry about the money, I will cut it from the sales of this pill. As far as I can tell, this alone will make you a small fortune."

"I look forward to it," Alex said. Harry left to show Alex the way to his room while the old man placed the pill on sale for everyone to see.

When the city saw a 94% Saint rank healing pill being sold, it caused no less commotion than if the Forbidden Orchard was opening.