

Alchemy 111

Chapter 111: Selling a pill

"You can breakthrough any time you want?" Wen Cheng was a little confused. But then, he remembered something and his eyes became a little wider.

"Is it like what you did back in the southern forest? Don't you have to gather your Qi first to breakthrough?" Wen Cheng asked.

"Oh, yes. I do. But I already have enough Qi to breakthrough 4 more times if I wanted to." Alex said.

"What?" Wen Cheng shouted once more. "Is that true? They why haven't you done so already?" he asked.

"Well, that's because Master said that I should wait until my cultivation base is stabilized before I proceed any further with the breakthroughs." Wen Cheng said.

"Oh, yeah that's right. When did you last breakthrough?" he asked.

"Umm... it was the day of the auction." He replied.

"Just 2 days ago then? That's probably not enough time for you to stabilize. But after today's training, you should be close to it. Just a few more battles and you should be able to do it. Battle is one of the best ways to stabilize your cultivation after all."

"Alright, then. Let's train some more. If you have enough Qi to breakthrough so many times, then you might as well spend the rest of the night stabilizing it. You can cultivate later on during the day to get more Qi." Wen Cheng said.

'Or I can just eat some monster cores and pills. But I don't know if that has any effect on my cultivation base yet.' He thought.

They went back to fighting until the early morning and only then did they stop. Alex got a lot more understanding of the technique and was happy with the outcome. Before sunrise, Alex left the sect leader's building and disappeared.

He only reappeared when he reached near his new house and entered.

'Hmm... my Qi is depleted completely. Can I just eat a core to replenish it?' he wondered as he sat on his bed. It was too late to cultivate and he would have to log out in a while.

'Doesn't hurt to try,' he thought. He took out a random core from all the different monster cores he still had that he didn't sell. At the auction, he had only sold the corpses of the monsters that Luo Mei had given him, and he had kept the cores and materials for himself.

He put the core into his mouth and swallowed it. As soon as it entered his mouth, it turned into a creamy liquid that slid down his throat.

<Sun God's Divine Yang Body disintegrates everything>

<The monster core's element aligns with your spiritual root>

<You have gained 192,524 Qi>

'Well, at least my spiritual roots have that as an advantage. I can eat any core without worries.' He laughed a little.

However, he frowned once more. He had taken in the Qi, but it didn't fill up his body at all.

'Status' he decided to check if what he thought had truly happened.

—————

[Player Name: Yu Ming

Cultivation: Bone Tempering 5th Realm (350,000 Qi : 100%) [Breakthrough]

Body: Sun God's Divine Yang Body

Talent: God

Spiritual Roots: 5 elements Yin-Yang roots

Cultivation Method: Starry Sky Qi Absorption Method

Qi: 1,856,446

]

"Just like I thought. The Qi from the monster core added to my Qi. Urghh... I don't want to cultivate at all. I hope I passively absorb enough Qi fill myself by the time I return from my university classes."

And so he logged out. He came back after a little while and started wondering what he should do in the less than 3 hours he had before university.

"Hmm... Master said I need spirit stones for everything, right? Let's go sell some pills." He walked out of his house and went to the small market out of the sect.

It didn't even take him 10 minutes to get there, and when he did, he was surprised that the market was already busy with many people from both in and outside of the sect.

Alex walked to a shop that sold pills and asked, "Hello, do you buy pills?"

The man in the shop was surprisingly an elder from the Tiger sect. "Yes, we do. Are you here to sell one?" he asked.

"Yes," Alex said as he brought out a pill bottle with a single pill inside. He had made a few pills as a warm-up before making the many different new pills and was going to sell one of those.

The pill he took out was a Common Healing pill. It was a better healing pill than a minor healing pill but not by much. The elder took the pill and put it into a tester.

Before he knew it, the fog around the glass reached up to 33% and stopped. The elder was really shocked at the pill.

"That's a nice pill you've got there. Sell it to me." A voice came from behind Alex. He turned around to see a man wearing a yellow robe with an orange lining on it.

"I don't really mind selling it to anyone in particular," Alex answered as he looked at the man more carefully. The man seemed to be in his early 20s and was in Meridian Tempering 3rd realm.

He was about the same height as Alex but was almost twice as wide. His unshaven facial hair also made him look like he was older than he actually was.

Behind him were a few inner set and outer sect disciples, who seemed to be following him. The man took out a few spirit stones from the bag and gave them to Alex.

Alex looked at the 10 spirit stones he was just given and hoping it was not what he was expecting asked, "What is this?"

"For the pill," The man said with a gentle-looking but clearly haughty smile.

Alex handed the spirit stones back to the man and said, "Thank you, but I'm not selling my pills for 10 spirit stones." He then turned to the elder and asked, "How much will you take this pill for, Elder?"

The young man was surprised at the refusal just now and started getting unreasonably angry. "How dare you turn your back on me and be disrespectful. Do you know who I am?"

Chapter 112: Prime Disciple

Alex startled at the sudden shout. He turned back to look at the man and asked, "What do you want?"

"I told you I wanted the pill and yet you deny it to me. If I say I want the pill, then I will get the pill." The arrogant man started spouting nonsense from what Alex could hear.

"Hey brother, why are you messing with brother Huo, he is the 7th elder's disciple? Just sell the pill if you don't want to be constantly challenged by everyone, every day."

"Yeah, if you don't want trouble, it's better to just sell the pill to him. He is 18th in ranking in the core disciples after all. So there is glory in selling the pills to him."

The disciples behind the young man started to fawn over the young man's ranking and privilege in the sect, while seemingly trying to pressure Alex into giving up the pill.

The young man had a smug smile on his face after hearing his lackeys announce his glorious achievements.

