

Alchemy 1161

Chapter 1161: The Ruler of the Southern Continent

"ALL HAIL THE RULER!"

"ALL HAIL THE RULER!"

The people viewing the coronation chanted all at the same time as the crown was placed on Scarlet's head.

She stood tall in front of everyone with not a single emotion on her face to betray what she was feeling or thinking on the inside.

Her eyes drifted across the room, looking at all the different people that were in there, and then closed them. Then, she reopened them and moved.

The chant stopped awkwardly as no one was sure what was going on. Scarlet was supposed to be giving a small speech of her own to the people after her coronation, so it was unexpected.

The 10 elders ran beside her and secretly asked what she was doing.

"I will address everyone at once," Scarlet said as she walked out of the door.

The elders were confused, but they at least knew what was going on. Two of them stayed behind and addressed the throne room.

"Her Majesty, the Pheonix is going to be addressing the entire continent at once. Please go outside if you wish to hear her speech," the elders said.

People started leaving one after another, and Alex walked out as well. The elders grabbed him as he left the room and brought him along with them to the stage where Scarlet stood tall in the sunlight.

Her crown glistened with colors of gold, red, blue, purple, and orange. Even so, it couldn't overshadow the majesty that came with Scarlet herself.

She stood up high, waiting for the people to gather.

The people on the outside were excited to see the Phoenix after she had been crowned and were more than excited to cheer for her.

Once more, another chant could be heard from the crowd around Scarlet. Only this time around, there were so many people that the air shook with each utter of the chant.

They chanted so loudly that their words could likely be heard from the other side of the dome.

"You're going to address them this quickly?" Alex asked softly after he got up on the stage next to Scarlet.

"The sooner the better," Scarlet said.

Alex sensed some sort of distress in her voice. She was nervous for some reason.

"What's wrong? Are you alright?" he asked. "You sound nervous."

"Do I?" she asked, before taking a deep breath. "How about now?"

"That's better," Alex said. "But why were you nervous? You're already the ruler, so you should be fine, right? Or did you not remember to write the speech"

"I haven't written anything," Scarlet said. "I spent way too long just deciding, so I didn't have the time to write anything."

"Deciding?"

"People are gathering, your majesty," one of the elders spoke as they all gathered behind Scarlet. They looked in front of them and saw nearly 10 thousand different individuals gathered in the area around the palace.

Beyond that, the entire capital city was completely covered in random people as well, who were viewing the ceremony from massive screen formations that were laid around the city.

Scarlet noticed that people had started to slow down with the cheer and the people that were coming out of the palace had already gathered in the yard outside.

She took a single step forward and everyone stopped making a noise. They all looked at her, silently, waiting for her to start speaking.

Alex felt unnerved by such a sudden silence. He couldn't imagine having to address this many people at once. But, he wasn't worried about Scarlet at all. She had done this before, a long time ago, so she would be used to it.

"Watch out for anyone that might try to attack her highness," one of the elders spoke into his mind, reminding him that not all that were gathered here were necessarily here to watch her ascend the throne.

There were most likely some here that were hoping that she wouldn't take the throne at all. After all, the freedom that came with not having a proper ruler was not something a few people could suddenly get rid of.

Alex doubted such a small group of people would make a scene, but he still couldn't leave it to chance. He looked around the crowd for any disappointed or angry faces, but it was hard to tell how someone was feeling or what they were thinking from the way they looked.

Scarlet viewed the crowd one last time, took a deep breath, and then started speaking.

"People of the Southern Continent. I, Feng Nuanhuo, a phoenix, am the ruler of the Southern Continent."

Everyone cheered when they heard her, cheering for nearly 10 seconds before Scarlet gestured for them to stop with her wings.

"Right now, the purpose of me being on this stage is to make you feel happy and better about having me as your new ruler by promising you many good things in the future that may or may not be capable of performing."

"However, I am not here today to do that to you," Scarlet said. "Today, I'm here to speak the truth."

"Your majesty?" a few of the elders felt warnings blare in their heads from what Scarlet was talking about. Alex was surprised too and he couldn't help but wonder what she was talking about.

"The truth is simple," Scarlet said. "You do not have a new Ruler. I, Feng Nuanhuo have been your ruler for the past 14 thousand years."

"Huh?"

"What?"

"What is going on?"

"What is her majesty talking about?"

Everyone except for the ones on top of the stage was confused about what Scarlet was talking about. Nothing about it all made sense to them at all.

One by one, the people started requesting an explanation, while the elders were fully working on controlling the damage. They requested Scarlet to speak sweet nonsense to the people, but she had gone and started giving them the bitter truth.

"What I said is correct. I came to this continent 14 thousand years ago to replace the Phoenix before me as the ruler of this continent. So, for the past 14 millennia, I have been your ruler."

"I ruled over this continent for 9 thousand years. However, 5 thousand years ago, due to some accident, I was forced to stop ruling over you, and these 10 had to temporarily step in to keep the continent from being doomed without a ruler."

"I'm sure many of you were dissatisfied when you learned that your rulers, the phoenixes were hiding inside the metal dome. However, that was never true."

"The truth is, the reason you have these 10 ruling over you for the past 5 thousand years is that I have been dead for that very long."

Scarlet's words confused even more people, but they did not ask her to continue this time around as they waited for her to do so on her own, and she did.

"For the past 5 thousand years, there has been no Phoenix ruling over you. All of that was because the only phoenix that was on this continent for the past 14 thousand years was me."

"Then, when I died, my throne was left vacant for 5 thousand years."

The crowd looked at each other, trying to digest this new piece of information. They weren't sure how to process it all.

From what they had heard before, it usually sounded like the Phoenixes had abandoned them and gone into hiding. However, they were now learning that the Phoenix had died, and had then gone through rebirth.

Which was to say that she would've been their ruler, even without the ceremony to make her their ruler.

Alex watched Scarlet fully give away all the secrets that was supposed to be bad for the succession to the throne.

"I will be honest," Scarlet said. "I had no idea 5 thousand years had passed by the time I was completely done with rebirth."

"For me, it felt like I was gone for 10 years. But for you, I had gone for 5 thousand years, and all that time, the throne was empty," Scarlet said. "If you despise me for that, I would understand."

"However, I am not here to simply talk to you about what I have done wrong in the past, but rather what I will do right in the future."

"I might be strong, or I might be Immortal. But that does not mean that I will forever remain on this continent. Either it will be my time to leave, or somehow, I might die again."

"Or I might just feel bored of ruling over a bunch of humans. Whatever the case, if anything happens to me, making me unable to rule properly, you will all once again become without a ruler."

"And I do not want you to be left in such a situation ever again. So, I have decided to fix that today," Scarlet said. "I have decided to follow in the footsteps of those from the rulers from the other continent and have taken an inspiration in the way that they rule."

Alex felt a sudden coolness in his mind that he had never felt before in his life. This sort of unnatural coolness couldn't possibly be something that he was simply imagining.

So, he reached for his head to see what it was. When he did, his eyes went wide. Spiritual sense rolled out of him as he used it to check what was happening.

Then, he saw the crown.

It lay on his head.

"This is Alex," Scarlet spoke. "From today onwards, in my absence, he will be the Ruler of the Southern Continent."

Chapter 1162: Backlash

Even with the coolness, Alex felt in his mind, he found it hard to think of just what exactly had happened.

The only thing he could think of was the divination from over 15 years ago. The one that showed him a vision of a crown that laid on his head.

A second divination had come true.

The crowd wasn't as stunned as Alex, so they immediately started talking within themselves to make sense of what they had just heard and seen.

If it were only the words, they could've imagined that the phoenix spoke wrongly, but seeing her put her own crown on Alex's head solidified her statement as to exactly what it was she wanted here.

Without a single say from anyone in the crowd, Alex had just become another Ruler of the Southern Continent.

The people didn't know how to feel about it all. "Your Majesty, what are you saying?" the elders quickly walked up to Scarlet and asked her.

"What?" Scarlet looked at them. "Did I say something wrong?"

"No, that's..." the elders themselves weren't sure what to make of the situation. "Is this the right thing to do, your Majesty?"

"Why would it not be?" Scarlet asked.

"We don't know," the elders said. "It's just that such a thing is unprecedented. You should consider it for a while before making a decision."

"Do you think I made my decision on a whim?" Scarlet asked. "I have spent all the time I had since yesterday on this one decision, and I have decided to make Alex the ruler whenever I am absent. Even in my presence, he will be the second highest authority of the continent."

The elders quickly shook their heads. "If you have given your decision some thought, we have no complaints at all," one of them said.

Scarlet nodded and turned towards Alex.

"You don't seem thrilled to suddenly be named a king," she said.

Alex finally got out of his stupor and looked at Scarlet. "Why did you not tell me you were going to do something so reckless," he said.

"Why should I? My decision wouldn't have changed either way," she said.

"Why me?" Alex asked.