'Master did talk about these sorts of people. But it's still surprising I get to meet one so soon. I don't remember people in the Hong Wu sect being like this. Although, I didn't really socialize there, so maybe there are.' He thought. One thing the disciples behind the young man had said had caught his attention.

"You are a core disciple?" he asked the young man directly.

The man thought Alex had gotten scared from hearing about his achievements and simply nodded.

Alex turned to the elder and asked, "Elder, if the orange lining on his cloth means that he is a core disciple, then what does a red lining mean? Are they not a core disciple, but something else?" he asked. He wanted to learn what Luo Mei's position was in the sect.

"Ah... you must be talking about disciple Luo Mei. She is the direct disciple of the sect leader and first in ranking amongst the core disciples. She is our Prime Disciple, and thus gets to wear red linings in her robes." The elder said with a face of fondness.

"Oh, I see." Alex then asked, "So, about the pill, elder. how much will you buy it for?" He asked.

The core disciple called Huo started getting mad. He stepped forward about to shout once more when the elder suddenly looked at him. "If you are here to disturb the sect's business, then you will have to suffer the consequences, disciple Huo Tu."

Huo Tu immediately got scared and bowed to the elder a little before leaving the shop. Alex was surprised that even such a haughty disciple would get scared of the elder.

'He must've thought he could make me give the pill to him, with just the fear of his name alone. He will come for revenge later, that's for sure.'

Alex however wasn't worried about that. Disciples in the sect weren't allowed to fight. If they wanted to, they would have to set up a fight in the fighting hall. The most important part of this situation was still the badges everyone got.

Only a disciple with the lower badge can request a fight with the other disciple. So, no matter how much the Huo Tu guys wanted to kill him, as long as he was in the sect, that would be impossible.

He turned his focus back to the elder who was looking at the pill and contemplating. After a while, he said, "I can give you 24 spirit stones for this pill. I don't know where you came to find this pill, but it's really good and deserves this amount."

Alex thought for a second. While the common healing pill wasn't the best, it was at 33% harmony. Since it wasn't an auction, he thought the specific price was okay.

"Yes, elder. I would like to sell it for that amount." Alex said. The elder kept the pill and passed along 24 spirit stones to Alex.

Alex left the market and started returning back to his house when suddenly he noticed something. He sent out his spiritual sense and found out that 2 of the lackeys that followed the core disciple named Huo Tu were currently tailing him.

'What are they trying to do?' he wondered. They couldn't attack him in the open or anything. There were a ton of disciples on the path. Even if they wanted to, they were way too weak to be a challenge for him.

So he ignored them and minded his own business as he returned back to his home. Just as he was about to open the door, however, the two lackeys ran away.

"Hmm..." he was confused for a second, but immediately realized what happened afterward. "They must've wanted my badge number, haha. I would've given it to them had they just asked." Alex chuckled a bit and returned back to his room.

Now that he had nothing to do, he logged out for the day. It was Tuesday, so he had to go to his classes for the day. Around half-past 3 after he was done with his afternoon lunch and after having called his parents back home, he returned back to the game.

He felt his Qi and realized it was back to full. 'So, I only need about 8 hours to get my Qi fully back huh. Or maybe even less.' He thought.

"Might as well breakthrough right now." He clicked the [Breakthrough] button and instantly reached Bone Tempering 6th realm.

Once done, he looked up, straight ahead of him at the wooden board with all the rankings on it, and thought, "If Master said I have to get to 194 by the end of today, I should fight the others in between to get the experience, right?"

He started looking through the different names. Thankfully, the names also had simple info next to their names that said whether someone is in their house, just within the sect, or out of sect.

Out of them, Alex chose the ones that had 'Their house' as their location. In the end, he gathered a few names he would fight today.

"Alright, let's go register some fights."

Chapter 113: Challenged

After a short walk, Alex reached the sect crater and got into the line at the Fighting hall. For the first fight, he challenged someone with the 250th badge.

According to the info on the board back in his room, the person was in their home. So, he decided to wait for the person to arrive. When his number was called, he responded. Another person also responded at the same time after hearing their number. Realizing his opponent had come, Alex walked up to the stage.

Alex had decided to hide his cultivation entirely so that people wouldn't realize how strong he was, or how fast he broke through. His opponent this time was an older girl with a simple ponytail. She was shorter than him, but not by much.

Alex took out his common rank sword and got ready to fight. 'Should I show off my Elusive Heavenly Sword so early?' he wondered. He looked at the girl and realized she hadn't taken out any weapons.

He was surprised. 'Elemental techniques user or close combat fighter?' he started guessing as to how the girl fought. However, seeing as she was only at Muscle tempering 6th realm, he wasn't very worried.

As soon as the elder gave the go, the girl immediately started pouring out her Qi and created a fireball that she shot towards Alex. Alex was surprised, but that was the extent of his reaction. He immediately used Flame Mastery Scripture to control the incoming fire. It showed a little resistance but instantly obeyed his commands. So, he basically killed the flame and made it disappear.

The girl was surprised at what just happened. 'Is my opponent very strong?' she thought. She took out another fireball and threw it towards Alex. This time, however, Alex didn't destroy it. Instead, he controlled it and sent it back to her with a bigger size and higher intensity.

BOOM

The girl was hit directly in the chest and thrown the ground a few meters back. She wasn't sent out of the stage but was really close to it.

Alex was about to charge at her and push her over when she suddenly shouted, "I give up."

"Huh?" Alex nearly stumbled where he stood. He balanced himself and looked towards the elder. The elder nodded and declared the fight over.

Alex took his new badge, numbered at 250, and turned around to walk back to the fighting hall. As he was about to leave the stage, however, he heard the elder call out numbers 275 and 367.

'Hmm... is that me? Or the girl now?' he wondered. The girl was surprised and responded to the call. Alex looked at her walk up to the stage and found that her opponent was one of the lackeys from this morning.

"Hahaha, did they make a mistake? They probably didn't expect me to have won already, huh." The lackeys had only taken his house number, so they couldn't request a fight based on the person, and instead did it based on the badge. And the poor girl fell into a fight once more.

Except for this time, she wasn't so hopeless. The same thing that happened between him and the girl, happened between the girl and the poor lackey.

'Why would they target me with such a weak opponent? Is it really just to bother me?' he wondered. He thought for a moment and said, "They must be checking how strong I am. Like I will every give it them straight." He turned around and walked back to the fighting hall. However, before he could sit in a line, his badge buzzed.

"Hmm..." this was the first time he had seen the badge do anything other than unlock his doors and that wooden tv.

He sent his consciousness into the badge and realized he had a fight in Stage 42 with someone at 312th ranking. Alex sighed with disappointment as this was going to be too easy. He didn't want to waste time with such a useless fight and just reach 194th by the end of the day. But if they were to continue harassing him with the useless fights, he wouldn't have enough time to challenge all those other people.

Reluctantly, he walked over to stage 42. Once his number was called, he walked up to the stage. When his opponent came out, he sighed. 'An outer sect disciple really is too weak,' he thought. His opponent was barely at the 3rd stage of Muscle tempering. He was way too weak to be challenging him right now.

As soon as the elder gave the go, the outer sect disciple ran towards Alex with a small dagger. In response, Alex just put out his hand and used Qi manipulation. Suddenly, the outer sect disciple stopped where he was and started struggling to get out of his clutch.

Alex simply floated him up and tossed him out of the stage. The match was over. Alex took his badge back and walked down the stage.

He could hear the numerous disciples murmur as they started wondering how he did that. Alex on the other hand started realizing what he had just done.

"Urgh... I shouldn't have done that. I got a little angry and forgot you could use Qi manipulation of that order only when you are near the True realm. Whatever, I'll just say it's a technique if someone asks."

He walked back to the fighting hall and finally registered another battle with someone numbered 236. He had to wait for a while before they arrived.

"Number 250 and 234" The elder shouted.

"Here"

"Here"

Two voiced came out from the crowd. Alex walked up onto the stage and looked at his opponent. He was a generic-looking man with long hair. The man took out a weird weapon to fight with, A sickle.

Alex was surprised at first. He hadn't seen a sickle anywhere other than back at his farm. 'You can use a sickle as a weapon too? Master did say people used various weapons, but I didn't expect they would even use something this unorthodox.'

From the side, the elder working as the referee shouted, "Start".

Chapter 114: Badge Number 194

Alex was surprised at seeing the sickle, but the man was still only in the Muscle tempering realm, so he had no worries. He simply walked forward with his sword and started swinging it randomly.

He wanted to see how one would fight with a sickle in this case. The man swung his sickle in a simple manner, which Alex easily dodge. The man once more brought back the sickle the other way around, which Alex once more dodged easily.

But, on the third swing, something weird happened. Suddenly, as the man was swinging, the sickle left in hand and flew past Alex. 'Did he make a mistake?' But before Alex could even think of a reason, the sickle immediately flew back, targeting the back of his head.

Thankfully, Alex had spiritual sense so he could see what was happening even behind him. He simply ducked as the sickle was about to attack him.

The young man who caught the sickle, and the elder who was about to save him were both surprised. Alex nodded to himself, thinking he did well sending out his spiritual sense even during a fight with a weaker opponent.

He would've been badly hurt if he hadn't. The man with the sickle tried attacking some more but he didn't use any different techniques. He had a pretty simple movement technique that made him just as fast as Alex, but his damage was nowhere sufficient.

After a few bouts, Alex struck him to the ground and the match was over. Alex left the stage after taking his badge.

Over the next couple of hours, Alex fought quite a few disciples and managed to win every single one of them without using any of his techniques. He just used his superior cultivation and spiritual sense to knock down everyone.

Thankfully, he also wasn't challenged. Finally, around 8 pm, he challenged his final opponent for the day, number 194. He waited around half an hour watching the other people's fight in stage 4 before his turn came.

"Number 198 and 194," the elder shouted from stage 4. By now he had managed to defeat the 198th ranking opponent who had a cultivation base of Bone Tempering 2nd realm.

"Here," Alex shouted and waited for another voice to appear.

"Here," someone did speak, and Alex walked up to the stage.

The one who he was going to have to fight was a massive guy with a very well-built body. He was also tall and looked more like a bodybuilder than a cultivator.

'Damn, he looks even beefier than Kong Yuhun,' Alex thought. He took out his sword and got ready to fight as he checked his opponent's cultivation base.

'Bone Tempering 3rd realm? And a person who knows how to fight at that. This is going to be troublesome.' He would have to show more focus in this fight than any of the ones before this. He activated focus mode and adapted to the sudden changes to his senses.

The passage of time slowed down as the different lights from the lanterns started painting the stage in bright orange color. Alex got into his fighting stance as per the Elusive Heavenly Sword for the first time today. He couldn't afford to underestimate the fighter here.

He would also have to be careful about his damage output. Even if the opponent was a veteran fighter, he was still a 3rd realm Bone Tempering cultivator. And all of Alex's damage abilities did way more than that.

"Start," the elder shouted from the side.

Alex waited for the beefy man to come into close combat so he could fight him. But, suddenly, the man did something completely unexpected.

He started using a technique. With a move of his hands, the wind started moving at extreme speed trying to blow away Alex. The only thing Alex do was struggle through it.