"Isn't it obvious? Because we are bonded," Scarlet said.

A few people that were close to the stage heard the conversation and were more than surprised by what they heard. Within moments, the gossip found legs and made its way around the crowd.

Soon enough, everyone was talking about exactly that very information.

Scarlet noticed the rumor that was spreading and decided to stop it at once. "I have bonded with this young human, that is true," she said.

"Isn't that biased?"

"Why him? There are many better candidates."

People started complaining finally, and no one could stop anyone from speaking out of their turn. The elders tried to make them stop, but Scarlet stopped them. She let the crowd vent out their anger and frustration.

Instead, she turned back to Alex again who seemed ready to question her again.

"They are right," he said. "Why did you make such a biased judgment? Why me?"

"I am not biased," Scarlet said. "Even without our bond, even if I had only ever heard of you, I would have chosen you. Your accomplishments are not something anyone can imagine doing. You alone are worthy in this entire continent."

"Maybe," Alex said. "But what about the main problem? The fact that I'm not from this continent. At some point, I will have to leave this place and return."

"I know," Scarlet said. "You told me so. Did you think I made such an important decision without thinking about that?"

"So you knew I would leave and you still decided to make me a king?" Alex asked.

"When you say return, what is the name of the place you will be returning to?" Scarlet asked.

Alex frowned for a second. "That's..." he found it hard to speak the name of a place that he considered he was returning to.

For a moment he thought of the Central continent, but that wasn't right. Pearl was there, and his old house was, but that was now a place he could only ever say he was visiting, not returning.

As for the Western Continent, he could say he was returning to that place too, but where exactly in that continent was it?

He thought of the Hong Wu sect and the Tiger sect, but they were places he had left behind long ago. That place held his memories, not his home.

As for the Beast realm or the Luminance Empire, there was really only one place he would be returning to there. It was to his mother.

Wherever his mother was, he would go there.

But then... couldn't he just bring his mother to the Southern Continent?

"You told me you don't have a house to go back to, you only have a family. You can easily have your family members gather in this continent, can't you?" Scarlet asked. "You already have two here, you only need to bring the rest."

Alex slowly nodded when he heard that. That was the truth, no matter how he viewed it. His home was where his family was, so as long as they were there, he would forever remain in the Southern Continent, with no need to leave the place

Alex couldn't help but sigh in the end. "I have no interest to rule, nor do I have the ability to do so. Even then, if you want me to become the ruler, then I shall do it," he said.

"Leaders and Rulers aren't born with the ability to lead and rule. They are made by the teachings and actions of those around them. You might not have the ability to rule right now, but in just a few years, you would be making decisions that only a ruler can make. I guarantee you at least that."

Alex didn't doubt that, but still. It simply felt wrong for him to become a ruler. He didn't feel like he deserved it.

"You fought and survived people that were nearly 30 realms higher than you. Why are you suddenly scared of just having to make a few decisions?" Scarlet asked.

Alex thought about it for a second and sighed. "When you put it like that, I might really be overreacting," he said. He took a deep breath as he remembered the divination.

Was he afraid of becoming a ruler because that would make a second divination come true? Was he trying to fight fate so he could make sure the divinations could also turn out to be wrong?

Now that he thought about it, he had always feared the one prophecy that told him when he would die.

He would die when helping a fallen power restore itself. Was he afraid that Scarlet was that power?

'What's done is done,' he thought. 'If the divinations are to come true, they will. I can't stop it.'

"Alright, I am willing to become the ruler," Alex said with a straight back as he looked at Scarlet.

Scarlet smiled and turned towards the crowd that was still talking amongst themselves, clearly unsatisfied.

"You all must believe that I made a biased choice today?" Scarlet asked.

The crowd quietened down. They all believed so, but no one wanted to be the one to say it to their new ruler.

"You are right," Scarlet said. "It is a biased choice. However, the bias is not based on my closeness with the young man, but rather my understanding of what he can and cannot do."

The crowd was confused slightly, so they let her continue.

"Who here can fight someone more than 3 realms higher than their own cultivation base?" Scarlet asked.

The crowd looked at each other, trying to find a face that would match the question, but there wasn't any.

"Alex here can fight someone 10 realms higher than his cultivation base," she said.

Sounds of awe and surprise sounded from all over the yard as people were made aware of the fact.

"10 realms? That shouldn't be possible," someone said, and the others hummed or nodded in agreement.

"You!" Scarlet pointed to a certain middle-aged man, who had a cultivation base of Saint Core 3rd realm.
"Do you disagree with my decision?"

The old man being singled out by the phoenix immediately started sweating profusely. He had been vocal about the disagreement, but he thought he had been hiding quite well.

"O-of course not, your Majesty," the man said.

"No, you have been," Scarlet said. "I have heard your voice. I have heard everyone's voice. So, I shall give you a chance to undo my decision."

"You will fight him in front of us all for exactly 3 clashes. If Alex loses, I will take back my decision to make him a ruler as well," she said. "Do you agree?"

The man was put in a tough position as he didn't want to offend anyone, but from the glares of the many people around him, he was forced to accept the battle.

"And if I lose?" he asked.

"Nothing," Scarlet said. "I will still let you all complain."

"I agree to the fight," the man said immediately after hearing that.

"Must we do this?" Alex asked Scarlet quietly.

"The only way to prove your legitimacy is by showing others how strong you are," she said. "Now, go ahead and fight him."

"Fine," Alex said and stepped away from the stage and flew into the sky. The man followed behind a moment later, and soon enough the two were in front of each other, ready to battle.

Chapter 1163: The Three Attacks

The man bowed to Alex, who bowed back.

"My apologies for being against what was presented to us by her Majesty. I promise I won't say a single thing if you can prove yourself," the man said.

"My apologies for it coming out of the blue too," Alex said. "I'm sure there was a better way for all of this to go down, but unfortunately we ended up having to fight for it."

The man bowed. "Let us begin then."

Alex nodded and stood in front of the man. "Please begin."

The man looked at him weirdly, and so did the crowd that was below. "I believe it is only right for the weaker one of us to start," the man said.

"I agree," Alex replied. "That is why I am letting you go first."

The man felt a pang of anger that he quickly let go of. "Very well, if that is what you wish," he said.

His hands moved in front of him and suddenly water appeared from all around the atmosphere as it gathered into an unstable mass in front of the man.

Blue aura gathered around it that got bright enough to be visible in daylight. Then, he shot the water toward Alex.

Alex saw the water flying in his direction and moved a single hand in front of him. A layer of fire appeared on his hand that grew to extreme temperature in an instant.

When the ball of water arrived next to him, he simply caught it, as if it were a small piece of rock someone had tossed at him.

The water immediately fizzled out from within his fiery arm, which itself vanished, leaving pristine skin that didn't have any damage.

"Would you like to go again?" Alex asked the man.

The crowd watched in silence and awe at the sight above them. The weaker ones in the crowd started assuming that the man had been a plant in the crowd, to make Alex look stronger.

However, the stronger ones, the ones who mattered, could see that the man hadn't held back much in his attack and that Alex had just as easily destroyed it.

This was a genuine match with a genuine outcome, and that surprised them even more so than normal people.

"That was Fire Dao, right?" someone asked softly.

"I thought I sensed it," another man said.

"He isn't hiding his cultivation base at all," another person said. "Is that what he can do normally?"

"He can fight so well on top of making amazing pills?" someone else said. "I wonder what else he can do."

The man in the sky was in awe as well for a few seconds before reacting to Alex's words. "Yes, I will attack again."

He didn't understand how Alex had outdone him despite being 10 realms below him. Was it dao? If that was the case, then he couldn't mess around.

This time around, the man brought out a sword. It was a thin blue sword with white edges that seemed to give off cold energy.

The man poured Qi into his blade and suddenly Alex could feel the change in temperature from all the way where he was.

'That's not a normal attack,' he realized. He could feel the world moving to aid the man.

'Ice dao or Cold Dao?' Alex wondered. He didn't know much about Water Qi to accurately tell which dao did what, but he could be sure that it was one of the two.

He brought out his sword as well, which he started flooding with fire Qi. At the same time, he used his True Fire dao on the sword that he was going to add to the attack.

The man slashed without warning, sending such a cold attack toward him that it left behind snowflakes in the air. It came flying toward Alex in a blue slash, and Alex slashed back.

The fiery aura in his sword exploded as it devoured the cold attack almost instantly. The attack continued on, reaching the middle-aged man who was forced to block it.

He was pushed back a step or two in the air, and he quickly looked back to see that his attack hadn't even reached Alex this time around.

"No way!" he shouted out loud in shock.

The people below him were shocked as well.

"That's two attacks," Alex said while standing calmly in the air. "There's only one last remaining."

The man took a deep breath and calmed down his heart. "Yes, I will attack."

"I'm sorry, but I can't let you," Alex said as his sword glowed a brilliant white light that covered him entirely.