'He is using techniques, and not close combat?' Alex was surprised. Alex also used the 2nd sword strike in the Elusive Heavenly Sword and fought wind with the wind. Alex however, did much more damage and destroyed his opponent's wind gust. The remaining damage went on to attack the beefy man and damage him a little.

The man started swiping his hands left and right, creating blades of wind that attacked him. Using the evasive part of his sword style, Alex dodged every single one of the wind blades the man was using.

'Does he only have wood-type spiritual root?' he wondered. His attacks were strong enough to hurt Alex if he let them hit him. The man was also only using Wood type techniques and nothing else.

Suddenly, the man places his palms on the ground. Out of nowhere, roots and vines started appearing out of the ground that targeted Alex.

Alex weaved and dodged as he started cutting every root and vine that came his way. He slowly moved forward while doing that and reached the beefy man. The man had an absolutely shocked face. He had never seen someone so efficiently destroy his Rooting Vine Technique.

The technique wasn't meant to damage, but to obstruct their movements so that other techniques could land easily. Yet, the young man in front of him had used a weird dance-like sword style to cut off all of his roots and vines and nearly reached him.

Immediately, he turned into a bunch of roots and barks as he didn't remain there any longer. That wasn't a problem for Alex however. With his spiritual sense, he could see the beefy man appear inside a cluster of roots and vines in the side. He brought his sword to the highest point above his head and swung it down.

The sword itself did nothing, but Alex secretly used Qi manipulation to throw the whole group of vines, roots, and the man outside the stage.

"Fight over," The elder shouted. Alex walked up to the elder and took the 194th badge. He walked away from the stage thinking, '194 is already so unique at fighting, what are the ones in the higher numbers like? I can't wait.'

Chapter 115: Beat up

"Hey, Brother, Wait please."

Alex was near the outer end of the crater, about to leave the place when he suddenly heard someone calling. He turned around to find out that it was the beefy man who was calling him.

"Can I do something for you?" Alex asked.

"Ah brother, I've never seen you before, are you new around here?" he asked.

"Yes, I joined not long ago," Alex simply answered waiting for the man to get to the point.

The beefy man was surprised when he did learn that Alex really was a new disciple in the sect. "Oh, brother. You are so strong after joining the sect for so little time. Can you tell me your name?" the beefy man asked.

"It's Yu Ming," Alex simply replied. "Ah, Good to see you brother. I won't stop you now. I will take my leave." The man said and left him there.

Alex frowned. Something was fishy. There was no way the beefy man came here to just converse with him. Especially after he had just been defeated by him.

'How come he is not angry or upset with me? And the more troubling part, why did he only ask for my name, yet didn't give me his own?' he decided to follow the beefy man to see where he went.

After walking back inside the sect crater for a few minutes, the beefy man openly met another man and started talking to him. Alex recognized that guy. 'The inner sect disciple, that's the lackey to that Huo Tu guy? What does he want with my na— Oh. Sh*t, this is going to be troublesome now.'

Only now did Alex realize that he had just hit himself in the foot by giving that man his name. Now, those lackeys wouldn't have to worry about his ranking, and could fight him using his name.

'Whatever, it's not like they can ever beat me. The most they can be is annoying. I will see how long they can keep being annoying.' He thought and threw the matter into some dark corner in his mind.

It was late, so instead of going to his new house 194, which he would have to search for, he directly went to the training facility at his master's place.

Somewhere along the way, he disappeared, and only appeared when he reached his destination. The door to the training facility was open, so he simply walked in there.

"Master, I'm here," he said as he walked in.

Suddenly, a girl with a pouting face appeared in front of him and started talking to him. "Junior brother, Why didn't you come to see me yet? You already joined the sect yesterday and yet I have to be the one to come find you."

Luo Mei acted as if she was angered by this. Alex smiled and said, "Hello, senior sister. I had a lot to do after joining the sect yesterday, so I couldn't come to find you. Please forgive me."

"Hmph. There is no way I'm forgiving you until I beat you to a meat pulp." She said as she waved her fist. Alex was a bit surprised at the sudden and unexpected threat.

Wen Cheng walked from the side and said, "Ah, you're finally here. Did you do what I told you to do?"

Alex reached into his bag and took out the badge numbered 194. He showed it to Wen Cheng, who nodded in satisfaction. "Good, good." Wen Cheng then reaching into his bag and pulled out a stack of books.

There were about 7 books in the stack and he handed them all to Alex. "Here you go. These are all the books I found for you. They are the best of the best we have. Learn them when possible and practice them as much as you can."

"Thank you, master," Alex bowed a little to Wen Cheng as he started to look at the books.

"Nuh Uh. You don't get to learn that now. First, we fight right now. I want to see how much you've learned of the Elusive Heavenly Sword. Also, I said I was going to beat you and I was not lying about it. Come."

Luo Mei took out her blue blade and walked to the middle of the training hall. Wen Cheng shook his head as he smiled a little. "You better do what she says Yu Ming, your senior sister gets really angry when she is mad about something."

"Master, stop talking bad about me." She shouted. Wen Cheng simply laughed in response. Alex found himself unable to come up with any excuse so as to not fight, so he just took out his sword and went to the middle to fight.

As soon as both of them were ready, they started fighting. While Luo Mei did act angry, she was genuinely curious about how much he had learned.

Just prior to Alex coming here, Her master had told her that her junior brother had managed to learn the sword art overnight and she was very curious as to how much he had progressed.

After fighting for about 10 minutes, Luo Mei was absolutely shocked at how far he had come. 'Did he really just learn this sword art yesterday? How is he so good at it already?'

As she fought him more and more, she started becoming certain that telling her master about him at that time was the best choice. 'God, I thought I was already the most talented disciple of the master. However, he just overshadows us without even trying.'

After a few more minutes, Luo Mei got serious and started beating Alex all around. She used the flat side of his thin blade, but the strength of a Mind Tempering realm expert was too strong and by the time she was done, Alex was bruised all over.

"Next time, be sure to come to meet me, or you will have to train with me once more." She said and left the training hall.

Alex looked at himself and started laughing. Although she beat him all over, she only did damages that were easily healed and only hurt a lot.

Chapter 116: Fluctuating Friction Dance

Wen Cheng walked up to Alex who was still on the ground and said, "Alright, I need to talk to you about something."

Alex stood up and waited for his master to continue.

"So, I have 7 techniques here with me. Aside from one technique, all of them are heaven grade. Thankfully, you had 5 elemental spiritual roots, so I didn't have to filter through the techniques and the search didn't last for long."

"What I am thinking of doing is every day, I will give a target for you to defeat. After each time you defeat the target, I will give you one of these books. So, since you completed today's task like I said yesterday, you get a technique."

"Choose, which one do you want? There are 3 offensive techniques, 2 defensive techniques, 1 movement technique, and 1 escape technique. The escape technique is the only one that is in immortal grade, while the others are in heaven grade. So, choose," Wen Cheng really outdid whatever expectations Alex had of him.

"Master, didn't you say that I needed spirit stones for everything in the sect? How come I'm getting free stuff from you?" he asked.

"Yes, you do. In fact, these books cost spirit stones as well. Only thing is, I paid for them instead of you." Wen Cheng said.

"Aw, Master. You didn't have to do that. I could've paid for them myself." Alex said. He had a few pills he could sell, and he could've made more pills if he needed to.

"You could've paid 15 True spirit stones? Didn't you say you were broke yesterday?" Wen Cheng said with a snort.

Alex was shocked. "They cost 15 True spirit stones? Don't you rent them? Why are they so expensive?" he asked.

"These are rented for 2 weeks. As for why they are so expensive, well, our sect's gotta do something to survive. We use whatever method to get spirit stones. Most of them are from our own disciples. Some from outsiders who use our disciples for their requirements like protecting them, or helping them move cities and other stuff." Wen Cheng explained.

"Either way, we are getting out of topic. Choose one for today and get to training."

Alex thought for a bit. He didn't care about the offensive or defensive techniques for now. He only cared about the movement technique. However, the immortal grade escape technique was too good to pass on.

He racked his brains for a bit and chose the movement technique. From his reasoning, during the next day, he wouldn't get into a fight where he would have to escape from it. So, the movement technique was something that would make his life much easier.

"Alright, here you go. Read it and learn it. Shouldn't take you more than 5 hours once more right? Since it's the same grade as Elusive Heavenly Sword." Wen Cheng said.

"I will see you at around 2, and we will practice till dawn once again. I had hoped to keep you till 3, but since you can just use pills, for the most part, it's quite helpful. Okay, I'm leaving. I will see you later." Wen Cheng left with the other 6 books and left Alex with the single movement technique.

Alex looked at the book and started reading it. "Fluctuating Friction Dance. Use your Qi on your entire body to remove or add friction to your movements. Helps one move and stop as required. Doesn't have any elemental alignment, so anyone can learn it.

"Hmm... Friction? That's a very unique thing for a technique. So, it's like increasing and decreasing my resistance to the surrounding? How fast can I get by just removing some friction?"

He read the whole book and didn't have to stop to practice mid-read like he had yesterday. After a few minutes of reading, he got the notification.

<Congratulations, You have learned [Fluctuating Friction Dance]>

"Okay, let's test this out." He started moving his Qi around his body. Some of the Qi started to leak from all over his body, while most of it ended up in his legs where it strengthened them. He willed the Qi to make his immediate surroundings frictionless and moved forward.

His legs were now too strong and he moved at an incredible speed due to the lack of friction. As such, the room wasn't large enough for his first maneuver

BANG

"Ow," Alex screamed as he hit the wall. His already hurting body hurt even more. "God, that hurts." He looked around the room and wondered if it would be large enough for him to train in.

"Alright, let's not remove all of the friction, I will need some to control myself." He once again started channeling his Qi around his body as he coated himself in Qi, removing most of the friction around himself. However, he didn't send as much Qi into his leg and only increased the strength by about half as much as last time.

He prepared himself and dashed forward. He was still quite fast, but not as fast as he was previously. So, when he reached the end of the hall, he managed to easily stop himself by removing the Qi around him.

'Hmm... what if I increased the friction at the end of the run?' He decided to try once again. He removed his friction, strengthened his legs, and dashed.

He smoothly ran forward and just before he was about to reach the end, he increased his friction. Abruptly, his speed decreased at once and he came to a stop at once. The Qi formed a soft blanket that stopped him from moving forward and cushioned his abrupt stop.

Over the next couple of hours, he started testing different ways to use the movement technique and started getting good at it. Unlike Elusive Heavenly Sword which was focused on one's body, Fluctuating Friction Dance required Qi, so it took him a while to properly learn it.

By 2 am, however, he had made quite a bit of progress in using the movement technique.

Chapter 117: The Man in the Mansion

Alex had lost all of his Qi by now. He was sitting on the floor, waiting for his master to come back. Within a few minutes after it was 2 am, his master finally arrived.

"Did you learn the book already?" his master asked.

"Yes, Master. I'm done." He replied.

Wen Cheng had no problem believing him. "Okay, stand up. It's time we train again. I won't go as easy as last time today."

Over the next 4 hours, they trained until the morning and only stopped when the sun started to rise.

"Alright, that's enough for today. I see you've already broken through so you won't have to for another day."

"For today, I suggest you fight until the badge number 184. Although that's not that much of a higher number, starting now, the opponents will be harder and harder to fight for you. After you get the 184th badge, I will give you the next technique."