"Sword Aura!" people started shouting when they saw it. They couldn't believe that someone so young as Alex had learned something like that. After all, Sword aura wasn't something that one could just learn.

And from what they could see, Alex had been in possession of such a skill for a long time now. He was used to having a Sword Aura.

"Unlike you," Alex continued. "If I don't win this battle, I will have to step down as a ruler. So forgive me if I go a little overboard with this attack."

The air whipped around Alex as energy filled his sword to a point that even the 10 elders on the stage were surprised. They had never seen how strong Alex was on his own, and had only ever known about his feats after the fact.

Today, however, they were seeing it on their own.

His opponent moved as well. A swirling blue energy appeared in front of him as it began to solidify. As long as he could defend this attack, he could at least tie the match. If neither of them won, the man would still come out victorious due to the way conditions of the duel.

However, even as he thought that he could feel the air around Alex. Something felt... wrong. Something felt dangerous.

He had never seen a dao like this, but he could tell it was a strong one. So, created multiple such defensive skills to stop Alex's attack.

Alex slowly opened his eyes and spoke. "Here I go."

Then, he slashed.

The brilliant white energy flew through the air at a rather slow speed. It was fast for most, but the stronger individuals could tell that the attack focused more on its power than its speed.

The man could have dodged the attack, but doing so wasn't the right thing to do here. Since this was a duel, he had to survive the attack.

He strengthened his frozen, swirling barriers even more and pushed it forth as the attack landed on the shield.

At that very moment, the attack landed on the first barrier, and all 7 of the newly formed barrier split apart at once.

The attack suffered basically no pushback as it flew toward the man up front. The man's eyes went wide in shock and tried to fly away, but it was too late.

Somehow, the attack had appeared right in front of him, and it was going to kill him.

"I'm... dead!" the man thought.

Just then, something appeared in front of him. A flash of red shined and the attack disappeared.

When he finally focused his attention in front of him, he could see Alex standing there. He had somehow flown in between him and his attack

He smiled at the man. "My apologies for going overboard. I should have known better than to not hold back more," he said.

"Hold back... more?" the man was shocked. Did that mean that Alex had held back, even after using that terrifying attack?

The man gulped and immediately bowed in front of him. "Thank you for saving me," he said. "Your Majesty."

Alex was a little taken aback by the sudden royal address. He wasn't expecting that.

"Thank you for humoring her Majesty's demand," Alex said and bowed the man back before flying back down towards the Scarlet.

"Good job," Scarlet said with a smug little smile on her face. Alex simply shrugged and said nothing.

Scarlet then turned back towards the group of people in her eyesight. "So, does anyone else have any more complaints?" she asked.

Not a single soul made a peep when the question was asked. There was no way they would oppose the throne when the new Ruler had proved himself to be a force to be reckoned with.

"You all may know your new Ruler as an alchemy master. He is the best alchemist in the entire continent, nay, the entire world," she spoke. "But that is not all he's good in."

"As you just saw, he is also highly capable of fighting someone strong. He is so strong, that he killed 6 out of the 7 Dark Phoenix assassins that were after him, all by himself."

The crowd was only starting to discuss it when Scarlet continued. "Just the day before, Alex came out of the Sundering Sanctum as the one who completed it. Not only that, on the same day, he went to the Kang family and singlehandedly destroyed most of the family, and killed many of their members for all the wrongs that I'm sure you are familiar with by now."

"On top of all that, he is only 50 years old," Scarlet said. "Do you have a better candidate to be your King?"

Not a single person could even deny that Alex was worthy.

A voice sounded from amongst the group. "All hail King Alex!"

The other people slowly spoke as well. "All hail King Alex!"

Alex watched around as the crowd unanimously started chanting his name, calling him the King.

"All hail King Alex."

Chapter 1164: First Decree

The people complained no more after seeing Alex's abilities. Hearing about his feats made them even more certain that he was the right for the job.

So, after chanting his name and calling him his Majesty, the people were sent away from the palace.

Only a few were left behind, all of whom were from big families and sects. They were necessary to be kept there so they could talk about the future of the continent going forward.

Graham walked up to Alex who was getting down from the stage and couldn't help but simply stare at him with awe on his face.

"You are a King now?" Graham asked with a stunned voice.

"It seems so," Alex said, not knowing how to respond at all.

"Did you know this was going to happen?" Graham asked.

"No, I only just found out, like the rest," he said. "Scarlet had planned for it since yesterday it seems, but she didn't bother to tell me."

"Are you... okay with it?" Graham asked awkwardly.

"I'm... fine. It will take a few days for the reality to settle in, but I think I can handle it," Alex said. "You don't have to be worried about me."

"I'm not worried about you at all. I know I have nothing to worry for," Graham said. "I'm just wondering... since you are a King now... does that make me royalty?"

Alex couldn't help but chuckle. "I'm sure it does, father. Come, let us go in," he said.

The group walked back into the palace hall where the seats were laid for the ceremony. Since there was no time to switch it back to how it normally was, everyone found a random place to sit.

Graham sat towards the back since he didn't have much to do in this assembly. The other family and sect leaders sat towards the middle, and 10 elders sat at the front.

Alex was wondering for a moment where exactly he was supposed to be sitting, but the question was answered when Scarlet asked the elders to put another seat right next to her.

He went up and sat down next to her.

Everyone stood up at once and bowed toward the two of them before sitting back down.

"So, do you have any topics to discuss? I am curious what my first decree will be about after coming back to the throne after 5 thousand years," Scarlet said.

The group looked at each other. "Is there anything you would like to change about how the continent is lead right now?" one of the elders asked.

"Not really," Scarlet said. "The gears seem to have fallen in place nicely and the continent seems to be running quite fine even without an overall ruler. I'm sure there is stuff here and there we can improve, but it's not something I can just decide on a single day."

"Yes, your Majesty," the people said.

"Then how about dealing with the Wasteland? The people there need to know who their true ruler is as well," another one said.

"That won't be necessary for now. We haven't helped them in 5 thousand years. Suddenly going there to say that they are under someone else simply doesn't feel right with me. We will help them, but I think it's better to just give them the freedom they already have," Scarlet said.

"We will have to improve foreign relations. We had to lessen our contact with the Eastern or Northern continent for a very long time so they didn't know you were absent, your Majesty. Now that you are back, we should go ahead and start improving it again," another person said.

"No," Scarlet said. "I do not wish to contact any foreign power until I've grown stronger. I can't let them know that I haven't reached a high enough cultivation base."

"We can have his Majesty meet the foreign in your stead, your Majesty," someone else mentioned.

"Hmm," Scarlet gave the idea some thought and looked at Alex. After looking at him, however, she quickly shook her head. "He only just became a King. While he is royalty, he doesn't have the attitude or the arrogance of one. Until he learns to present himself as royalty, I can't have him leave for diplomacy missions."

"Besides, it's not like we can just go to the other continents, right? The Teleportation formations don't work like they used to," Scarlet said.

"We can still go from here to the other continent, your Majesty," one of the elders said. "It just costs a lot."

"How much would you estimate it costs?" Scarlet asked.

"We've tried it once to go to the Eastern continent, and... it cost nearly half of a normal-sized Saint spirit vein to teleport about 20 people to the other continent," the elder said.

"That's a lot, isn't it? We don't have that sort of resources to simply waste on a diplomacy mission," Scarlet said. "We don't have ships that can travel the ocean to the Eastern Continent, do we?"

"There are, but they are quite dangerous to use. Their concealment capabilities are nearly nowhere as good as the ones from the Eastern Continent," the elder said.

"Then this topic ends here. I will try to reach the Immortal realm as soon as I can," Scarlet said. "Once I do, we should have about 3 boats we can make use of. Okay, what else?"

The group gave some more thought, but no one could really think of any pressing matters that needed the Ruler's urgent care.

"How about... closing the barrier in the north?" Alex asked. "The spirit veins there were stolen from the Western continent and are being used to stop the tribal folks from entering."

"Since both of those actions don't reflect well on the continent, we should close the barrier and return the spirit veins to the Western continent," Alex said.

"Hmm, you're right," Scarlet said. "We can't return it just yet, but we do have to stop using the barrier."

"We should," Alex said.

"Fine, let this be my first decree then," Scarlet said. "Dismantle the barrier to the north and gather all Spirit vein there that do not belong to us."

"Yes, your Majesty," the 10 elders bowed.

Scarlet nodded. "As for the rest of what we should be talking about, I don't see any of you have any more problems that need my attention, so we will end this meeting today. Try to list out all the things that are wrong that I will have to look over in the future. I will see to it when I'm free."

"Yes, your Majesty."

"Leave now. I wish to speak with Alex alone," Scarlet said.

"Yes, your Majesty," the elders and the other leaders said as they all bowed toward Scarlet and then toward Alex before leaving.

Alex nodded slightly and watched them all leave. Graham gave a small nod and left the room as well.

Scarlet waited for everyone to leave before opening her mouth. "That was wrong," she said.

"Sorry?" Alex asked.

"The topic you brought up," Scarlet said. "That was wrong."

Alex frowned slightly. "Are you saying I shouldn't have brought up the topic?" he asked.

"No," Scarlet said. "You bringing up the topic makes you look like you care more about the Western Continent than the Southern."

She turned to look towards Alex. "It might not have sunk into you yet, but this is the fact now. You are a human King of the Southern Continent. Everything you do, everything you say, it should all be from the perspective of the King, not of the person behind the title."

"You saying that we should get rid of the barrier is good, but saying that we should do it so we can return it to the Western continent makes it sound like you care more about the Western continent than your own."

Alex dropped his head in thought. "You're right," he said. "I should have worded it better."

"Yes," Scarlet said. She placed her wings on him and patted him a bit.

"Don't worry, you weren't so obvious either. I don't think many caught on at all. Just be careful next time. As a King, every word that comes out of your mouth should be one that you have carefully thought of it beforehand."

"After all, each and every single word of yours now has the power to change the fate and destiny of others. A single word can make a beggar the richest man in the city, or it can turn a rich merchant into a beggar," Scarlet said.

"Don't worry too much for now. I'm sure the 10 will find some texts to help you soon. I will remain outside for a while, so you won't have to bother with being a good ruler just yet."

"However, very soon, I will enter closed cultivation so I can fix my rushed cultivation base. At that time, you will have to remain outside and become the ruler this continent needs."

"I hope that you will be ready by then."

Alex straightened himself. "Don't worry, I will be ready. I will give you my word on this."

Scarlet smiled. "Don't be so stiff. You're the second most important person in the continent now, you can enjoy everything you want," she said.

Alex smiled. "I will try to," he said.

"Oh, speaking of which, have you ever seen spirit veins in person?" Scarlet asked.

"In part," Alex said. "Not the whole thing, no."

"You wanna see?" she asked.

"You mean..."

Scarlet nodded. "I will send you with the others tomorrow. There, you can get rid of the barrier and take away all the spirit veins yourself."

Chapter 1165: Purelake Qi Absorption Method

Alex walked out of the throne room and two of the elders suddenly walked next to him. He was surprised for a moment. "Do you need something, seniors?" he asked.

"No, your Majesty," the elders said. "We are merely walking next to you."

"Why?" he asked.

"You are now a King. We cannot let you walk around on your own. Us servants must be with you at all times," the two of them explained.

"It's fine, you know," Alex said. "I'm used to being alone. I can call for you if I need your help."

"Please let us accompany you wherever you go, your Majesty. We will feel better if we are around you whenever you might need something," the two said.

"Can't I at least be alone in the palace itself?" Alex asked.

"If that is your wish, then yes," the two said.

Alex nodded. "Please let me be by myself for a while. In the meantime, if you do want to do something, please help me find a bunch of cultivation methods so I can get my father started on with cultivation."

"Yes, your Majesty. I will immediately go find whatever is needed for his highness," one of the elders said.

Alex nodded and let them get away.

"I'll be in my room for now," he said.

"Your Majesty, you can't stay in that place anymore. We will prepare you a better room fit for a King," the elder said.

"Oh, is that room ready?" Alex asked.

"N-no, not yet," the elder said.

Alex smiled. "Then I shall be content with what I have. Please let me know when the room is ready," he said.

The elder nodded.

Alex nodded back and walked away from the place with his father. Graham was still in shock, so the two of them didn't say anything until they reached the guest room Alex was staying in for now.

"I didn't get the time to ask, but did you consume the Divine Devil's fruit?" he asked.

Graham shook his head. "It got late yesterday, so I didn't have the time. I will be eating it today," he said.

Alex nodded. "I should be able to find some good cultivation methods for you soon. Once that happens, you will need to use another thing, a lily. Although, I believe someone else would prefer to give it to you," he said.

"Someone... else? Who?" Graham asked.

A small light flashed from Alex's shoulders and Whisker appeared in front of him. Graham looked at Whisker and remembered him from the battle.

"This mouse... it was in the battle too," Graham said.

"This is Whisker," Alex said. "He's been with me for a while now and has been helping me with finding you. If not for him, I would've likely died in the battle the other day."

"Brother's father is safe?" Whisker asked with his spiritual sense.

"Yes," Alex said. "We saved him."

He put his hand forward and placed it next to Graham so he could see Whisker better. "He's not a normal mouse. You can speak with him, he'll speak back."

"Speak... back? A mouse?" Graham was surprised.

Alex smiled and nudged Whisker. "Whisker, say hello," he said.

"Hello, Brother's father," Whisker spoke aloud into Graham's mind.

Graham was taken aback by the sudden voice in his head, but he understood that it was the mouse speaking.

"He-hello," Graham said. "Your name is Whisker, right?"

"Yes," Whisker said. "What is brother's father's name?"

"My name? It's Graham."

Alex smiled seeing the two interacting. "Whisker, you don't have to continue calling him 'brother's father', just call him father from now on."

"Oh... okay," Whisker said. "Are you well, Father? Do you want a pill?"

"A... a pill?" Graham looked at the little mouse. "You're going to get me a pill?"

"No," Whisker said. "I'll make you one."

"M-make a pill?" Graham was surprised. "Isn't that... hard? Isn't being an alchemist a hard job?"

"He's a talented little mouse," Alex said. "He doesn't have much talent in fighting, but he's not bad when it comes to stuff like alchemy and formations."

He then turned to Whisker. "Don't worry about father. He's fine," he said. "He doesn't need a pill but, his friends do. Help me make some of those pills instead."

"What pills?" Whisker asked.

"It's... hmm, you don't know about it," Alex said. "Let me write the recipe down."

He took out a talisman and noted down the recipe for the pill that made a person sweat profusely.

'I wonder if body cultivators need something stronger,' Alex thought. The recipe he had written down was for Common pills, so he wasn't sure what a body cultivator with strength in the True realms needed.

'I will find out after feeding them,' he thought. It was just a common pill either way, so it wouldn't be a problem if it didn't work.

"Try and see if you can make a pill with this. You've never tried this recipe before, but it shouldn't be that hard," Alex said.

"Where are the ingredients?" Whisker asked.

Alex brought out a pile of ingredients and put it to the side, along with a cauldron he brought out for Whisker.

"Don't worry, father. I will make these pills to heal your friends," Whisker said and got to work.

Alex looked at Whisker and back to his father. "I will start too," he said.

"Okay, work," Graham said. "I will leave you for now."

"Where will you go?" Alex asked curiously.

"Anywhere I want," Graham said. "As the King's father, people shouldn't bother me as much, will they?"

"I don't think they will," Alex said. "Go on. I will finish these pills quickly."

Graham nodded. "Don't overdo yourself," he said and left.

After he was gone, Alex focused entirely on making pills and spent the next 2 hours completely making all the remaining antidote pills.

After he was done, he looked over at Whisker who was hard at work as well. His pills were coming to be somewhere between 40% and 60% in harmony. Given how bad the recipe itself most likely was, that was a great feat for Whisker.

But then again, he was making a Common pill as a True rank alchemist, so he was bound to do something good.

Alex decided to help him, so he started making the pills on his own as well. With each pill he made, he realized just how bad his recipe was.

There were so many places for improvement, but there just wasn't any time for it. He had to make the normal pills to test the people.

Alex made up to 8 pills at once using two different cauldrons. He could've gone up to 12, but he didn't want to have an aching head by the end of this.

Sometime around the evening, someone knocked on his door.

Alex was just about to finish the pills, so he made the person stay out for a few minutes. Once done, he finally called the person inside.

Yao Ning walked in with a storage bag in her hand. She smelled the aromatic scents in the air and looked at Alex sitting with 3 cauldrons around him.

"Were you making pills, your Majesty?" she asked.

Alex slumped back. "Yes," he said. "Those people we saved still need treatment, so I was making some pills that would help them."

"Did you spend the entire day making it, your Majesty? You should at least rest on the day you became a King," Yao Ning said.

"It's fine, I was worried anyway," he said. "So, why are you here?"

"Oh right. I was told you were looking for these," she said as she handed him the storage bag.

"Cultivation methods huh? Yes, I wanted my father to start cultivating," Alex said. "Do you have any suggestions?"

"How about your Yao family's cultivation method? It was a prize one of my elders got back when they entered the Sanctum a long time ago," the old woman said.

Alex thought for a bit. "Isn't the Yao family known for their Metal arts? My father's Metal spiritual root is one of the worst. I don't think that's a good idea," he said.

"Oh, what spiritual roots does his highness have?" the old woman asked.

"Wood, Water, and Earth," Alex said as he looked around.

"Wood, Water, and Earth..." the old woman repeated to herself. "A cultivation method that only has those 3 spiritual roots, huh?"

"Oh, no," Alex quickly explained. "He has all 5 roots, but those are the best."