"Okay, master." Alex nodded and left the training hall. He went back to his room and logged out.

* * * * *

Somewhere else in the real world,

Outside of a giant door, a girl was sitting in the hallway, twirling her bangs along her face, clearly bored. She was wearing a blue dress and had a red bag with her. Her cute face looked cuter as she pouted. She had to wait outside the door for so long, and she didn't like that.

Another hour passed and the girl was still there, waiting for the door to open. Suddenly, the lock to the door opened and a middle-aged man in a white robe walked out.

He had no beard or mustache on his face and his long hair was tied in a ponytail behind him. He looked a little weak, almost as if he hadn't gotten sleep for the last few days.

"Hmm..." he noticed the girl in front of his door who was looking at him with a pout on her face. " Oh, Hao Ya, how long have you been waiting here?" he asked.

The girl was called Hao Ya. She was the same Hao that the president of the Deva corporation practically worshiped as his benefactor. While she had a haughty face and attitude around others, in front of this man, she was a little child pouting because he took too long to leave his room.

"What took you so long? I have been waiting here forever." She said in an angry voice.

The man laughed a little and said, "Ah, it took me longer than I had assumed it would. I was giving some final touches to the new items and I lost track of time."

The girl took out a stack of papers. "Here you go. You asked for these, didn't you?" she said as she handed the stack of paper to the man.

"These are?" he looked at the stack of papers with a look of confusion.

"The records from Deva Corp., for the last month and a half." Hao Ya said.

A light shined in the tired eyes of the man. He started flipping through the pages and reading the assessments written there.

"Have you read these?" he asked the girl.

"Yes," she nodded.

"And?"

"And what?" she asked.

"How are they? Is there anyone with any good talents? Is anyone worth recruiting?" he asked.

"From what I saw, there are a few that are definitely worth it. There are a few that are close to becoming saints and some more in the True Emperor realm. However, the highest one that has revealed himself right now only has a True King realm. I do not know who these other people are."

The man thought for a second and said in a stern voice, "We do not want any of these people who broke through to the True Lord realm or higher. Let's look for better ones. How many of them died by now?"

"Around 30% of these people have died by now." The girl replied.

The man shook his head after hearing this. "The ones that have died are useless now. They can't progress any further."

"Is nobody else bragging about their body or talent? I worked so hard to make a reading of someone's talent possible. At least someone must have a really good talent right?" he asked.

"Well, there are. See here," she turned the records to a different page and said, "According to this, there are about 10 different individuals with God Grade talent, around 50 with Ancient Grade talents, and 500 with Divine grade talents. Although 30% of these have died as well, and we have no way of telling who."

"Oh, and what about bodies? Any special bodies?" The man didn't want to read the whole thing so he instead just asked the girl.

"From what I saw, there is someone special. Someone had an Ancient Grade body, but the name isn't recorded here. There are also a few divine-grade bodies and quite a few immortal-grade bodies. But as I said, quite a few of them died, so I don't know how many of those remaining."

The man got solemn and turned the record's page. After a while, he said, "Go back to the Deva Corp and tell them that I have finished making the sleeping artifacts and that they can come to get it. That should help us gather a more accurate result than just that helm artifact."

"Yes, master," the Hao girl nodded and left. The man kept looking at the different pages of records until he came across a certain piece of information.

"Hmm... it's gone? The god grade technique is gone?" he flipped the pages to see if there was any more info about it. "Who got it? But the technique is only supposed to go to someone with— Ahh, I see. " The man said with a face of understanding

"So finally, someone has come along with those spiritual roots, huh. Hopefully, they haven't died by now and we can once again see the glory of the technique paired together with those spiritual roots." The man's eyes started trembling in hope and anticipation.

"Will another god be born again?"

Chapter 118: Capsules

It was 3 am in the morning. Alex was still training with Wen Cheng. He had just finished learning another new technique a few hours earlier and had exhausted his Qi training on it.

"Alright, let's stop here for today." Wen Cheng said as he casually blocked one of Alex's sword thrusts. Alex stumbled a little but came to a stop easily.

"Huh?" Alex looked at the clock in his vision and asked, "But it's only been 3 am, Master. Aren't we going to fight until sunrise? Do you need to go anywhere?"

"No. We have an important job today. Around noon, I want you to come back here with a different face. Do you have a face-changing pill?" he asked.

'A different face?' Alex got confused. Still, he answered his master.

"Yes, master. I have one." He said as he took out a Face Changing pill that he had made recently. Half of the pills he made for registering ended up with an extra pill. This was one of them. It was a 38% harmony Face Changing pill that could change a person's face for 38 hours.

"Good. I won't have to give you one then. Alright, at noon, come here with a different face. I, along with a few elders will take you deeper into the southern jungle, where you can find more alchemy ingredients."

Wen Cheng had arranged an expedition along with a few elders to take Alex to find more ingredients. He was hoping he would find a Spirit Cleansing Lily so that he too could unlock spiritual sense just like his disciple, Luo Mei.

"I understand, Master," Alex said. Wen Cheng handed him a small paper slip and Alex left the training hall. He disappeared after getting outside and made his way back to his house in the darkness of the night.

It didn't take him long to find his house numbered 168. During the last 3 days, he had managed to obtain badge 168. He walked into the house and sat on the unfamiliar, yet familiar bed. All the houses in the sect were designed according to the 3 ranks.

Outer sect disciple's houses were all the same. They had multiple rooms in one house and up to 5 disciples could live there at once.

The inner sect disciple's houses were simple, yet elegant. It had a single room, yet it gave the disciples peace and quiet while cultivating.

As for the core disciples, they had houses with courtyards, not unlike what Alex had back in the Hong Wu Sect. He had seen how good his senior sister's house looked when he had gone there to visit her.