"Oh, if he has all 5 roots, then... he should use the Liang family's cultivation method. They are known for their 5 roots after all," the old woman said.

"Is that so?" Alex said. "Is it here in this bag?"

"It should be," the old woman said. "It's called the Purelake Qi Absorption Method."

Alex nodded and searched for a few seconds before pulling out the manual. "Isn't Purelake the city where the Liang family is located? Is the manual named after the city?"

"No, the lake is named after the manual when the Liang Family settled there about 9 thousand years ago," the old woman said.

"I see," Alex said. "Then I shall be using this. Since it's only for the Common realm, I shouldn't worry about finding the best methods just yet."

The old woman agreed.

"Thank you for bringing these to me," Alex said.

"It's my pleasure, your Majesty," the old woman said.

"Also, I need something done tomorrow while I am gone to the north," Alex said.

"What do you need?" the old woman asked.

Alex brought out all the pills and handed them to her. "I will be needing your help in having these delivered to the people we saved. They will have to eat these pills."

Chapter 1166: Spirit Vein

"Your Majesty, we are ready to leave," Hou Xinya of the 10 Elders reported to Scarlet.

Scarlet nodded. "Take your time with the job," she said. "And look after Alex. Make sure he understands he is royalty now."

"Yes, your Majesty," the man said and retreated away from the throne room.

Scarlet slumped on the throne with 4 more of the 10 elders around her. "I'm sure I was sending 4 of you to the North. Where are the other 2?" she asked.

"Sister Ren is in the east following his Majesty's order to provide the pills he had made to the people he saved. As for brother Kang, he is busy dealing with the death in his family. Given the situation of the Kang family, I'm sure he would be away for a while," one of them answered.

"I see," Scarlet said. "Let him have as much time as he needs."

The group nodded.

"Now, for the matter, I gathered you all here," Scarlet said. "I never thought it would be possible, but it seems there are people in this realm crazy enough to go attack another continent. So, for safety reasons, I want you guys to start recruiting strong individuals that can help maintain peace during peaceful times, and go to war during warring times."

"I want to build an army."

* * * * *

Whisker sat on top of Graham's shoulders, looking over the people that were gathered in front of them.

Ren Guanting was by their side, but she was staying a step behind Graham as he was a person with more authority than her in this situation, due to him being a royal.

While she had a say in stuff, she would have to normally stay out of what Graham would say and do.

Fortunately for her, Graham didn't care much about power and authority. As long as he was free, he would want others to be free from having stayed under someone else.

"Are you guys doing well?" Graham asked his friends he had been with for the longest of times.

"We haven't been better," they answered.

"Leader, we heard the news, is it true that your son became the ruler of this land?" one of them asked.

Graham gave a smile and nodded. "That's true," he said.

"Woah! You must be really proud then," the people said with wide smiles on their faces too.

Graham couldn't hide the smug look on his face that every parent got when others talked about their children's success. "I'm very proud," he said.

"What about me?" Whisker asked.

"Haha, I'm proud of you too, Whisker," Graham said as he pet the mouse with a finger.

"And brother Pearl too?" Whisker asked.

"Yes, I'm proud of everyone," Graham said. "Alright, it's time for you guys to take your pills."

Graham turned around and nodded to Ren Guanting who had been waiting for this. She walked forward, with the dozen or so people that had come with her and started handing out the antidote pill.

Once that was done, she would start handing over the pill that would make them sweat. Alex had mentioned to her how that pill could most likely work due to the strength of these body cultivators, and if something bad happened by chance, she was to let him know immediately.

* * * * *

"Deactivate the barrier," Alex ordered.

"Yes, your Majesty," the 4 elders spoke, standing next to many others that were here with them to aid them.

The massive barrier in front of them shined for a split second before dispersing slowly like a popped bubble. The motes of light drifted in the air for a few seconds before disappearing completely.

Alex watched as the wall dividing the Wasteland and the Mainland of the Southern Continent finally disappeared.

"There will be voices of concerns and worries everywhere. Make sure to let everyone know exactly what it is we are doing," Alex said.

"Yes, your Majesty," the others responded.

"Make sure the notice goes to the Wasteland too. Make sure to let them know that they are welcome to come to the mainland if they so please too," Alex said. "But also make sure they know that there is no sacred flame for them to easily find here."

"Understood, your Majesty," they said.

"Alright, let us begin harvesting the spirit veins. Do elders remember which ones belong to us, and which ones don't?" Alex asked.

"We do, your Majesty," the 4 elders answer.

"Go ahead, show me," Alex said.

One of the elders flew toward one of the mountains on the mountain range in front of them. They closed their eyes and used only their sense to see everything. After a few seconds, they managed to locate the first Spirit veins.

"Here I go," the elder said and put their hand in front of them in the air as if grabbing something illusory in front of them.

The entire mountain shuddered and started shedding rocks and dirt on top of it. The trees toppled, and many nearby humans most likely sensed some earthquakes as well.

The elder clenched their fist even harder and gestured to pull something out.

Alex looked down and saw something white pop out of the ground. A 3-meter wide strip of crystalline concentrated Qi started floating into the air, and with it, the rest of it showed up as well.

Alex remembered seeing a spirit vein back in the Beast realm, where the palace was built below one that had the capability to hide immortals. It was the glowing crystal stalactite when viewed from close up, but from far away, it looked like a long glowing worm.

As the elder pulled more out, Alex saw the worm start to branch out into multiple directions that then branched into more directions. It was like the root of a tree, where there was a primary root, and from the primary root came secondary and tertiary roots.

Or more accurately, it was like the veins in a human body, that split from the main veins into multiple smaller veins.

'Ah, no wonder it's called a Spirit vein,' Alex thought. He continued watching as the spirit vein was pulled more and more, and Alex could see that the main vein was multiple kilometers long. The only reason it took not so much land here was that it was coiled around in the ground, most likely placed that way.

"Spirit veins are extremely delicate, your Majesty," one of the elders explained. "They are resilient to stress and can handle any attack that even a Saint Transformation realm cultivator could send its way, but they are brittle and the slightest bit of bend beyond a certain degree could snap them instantly."

Alex nodded as he heard that. "What happens if that happens?" he asked. "Does the spirit vein become useless? Does it turn to Spirit stones?"

"Yes, but not immediately," the elder said. "To turn into spirit stones, a spirit vein must stop growing and evolving. Only after not doing anything for a long time can the spirit vein turn to spirit stones."

"Then?" Alex asked.

"If you snap a spirit vein in half, not counting the thousands of small shards of crystals that would drop from it, the two main halves of the spirit vein will become fundamentally different from the original one," the elder said.

"Fundamentally different? Can you elaborate?" Alex asked.

"I mean to say that the spirit veins no longer have the same energy or aura as the original one. They don't have the same concentration of Qi, so—"

"So, the formations and scripts made with the original Spirit vein stop working, is that it?" Alex asked.

"Yes," the elder said. "You would have to start all over again, and that is just so you can use the few dozen years you have with the broken spirit veins before they turn into spirit stones."

"I see," Alex said. "So we have to be careful when pulling it out of the ground huh."

"Yes, but only the main vein. It won't matter much if the branches break off," the elder said.

Alex nodded. "I wish to try one for myself," he said.

"Let me find you one after this vein is pulled, your Majesty," the elder said.

Alex nodded and watched the elder finish pulling the entirety of the spirit vein into the air.

Everyone in the area immediately found the air growing thick with Saint Qi. The spirit vein diffused slowly when underground, but in the air, it was very fast.

Alex's eyes glowed purple for a moment as he used his Demon eyes to see what was happening exactly with the Qi in the air. When he did, he was surprised that he wasn't seeing exactly what he thought he would.

The multicolored Qi was being pumped out from the spirit vein, but about a third of the Qi that was being pumped out was going back into the spirit vein, along the Qi in the air.

Alex was surprised to see a field of Qi that circled back on itself in the air. 'Spirit vein absorbs Qi and evolves,' Alex thought as he recalled what he learned. 'If it didn't absorb the Qi, it wouldn't grow. So, I shouldn't be surprised seeing this.'

Even though he thought that he had assumed a spirit vein to only be pumping out Qi, so he was a little surprised for sure.

The elder sent out a spiritual bag toward on end of the spirit vein. Immediately it landed on the end of the main vein and started swallowing the spirit vein.

Within a minute, the entirety of the spirit vein in the air was swallowed into the storage bag.

Alex looked at the storage bag and nodded. "Let's continue with the rest."

Chapter 1167: Treasure Room

Alex felt the energy underground and grabbed onto the tail end of one of the spirit veins using his Qi.

He flexed his muscles and suddenly the tip of the main vein showed its face out of the ground. As soon as Alex saw that it was out, he pulled it out even more and the entire vein started coming out of the ground.

The white crystalline spirit vein was entirely uprooted a minute later and hung in the air. Alex felt the strain of having to hold something so strong with his own Qi, especially because the vein was sending out its own Qi, disturbing his own.

However, he had done it a couple of times today, so he had ready for it. He took the free storage bag that was prepared and sent it down onto the tail end of the main vein.

As soon as it reached the spirit vein, it started dragging in all of the spirit veins that was in the air, and not even a minute later, it was all gone.

The storage bag came flying back to Alex who held it in his hand and nodded to himself. He turned around towards the elders. "That was the last of it, right?" he asked.

"Yes, your majesty," one of the elders answered.

Alex looked at the destroyed land. "Do we bother planting some trees here, or what?" he asked.

"You don't have to worry about this, your Majesty. The trees will grow on their own in a few years," one of them answered.

"I see," Alex said. "How many did we get in the end?"

"We took all 56 spirit veins that were here," one of them said and put forth a pile of storage bags. Since the spirit veins were large and full of Qi, they couldn't be stored together at all or one would most likely destroy the other.

On top of that, the chances of the veins entangling were high as well, so it was better to keep them separate. Besides, they were large enough that there were barely any storage bags that could keep more than one spirit vein anyway.

Alex took all 56 bags and kept them inside his robes. His robes bulged around his waist, but no one said anything about it.

"What else do we have to do here?" Alex asked.

"There's nothing that needs your attention here, your Majesty," the elders said. "We can take care of the rest."

"Good. I will return then," Alex said.

He wanted to return on his own to let the elders do their job, but the elders ended up insisting that they follow him back. They would come back later to do the few things that were remaining.

Alex tried to argue, but it was more annoying to argue with them than to just let them come with him, so he did.

He returned back to the palace late in the evening and went to find Scarlet to tell her that he was done.

"Oh, you're back?" Scarlet asked from atop the sunstone where she was resting for the time being. "Did you get it all?"

"Yes," Alex said. "Where do I keep these? In the dome?"

"No, just place it all in the Treasure room in the palace," Scarlet said.

"There's a treasure room?" Alex asked with a surprised look on his face.

"Of course, there is," Scarlet said. "It's a palace after all. If a palace doesn't have a treasure room, then where would we keep all the valuable items?"

"I don't think I've seen it," Alex said.

"That's the point, isn't it?" Scarlet asked. "If anyone can find it, then it's not a very good treasure room."

"Makes sense," Alex said. "Where is it then? I'll go store these."

"Those elders should know the location, ask them," Scarlet said.

Alex nodded. "Alright, I'll do that," he said.

"By the way," Scarlet said. "I've decided to form a royal army. Can you take care of handling the logistics of it?"

"The logistics? I don't know if I'm right for the job though. Shouldn't one of the elders be better for this?" he asked.

"Oh, they will do all the job. You will only be there to approve or disapprove stuff. The continent needs them, but I don't want to deal with it at all," Scarlet said.

Alex sighed. "Did you really appoint me as the King just so you don't have to do the annoying work?" he asked.

"Of course," Scarlet said as she laughed. "Why would I make you a King if I was going to do everything on my own?"

"Damn you," Alex said. "I'm going to the treasure room. I'll see you later."

"Okay," Scarlet said. She watched Alex walk away and thought she was forgetting something important that she had to tell him but couldn't remember it immediately.

"Ah! I forgot to tell him how to open the room," she thought. "Whatever, he will come back when he fails."

Alex found one of the elders and asked them to lead him to the treasure room.

The path to the treasure room was simple but definitely surprising. One could only go to it through the throne room using a hidden door behind the throne itself.

"It's right through here, your Majesty" the elder showed the empty wall in front of him.

"Thank you," Alex said and looked at the wall. There were no signs of formations at all, but when looking through his demon eyes, he could see that it was hidden very well. Even with his demon eyes, he could only see a faint energy aura coming out of the wall.

He placed his palm on the wall and poured his Qi into it.

"Your Majesty, you can't just—"

The elder was going to warn him not to try and unlock the formation, but seeing how nothing happened, the elder stopped halfway through his sentence.

"What did you say?" he asked.

The elder looked surprised and confused. "Why did the formation not attack you?" he couldn't help but ask. One couldn't just pour Qi into a formation after all, especially on one that required something else to activate it.

There were defensive mechanisms to these sorts of formations that were more of a seal. However, seeing as nothing happened to Alex, the elder couldn't understand what was going on.

Alex frowned too. He had activated the formation that locked the door, but he was missing the key.

'Is it Phoenix blood?' he wondered. To enter the treasure room back in the White Tiger's realm, he needed White Tiger's blood. However, he didn't have the Phoenix blood at all.

"Do I need to go back and ask Scarlet to help me open this?" he asked.

"Your Majesty, the crown," the elder said. "Wear the crown and you will be able to open it."

"Oh!" Alex said and quickly brought out the crown. Scarlet had let him keep it, so he did. He placed the crown on his head and suddenly felt a coolness as his mind felt refreshed.

"Whoever made this crown is very talented for sure," Alex said softly.

The elder didn't say anything as he didn't know the crown's origins. The crown definitely preceded him by thousands of years at least.

Alex placed his palm back on the door and poured his Qi. This time around, the door made a humming sound as it slowly vanished into nothing.

Alex saw the opening and walked in. The opening led to a long hallway that was nearly 200 meters long and ended up in another room that had a door of its own.

Alex opened that door too and finally, he could enter the treasure room.

The treasure room of a palace was by no means a normal place. It was a 20-meter wide room that was about 2 floors high and had various sorts of treasures that were gathered throughout the ages, be it from techniques to weapons to all sorts of different items.

Alex was overwhelmed for a bit by the number of things in the room. The elder that had followed behind him was surprised even more so.

He couldn't help but want to browse through everything that was there.

"Your majesty, you should take these armors for yourself. I don't recall seeing you wear armor ever," the elder said.

"Maybe," Alex said. It was definitely a good idea to do that. He looked at the swords and they weren't bad either.

There were formation designs, talisman scripts, and even some pill recipes there that may come to use sometime in the future.

Not only that, he even saw various different pills that were kept there.

Fortunately, everything in the room was named, or else Alex would have no idea what was what.

He found an empty corner and placed all 56 storage bags there before taking out a talisman to write exactly what it was.

After storing it, he went around the treasure room to see if he could take something. Given that he was the king, he doubted anyone would mind.

He took an armor that he desperately needed. Then, he took a few defensive and offensive talismans as well. After that, he learned the various different scripts and blueprints as well as some of the pill recipes.

He found a defensive technique, something that he had been lacking for a very long time. He had been using the same defensive technique he had learned back in the Crimson Empire, so it was about time to change them.

He wasn't lacking offensive techniques though, so he didn't take any of those.

As he looked around for a while longer, his eyes fell on something. When he read the description, he couldn't help but be surprised that something like that existed at all.

"This is not bad," Alex thought as he took the item too.

The elder with Alex wondered why he took a set of robes with him when there were so many other treasures that should have caught his eye.

"Your majesty, is there something unique about that robe?" he couldn't help but be curious about it.

"Yes," Alex said as he handed the talisman with the information about the robe to the old man.

The elder took the talisman and read through it calmly. However, by the end of it, his eyes wide as a duck's egg.

"How... how can something like this exist?" he couldn't help but ask.

"I don't know," Alex said. "Which is why I'm so surprised too."

He pulled the cloth a bit and found it really resilient. "It is also very durable. I shouldn't have any problem fighting in it," he said.

"You should definitely wear it, your Majesty," the elder said. "That is perhaps the best thing in this room."

Alex nodded. He felt the same as well.

He kept the robe in his storage and looked through the rest of the stuff. He came across a few treasures for mental protection and tested how strong they were.

Of them, only a single necklace showed any sign of being worth it. Given the strength of his own spiritual energy, he could defend against any mental attacks that the other artifacts could.

This necklace, however, could defend Saint Transformation realm of mental attacks, which he wasn't yet capable of.

"Can you use a mental attack on me?" Alex asked the elder.

"Attack you, your Majesty?" the elder said with wide eyes. "I could never."

"No, please. I want to test something," Alex said.

"But how could I attack you, your Majesty? If I were to hurt you by some chance, I could never—"

"It's an order," Alex said sternly. He needed to test the before and after results of a spiritual attack on whether he was wearing the necklace or not.

The elder sighed in the end and complied with the order. "I'm not the best at using mental attacks, but still, please be careful," he said and launched an attack at Alex.

Alex braced himself for the mental pain that was going to come next. He was ready for the head-pounding pain and only hoped that he didn't faint.

He had pride in his own spiritual energy, but this was a Saint Transformation realm cultivator that he was going up against. Pride did little to stop an attack of such might.

Alex waited for the attack to hit, and waited, and waited. However, the attack never came at all.

"What are you doing?" he asked. "Attack me already."

"Huh?" the elder was surprised. "But... I did. I already attacked you. How are you not hurt?"