He was now at Bone Tempering 8th realm as he had just broken through last night before training. He needed to be ready for the expedition at noon so he started cultivating. As usual, he lost his consciousness and ended up cultivating till the morning.

Once again, early in the morning, between 6 am and 7 am, he woke up. He directly logged out and went to get some breakfast along with the other 3 people.

"Hey, Alex. I need to talk to you about something." Eric said in the cafeteria.

"Sure, go ahead. What do you want to talk about." Alex was surprised he even brought up anything. Ever since he had gotten here, they only ever focused on playing Eternal Cultivation. They never really talked about anything outside of it. To think Eric would be so serious about it, he wondered what it could be.

"Umm.... You see, I will need to get that helmet back from you." Eric said. Alex was shocked. He hadn't expected the topic in question to be about giving him back his helmet.

'I already have the money, so I should just buy another one by now. I should stop being so lazy.' He thought.

"Okay. Do you want me to return it to you today?" Alex asked.

"Oh no. You can keep it for a few more days. I need that helmet back when the capsules are released," Eric said.

"Huh? Capsule? What's that?" Alex asked in confusion.

"Have you not heard the news? Deva Corp is coming up with capsules that you can sleep inside while playing the game. Apparently, they are much better than the helmet," said Eric. "Apparently, you can

sell your helmets and get a discount for the capsule. That was why I wanted it. You can give it to me back on the day the capsules are sold."

"Oh. Do you by any chance happen to know when the capsules are going to be sold? Also at what price they are going to be sold?" Alex asked.

"Hmm... I think they said in around 3 weeks or so. I don't think they have a specific date set as a selling day. As for the price, they've given us a range between 300 to 500 dollars after a helmet has been returned. Without the discount, should be around 800 to 1000 dollars," said Eric.

Alex was stunned at how high the price was but shook his head as he remembered that he could afford such money now. 'Although, I will have to earn some more money somehow. After I get the ingredients back today, I should make a lot of pills on the upcoming Sunday and sell them at the auction once more.'

While he had about \$25 thousand in the bank right now, that wouldn't be enough for him at all. He could tell that. If he ever was in desperate need of spirit stones, he needed money in the bank for a quick transfer.

'I guess I will care about it when the time comes. Let's just go gather some ingredients for today. It's been nearly 3 weeks since I went hunting in the southern forest. Master says we are going even deeper now. I wonder where we will be going this time. It should be further in than where my senior sister took me to. I'm getting kinda excited now.'

He and the other boys returned back to the room and logged back into the game.

Chapter 119: Leaving with master

Alex logged back into the game at half-past 10. He had decided to sell another few pills at the market in front of the gate and had gotten 45 spirit stones from that sale. He had then decided to tour around the sect and look at more of the locations.

He had gone around the sect crater and looked at the different fights that were already taking place. He had once again seen that black stele, but this time he was too afraid to do anything and had simply left.

After logging out to get his lunch, he had logged back in once again. He waited for a while and only then ate the Face Changing pill. The pill entered his body and started to dissolve. Thick energy streamed out from his stomach reaching every corner of his body as he felt himself getting melted from inside out.

However, it didn't hurt at all. In fact, he felt like he could influence these melted portions. He started to think of a face to change to. The only face he knew was his own. So, his body slowly morphed into what his real-life mirrored version would look like.

His hair shriveled and shortened itself and his eyes changed color. His face started to slowly change as well. Other than that, there was no change to him. But, this was still enough to make him unrecognizable to the rest of the people.

He walked out of the house after checking that there was no one around to see him leave this exact house. He walked in broad daylight up to the sect leader's building.

Funnily enough, nobody was here to care about this at all. Most of the people were down at the sect crater fighting, as it was Friday today with unlimited challenges.

Alex had come to learn that having a higher badge gave you many benefits in the sect. Everything in the sect needed to be bought with real money. From time in the training hall or a room in the production hall. Or even the techniques in the Library. If one wanted them, they would have to pay a certain price.

But with badges, the higher the badge, the more discount they got. The badges also set an order on who gets what first. If 5 people were waiting for the same technique in the library to be returned, when it did get returned, the one with the highest badge would be allowed to get it.

Sometimes, the disciples with lower badges took forever to get a single technique. So they always looked forward to having a higher numbered badge as it meant life would be better in the sect.

The one thing that Alex found odd regarding the Tiger sect was that the disciples didn't get any form of help to start on their journey. Unlike how Hong Wu Sect gave its disciple's spirit stones and pills monthly, the Tiger sect did nothing of that sort. Every disciple was on their own.

This was also the reason why outer sect disciples and inner sect disciples went around following core disciples just so that they could give them something that would help them. It may be weapons, or techniques, or spirit stones, or even simply just the threat of their name. The disciples could use any of these things to go higher in rank.

'Did that Huo Tu guy think I would do anything for money? Or was he legitimately expecting me to get scared and give him that pill for 10 spirit stones?' he wondered.

He finally reached the sect leader's building. He had never walked in here before. Since he was asked to come secretly every night, he had always sneaked around the side instead of walking through the main hall.

He walked in through the hall and came out of the other side. He saw a few people standing around there. Aside from his master, there were 5 people standing in a group, talking to each other.

Wen Cheng saw him walking towards the group and looked at him with a confused face.

'He doesn't recognize me.' Alex chuckled to himself learning that. He walked straight to his master and bowed down to make a greeting.

"Good Afternoon, Master." As soon as he said that, a light flashed in Wen Cheng's eyes as he realized what was happening.

"Yu Ming, you are finally here. Come here, let me introduce you to the elders."