"What?" Alex was confused now. "You didn't attack me at all. I didn't even feel anything."

"But I did," the elder said softly. "I must've made a mistake, your highness. Let me do it again."

Alex prepared himself and watched the elder ready his attack as well. However, once again, the attack didn't come.

"You weren't hurt?" the elder asked.

"You attacked already?" Alex was surprised. "How come I don't feel any—"

His words paused as his eyes slowly moved upward. He reached up with his hand and pulled down the crown on his head.

The coolness he felt in his mind disappeared instantly, leaving him with what felt like a drowsy mind.

"Uhh... try again," Alex said.

The elder nodded. He launched an attack, and Alex definitely felt this one. "Argh!" he cried out in pain and stumbled a bit as he fell to the ground. His vision went black for a few seconds before it slowly came back to him.

It took him about 10 seconds to slowly get back up and even then his head hurt quite a bit. He shook his head and half a minute later, the pain finally subsided.

He reached for the necklace and wore it. "Can you do it again?" he asked.

The elder nodded and attacked.

The necklace suddenly vibrated and stopped the mental attack from reaching him. It couldn't completely protect him, but what did remain of the attack was of no worry to Alex. His spiritual energy easily destroyed the remaining attack, leaving him unharmed.

"Not bad," he thought as he touched the necklace. "However, it is nowhere near as good as this crown."

Alex placed the crown back on his head and immediately felt the difference of night and day when it came to how the crown affected his mind.

The coolness took away any remaining pain he was feeling. "Damn, why did no one tell me that the crown was a mental defense artifact?" he asked.

"We... weren't aware," the elder said. "We don't know much about the crown after all."

"You didn't experiment while you were with it? You have 5 thousand years to do so," Alex said.

"It is a crown that belongs to the ruler of the continent, we didn't dare touch it except for when it needed cleaning," the elder said.

"I see," Alex said as he touched the crown. "I can't just wear it wherever I go, so I think I will keep the necklace too."

Afterward, he searched the treasure room for a few more things, but nothing substantial stood out to him. He did notice a very large amount of spirit stones kept in a few storage bags in one corner, which could be used to fund whatever idea it was that Scarlet and the rest required.

'The royal army can certainly use it,' he thought.

Alex left the treasure room, very satisfied, and closed everything. With the formation working again, no one could tell that the throne room led to the Treasure room at all.

"Your majesty, your father has returned," someone reported to him.

"Ah, good," Alex said and went over to where his father was. He was resting in one of the rooms along with Ren Guanting who had gone out with him.

Whisker jumped onto his shoulder the moment he entered the room, and elder Ren stood up to greet him.

"How did it go?" Alex asked. "Any complications?"

"None, your majesty," the elder said. "We had the people take both pills one after another. The antidote pill healed them from the toxins, and the sweating pill made them sweat out all the red dust in their body."

"Oh," Alex was surprised. "The sweating pills actually worked on the body cultivators? I would've assumed that it wouldn't."

"They took some time to work on the stronger body cultivators, but it did work in the end," the elder said.

"I see," Alex said. "Maybe that's how it works on body cultivators."

"Now that they are healed, do you have any plans on what we should do with them?" the elder asked.

Alex thought for a bit. "Do you know what we should do, father?" he asked.

"Send them home," Graham said. "While I don't believe anyone has an actual home to return to, just sending them to the Wasteland where they can live as a tribe should be enough. That is what they had been wishing for the longest time while they were kept on that godforsaken island."

Alex gave some thought to the suggestion and nodded. "Give those people two choices. They can stay here and cultivate as they like. We will give them some resources to get started."

"However, if they choose to, they can return to the Wasteland where there should be locations with Phoenix fire that don't have people living in it yet," Alex said.

"As you say, your Majesty," elder Ren said.

"You may leave, elder."

Ren Guanting bowed and walked away from the room.

"You really have quite a bit of power, don't you?" Graham said while showing a surprised face. "I would've never assumed somebody strong like her could ever listen to you."

"These 10 elders are loyal to the throne, so they are very respectful of me," Alex said. "As long as I don't cross some sort of boundary, they should be willing to help me with everything they can."

Graham nodded. "Anyway, I'm feeling exhausted for some reason. I will go rest in a bit," he said.

"Oh right, before you go," Alex spoke as he brought out something and handed it over to his father. "You should learn this technique. You have already gone through Mortal Cleansing, so you will need to start cultivating soon. This technique will help you with that."

"Oh, really?" Graham said excitedly as he took the Purelake Qi Absorption Method. He flipped the book and started reading. However, as he went along, his smile turned to a frown.

Alex frowned as well when he saw that. "Is... something wrong? Do you not like the book?" he asked.

Graham gave an awkward look as he turned to his son. "Forget about not liking the book, I can't even read it. What language is this written in?" he asked.

"It's the demon lan— ah, I forgot. You don't know the language of this world," Alex said as he slapped his forehead. "You will need to learn how to read and write the language of this world."

"That will take some time, won't it?" Graham asked. "You can't just learn a language in a short time."

"You can if you have an eidetic memory," Alex said. "Here's what we'll do. Whisker will stay with you and read everything that is written in that book, so you can start cultivating immediately."

"Once you can cultivate, you will use this Spirit Cleansing Lily and open your Spiritual sea. After that, learning anything, including the language, will be a piece of cake."

Chapter 1169: The Logistics

"Uhh... this pill and this pill." A young man pointed at two different pills that were showcased under formation barriers.

"Antidotes, again?" the seller asked. "Did the last few pills not work either?"

The young man gave a sad smile and shook his head. "None of them seem to work, so I have to keep on trying with new ones," he said as he looked through the various pills that were on show. "Are there any that are not on display?"

"No, I wouldn't dare hide pills from a customer when I could be selling them," the seller said.

"I see," the young man said sadly. "How much for the pills?"

"52 thousand true spirit stones," the seller said.

The young man gave a dry laugh when he heard that. "So expensive," he said softly as he fished for some spirit stones.

"It's a fair price, young man," the seller said. "I wouldn't try to profit off of someone's illness. It wouldn't sit right with my conscience."

"No, no, I'm not blaming you," the young man quickly said. "It's just that I'm used to having these pills cost less than what I'm paying right now."

"That's not possible unless you can get the alchemist himself to give you a discount," the seller quickly said.

The young man smiled. "I suppose. My family has a few good alchemists, so I never had to buy the pills myself. My father is the best at making them," he said.

"Oh, your father can make pills too? Why don't you just have him make some for you then?" the seller asked.

"I... don't really talk with him anymore," the young man said. "He had taught me quite a bit about alchemy when I was a child, but... I wasn't really into learning at the time. I regret it right now."

The seller didn't respond. "If only you could ask the King to try and look after your injury, he could maybe help you out," he said.

"The king?" the young man gave a weird look. "Does the new Phoenix ruler know about pills?"

"No, not lord Phoenix," the seller said. "The King, Alex."

The young man gave a confused look. "Who's Alex?" he asked.

"Have you not heard the news?" the seller asked with wide eyes. "In her Coronation event, lord Phoenix appointed the Alchemist Alex as the new King of the continent."

"Oh," the young man said with a surprised expression. "The Southern Continent has a change in rulership as well, huh?"

"Yes, after such a long time," the seller said.

"I see, and this king Alex is a great Alchemist?" the young man asked.

"The best in the world," the seller said.

"Haha, that's quite the boast. How good are his pills?" the young man asked.

"I hear most of his pills go above 90% in harmony, many even reaching 95%. Tell me they aren't good," the seller said proudly.

"I see, that's not bad for someone th—" the young man paused. "Wait, over 95%?"

The seller nodded after seeing the shock on the young man's face.

The young man was indeed very shocked. He had never expected there to be someone in this world that could make pills nearly as great as his father.

'Should I talk with him about the antidote?' he wondered before quickly shaking his head. 'I can't let anyone know I'm here. They will go to him first if any.'

"Here's you go," the young man paid for the pills with 50 thousand Spirit stones. "Thank you for the pill."

"Come anytime," the seller waved him away.

The young man put up his scarf and hid his face as he walked through the streets of the busy city. He reached a small tavern and walked in to go to his room.

He stood in front of the room and flexed his aura a bit before opening the door.

As soon as he walked in, a head turned in his direction. "I'm back," the young man said unenthusiastically.

The head followed where he walked and didn't miss any movement of the young man. The young man turned and looked at the woman that was sitting quietly on the bed.

She wore pink robes with a white veil that went over her head. An orange mask covered her face with absolutely no opening for her to see, breathe, or eat from.

The young man walked up to the woman and grabbed her hand.

"I am back," he spoke as he wrote the words on her hand with his finger.

The woman nodded after feeling the word. She used her Qi to create a set of words in the air.

"Did I get more..." the man read the words and quickly answered her back by writing on her palm again.
"Yes, I got more pills."

He placed the two pills on her palm.

"Which one first?" the woman wrote in the air.

"Any," the man wrote back.

The woman nodded and lifted her mask to eat the first pill. She waited for a while and then ate the second one. After she was done with both, she shook her head.

The young man didn't even have it in him to feel dejected as another pill didn't work to cure her poison. At this point, the young man was feeling desperate.

"Should we... just go back?" he asked, but of course, there was no answer. The woman couldn't hear him at all after all.

The young man thought for a bit and quickly shook his head. "I can't go back. Not after..."

Since going back to his father wasn't an option, he wondered if he should go find the King of this continent. 'How do I possibly talk with someone so high profile as the king? I would have to reveal my own identity. I can't possibly do that,' he thought.

That wasn't a choice either.

In the end, the young man had nothing else he could do. He held the woman's hand and spoke, "Don't worry, I'll fix this somehow. I will take you back and heal you, even if that means I will have to stand up to father. Don't worry."

The woman stroked his head while he sat there wondering how long it will be in the future before their lives would finally return back to some form of normality again.

* * * * *

Alex sat with wide eyes as he read the cost of keeping and maintaining a mere 5000 people army.

"Are you sure these numbers are not common spirit stones? There's no way it could be True spirit stones, right?" he asked.

"That's the correct number, your highness," the elder that had brought him the information said.

"How can 5 thousand people cost us this many spirit stones for just a year?" Alex asked.

"Ahem," the elder coughed a little. "That's monthly, not yearly."

"What?!" Alex's eyes went wide when he heard that. "This can't possibly be monthly."

"I am afraid it is, your majesty," the elder said. "1000 of those would be Saint realm cultivators after all, with the remaining 4000 being no less than a True King realm cultivator."

"Even then," Alex said. "These numbers sound simply absurd. I mean, 800 Million Spirit stones per month?"

"That is the requirement if we want to have a well-maintained army, your majesty," the elder said.

Alex scratched his head as he read through the numbers that made up everything.

"Salary, housing, training, talismans, formations, pills, weapons, clothing," he read through it all.

"There's just so much. Is there no way to reduce these numbers?"

"There... is a way, but it is going to cost us a lot initially while being beneficial in the long run," the elder said.

"What is it?" Alex asked excitedly.

"You see, since most of the cost comes from stuff like pills and talismans, instead of buying them from somewhere, how about establishing royal institutes whose main purpose would be to make these items," the elder said. "If we get too many, we can even turn it into an actual business, bringing in some income."

"I see," Alex said. "That's not a bad idea, but it is going to cost us a bit early on, huh?"

"That's right, your Majesty," the elder said.

Alex fell into some thought. "Establishing those institutes does feel like the best way of going about this issue, but then, we have to hire them too, don't we? That's another hassle," he said.

The elder said nothing and let Alex speak out his thoughts for the moment.

"We can exclude salary, housing, and clothing for the time being as there's no need to change them exactly."

"We can even remove weapons for the time being as well since a weapon isn't necessarily something that can be considered monthly. Once they get one, there would be no reason to change it so quickly."

"As for training, that is one place we cannot slack off at all, so the cost there remains."

"So, pills, formations, and talismans are the only thing we can save cost on, isn't it?" Alex thought. "Very well, it sounds like creating an institute for it is the best way to go about it."

"It does," the elder said. "So, should I tally up the costs for these institutes as well?"

"Yes, please do so," Alex said. "Also, you can start spreading the message that the royal family is looking to hire Alchemists, Talisman makers, and Formation designers. We will be hiring them no matter what in the end, so we might as well get started."

"Yes, your Majesty," the elder said.

"Also," Alex continued. "Just to make it more enticing to the ones that might not want to join, tell them that the ones that join will gain monthly tutelage from me. That should help make the bigger names want to join as well."

Chapter 1170: An Evening Walk

To a cultivator, a month was supposed to be a very short period of time that would usually just pass before one could even realize it had passed.

However, to Alex, the month following his ascendance to royalty felt like the longest month in recent memory.

His days were no longer monotonous where he could spend them doing the same thing over and over, simply losing himself to time.

Instead, he was forced to look at different problems every day, not letting each day blend into the other to not feel the passage of time.

"That will be all, your Majesty," the elder finished reporting everything to Alex.

"Thank you," Alex said while on his throne and sent the elder away. He slumped a bit after the elder was gone.

'So the tests for the production institutes are tomorrow, huh?' he thought. It had been a month since it was advertised that the royal palace was looking to hire many Alchemists, Talisman makers, and Formation designers. And finally, they were here to take the test that would help them join.

He needed to be ready for that tomorrow.

'Damn Scarlet, she's making me do everything,' he thought as he got off the throne and stretched. It had been a long day and finally, it all came to an end. He couldn't wait to go back and cultivate.

He left the throne room and made his way to his father's room. After knocking twice, his father's spiritual sense noticed him and he opened the door.

Alex walked through and went in to find his father learning how to read and write the demon language along with Whisker. It had been an entire month, so he was good enough that if given the time, he could read and write anything.

Still, it didn't come to him naturally, so he practiced a bit.

"Are you done?" Graham asked.

"Yeah, I just got done," Alex said. "What about you? Did you cultivate today?"

"I did," Graham said. "But once again, it's very slow."

Alex felt his father's cultivation base and nodded. He was merely in the Skin Tempering 3rd realm despite cultivating for an entire month.

It was impossible to tell if he was just bad at cultivating or if there was something wrong with his body.

He had asked Scarlet to check, but even she couldn't tell what was wrong with his father.

'It's not like he is practicing with bad technique or even rushing,' Alex thought. 'And I've also given him the best pills he can use right now, so why is his cultivation base so slow?'

It was impossible to tell exactly what the reason was, but at least his father could continue with his body cultivation.

According to Scarlet, one didn't necessarily have to have Qi cultivation to be immortal. You could also take the physical cultivation route to immortality. Although, that was significantly worse for the cultivator since advancing their body cultivation was extremely difficult in the Immortal realm without any sort of natural treasures.

'She said it was rare, but not impossible to do, so I can relax for now,' he thought.

"Did you go meet your friends?" Alex asked.

"Yes, I did," Graham said. "But most of them have already returned to the desert to live their life without any more twists and turns. They just want to live a simple life now."

Alex nodded. He wouldn't mind a simple life right now either.

He talked with his father for a few more minutes before walking out. Whisker remained with his father to keep him company, so Alex was all alone.

He thought of returning to his room, but instead, he decided to leave the palace. If he were to tell someone he was going out, the elders would have 3 people follow him immediately.

So instead, he simply sneaked out of the palace without letting anyone know.

With the skills and treasures he had on him, no one could even realize that he had left the palace right now.

He pulled out a small straw hat from his storage ring and wore it on his head. The hat drooped just enough to hide his face if he looked slightly downward. Without anyone specifically trying to see his face, they wouldn't be able to.

He walked through the evening crowd of the city that all rushed around buying and selling stuff, or returning from work. There were restaurants that were busy serving food to the mortal early in the evening.

Alex smiled softly and decided to try out some mortal food.

He kept his hat and sat alone at a table as the food came. There weren't many tables in the restaurant, so some people came and sat at the same table as him, without a single clue as to who he was.

Alex quite liked that.

He silently ate his food while listening to the conversation of the many around him. It sounded like quite a few of them were excited about the tests tomorrow that was going to be broadcast.

'I did promise monthly tutelage to the alchemists that will join,' he thought. He could understand why it was so popular.

He left the restaurant after he was finished and continued with his walk. The number of people walking around reduced significantly as time went on.

The air chilled a bit as well, and Alex found the lonely walk quite entrancing. He had needed this change of pace to refresh himself.

As he walked, he finally felt that he was free enough to think of what he needed to do next. Not just as a King, but also as himself.

"Scarlet is taking her time fixing her rushed cultivation," he thought. "So, it will be a while before she can reach the immortal realm to unlock whatever storage it is that needs Immortal Qi. Without her reaching the Immortal realm or reaching anywhere close to it, I can forget about her taking me away too."

Even if she did take just him back to the Western Continent somehow, he would still have trouble coming back from there. With the responsibility he was handed, he couldn't just leave the Southern Continent for years before he was strong enough either.

"So, I have to do what I need to before I have a chance of leaving this place," he thought. This meant, the following years of his were going to be filled with a lot of cultivation, a lot of training, a lot of pill making, and most definitely a lot of meditation to learn some more dao.

He knew exactly what dao he wanted to learn next, and even had some rough idea of how he was going to achieve it.

"I probably don't have to hide my alchemy skills, so it will definitely be easier," he thought.

He continued walking through the city and walked past the Insight Pavilion that was still working.

The pavilion was under new management now, becoming the Royal Insight Pavilion. With Zhu Shaofan dead, there was no one else to take over it, so Alex decided to use it for himself.

He went around the city for an hour or two more and finally returned to the palace, retreating into his royal chambers to wait for the next day to begin.