There were 2 female elders and 3 male elders in the group. Wen Cheng introduced Alex to them all. Wen Cheng unhesitatingly introduced Alex as his disciple as well. Now that nobody could see his face, he didn't care about hiding his relationship.

"Alright, let's leave. We need to reach there as soon as we can. We only have a day's worth of time. My disciple will be the one doing all the ingredients picking, so we old guys are there to protect him only."

Wen Cheng started flying simply and pulled Alex along with him. Unlike Ma Rong, he didn't care about having an artifact when flying. The high speed and the air hitting his face finally made him understand how fun flying really was.

While the speed of their flying wasn't as fast as when he was in Ma Rong's boat, it was still significantly fast. Alex knew that his master could go faster. Maybe even faster than Ma Rong could, but he didn't. Only because doing so would harm Alex.

"Where exactly are we going master?" he finally asked about the destination. While he knew they were going further into the southern forest, it seemed like his master and the elders had a destination in mind.

"Our records speak of a sacred land that we used to have. But ever since the war, most of the records were lost, and we never learned what this sacred land was. In search of the said sacred land, we found a special place in the southern forest that has a lot of different vegetation, no different from the alchemy gardens of Hong Wu Sect."

"We are going there right now."

Chapter 120: War and Records

"As many ingredients as the alchemy gardens?" Alex was shocked. If that was true, then there would be more than a mountain of ingredients there.

"Have you been to the alchemy gardens before, master?" Alex couldn't help but ask.

"Not, really," said Wen Cheng. "I've only ever seen it from afar. But even then I can tell that the place we are going to has as much alchemy ingredients as the alchemy gardens."

Wen Cheng seemed to be confident in his assessment, so all Alex could do was wait.

"By the way, master. What did you mean by war? Was there a war in the crimson empire?" he asked. To him, war was something that took place ages ago where one country would attack another country.

"No, not the empire. War in the sect. Although it might be better to call it infighting, it was too big to be called something so simple. So, we just call it the war. It's appropriate since more than 4000, 80% of the sect members at that time died in that war." Wen Cheng seemed to be getting a little emotional saying that.

"Were you there master?" he asked.

"Yes. I was but an inner sect disciple at the time. I bore witness to the death and destruction in the sect. Elders of two factions, fighting each other, each dying to the other's hands." Wen Cheng didn't seem to like remembering about the past.

"What was the cause of the war master?" Alex asked. He was getting interested in the history of the sect he joined.

"The 2nd Elder at that time was a powerful, but greedy man that wanted the sect all to himself. However, he couldn't beat the sect leader who was much stronger than him at the time. So, the 2nd Elder was never able to become the Sect Leader."

"Until one day, when the sect leader returned back to the sect from an outside visit, all bloody and weak. The 2nd Elder took the chance to launch a rebellion against the sect master."

"The ones that believed in the 2nd elder fought against the ones that defended the sect leader. It was an all-out war that resulted in huge destruction." Wen Cheng said.

"Was that what made the giant crater in the sect?" Alex asked.

"Crater? No. We still don't know what the crater was since most if not all records were lost. Although we do believe it was the black stele, We are not sure, however."

"The destruction I was talking about was more so the buildings and the lives we lost that day. Plus, we lost most of our history and records that day. It was truly a devastating event." Wen Cheng shook his head as he remembered more.

"Did the sect leader or the 2nd Elder die?" he asked.

"The sect leader died, unfortunately. His wound was just too severe. The 2nd elder was also heavily injured and was sent away to the southern forest at the time. We can only assume he died a few weeks later."

"It was actually at that time we came up with the idea." Wen Cheng said with a smile. "We made the rules on how sect leaders were chosen in the sect from that point forward."

"Do you know how sect leaders are chosen in the Tiger sect?" he asked Alex.

"No?" He wondered if this was common knowledge that everyone knew about.

"In the Tiger sect, the sect leader is based on the ranking of their respective students. The person whose student is the prime disciple gets to be the sect leader. As such, I have been a sect leader for nearly 10 years now." Wen Cheng said.

"hmm... Is it okay as long as it's a disciple? no other requirements?" Alex asked.

"Oh, no. The disciples must be below the age of 25, and not in the True realm yet. For now, your senior sister is the prime disciple, so I will be a sect leader for a little while more."

Alex thought and asked, "And what about after senior sister has crossed those limitations? Do you leave the sect leader's position?"

"Yes, that is how the sect works now. All I can do is rear another disciple to the same strength and hope they are the strongest. Otherwise, the first elder becomes the sect leader, while I turn to whatever rank my newest disciple is among the other elder's disciples."

"Oh..." Alex fell into contemplation after having been dumped such a huge amount of information on. He tried processing all he had just heard and thought of something.

"What is the Sacred land you talked about master?" he had remembered Wen Cheng saying the Sacred Land as they had been searching when they found this mysterious place.

"I don't know either," Wen Cheng said. "If we still had the records from the old times I could tell you, but we don't. Most of our history and information was lost during the war and no one knows what had happened in the sect before the war. All of the elders died so we don't even have hearsay."

"However, there are 2 pieces of information that we managed to find from what records still remained."

"The first information we have is that the Tiger sect actually moved to the current location around 150 years ago or so. We don't know where the Tiger sect was situated before it was shifted to the new location. Only that it was near the Sacred Land"

"The second thing is that the elders and disciples of that time didn't dare step in the sacred land. We can only assume that it was holy to them by what it was called. The records say the sacred land looked over a great landscape of blue, but we haven't found a river or lake matching this description yet."

"I will be honest. I don't know if you can even call those records trustworthy. We don't know how much of it is true and how much of it is just something we misunderstood. So you better take these with a bit of doubt in your heart." Wen Cheng explained a lot.

"I understand Master" Alex nodded seriously.