

Alchemy 1271

Chapter 1271: Helping the Sects

Shao Chun and the rest of the elders were still in disbelief that they now had a Saint spirit vein in their own backyard that would help them reach heights that only a handful of people could have reached in the Crimson Empire.

They thanked Alex profusely and thanked their own good sense to let Alex do what he wanted.

After planting the spirit vein, Alex then gave away pill recipes to the sect for free. He didn't ask for anything in return at all. He simply gave it to them because he wanted to.

He wanted the sect he once belonged to achieve a lot in the future. He wished to do the same for the Tiger Sect as well, but there wasn't much he could do to help the Tiger sect improve itself. He could give them some techniques, but that was about it.

After giving away the recipes, he then proceeded to give a lecture on Alchemy to the rest of the elders of the sect. He didn't want to give lectures to the disciples as there were so many of them.

Instead, he decided to give the lecture to the elders who would then pass it along to the disciples on their own.

His lectures lasted two days, and after that, he was done with everything he could do for the Hong Wu sect. Not only had the lectures been about Alchemy, but he had also given them knowledge on how to grow ingredients well.

He had that knowledge as well, so he passed it along. Along with that, he also gave them some formation blueprints that would make for an amazing formation to improve a garden's efficiency in growing plants, just like the 5 elemental formation that was around one of the Alchemy gardens that he had brought back from the Southern forest so many years ago.

After he was done, he left the Hong Wu sect for the time being and went over to the Tiger sect.

He hadn't visited the Tiger sect in the 3 days he had been in the Scarlet city. His time was mostly spent on the Hong Wu sect and with his master and the rest coming to visit them daily, he saw no reason to immediately go there.

Still, he had to go there eventually as he had to do a few things in that sect too. He didn't beat around the bush and instead directly told the current sect master of the Tiger sect what he planned on doing.

The current sect master of the Tiger sect was a middle-aged man that had joined the sect some 2 decades back. Normally, one couldn't become the sect master of any sect in that short of a time frame, but because of how the Tiger sect functioned, anyone with the strongest disciple could become the sect master.

Just like the Hong Wu sect, the Tiger sect also increased the cultivation threshold at which a disciple graduated from the sect. One had to now break through the True Disciple realm and enter the True Master realm to no longer remain a disciple of the sect.

As for age, they had to be 40 years or younger. Anyone above that age would automatically graduate.

The current prime disciple was someone who was about 36 years old and had a cultivation base at the end of the True Disciple realm.

People in the sect were all but certain that the prime disciple hadn't broken through to the True Master's realm yet just so he could keep his master at the sect master position for as long as he could.

In the remaining time, he hoped his master would find another disciple that could quickly reach the status of a prime disciple.

Alex spoke to the sect master directly and told him about the Saint spirit vein.

The middle-aged man did not trust Alex at all in the beginning. Even if he was the guest elder's son, something like Saint Spirit vein was still unbelievable to the man.

It took minutes of explanation from Wen Cheng, Luo Mei, and the rest for the sect master to realize that Alex wasn't lying at all. He could achieve what he wanted to do.

"Are you serious, senior?" the man asked. "Will you really put a Saint spirit vein in our sect?"

"Yes," Alex nodded.

The sect master was skeptical about it still. "Why?" he asked.

Wen Cheng sighed. "My disciple doesn't have any ulterior motive. He's just doing it because he was part of this sect at one point," he explained.

"That's right," Luo Mei nodded. "My little brother is just trying to help the sect."

Du Yuhan and Liu Xun made similar arguments, and finally, the sect master was coming around to accept what Alex was saying.

"If you can really do it, then do it," the sect master said. "But are you sure you want nothing in return? Just getting it for free feels... wrong for some reason."

Alex thought for a bit. "Actually, I was planning on taking something away anyway, but if it helps calm your anxiety, why don't we make a trade then?" he asked.

"Trade? What sort?" the sect master asked.

"I will give your sect a Saint Spirit vein. In exchange, I want something of yours too," Alex said.

"What do you want, senior?" the sect master asked. He couldn't imagine there was anything in the sect that he could compare with a Saint spirit vein. That would just be absurd.

"I want the thing that formed the crater," Alex said. "I want the Black stele at the center of your sect crater."

"Huh?" the sect master looked confused. "Black Stele? Do you mean the thing that is behind that formation?"

"Yes, that's exactly what I want," Alex said.

The sect master got curious now. Why was it that Alex wanted the black stele? What exactly was the black stele and why was it hidden inside a formation?

The sect master had arrived after the black stele was put into a formation, so he hadn't ever seen it before and had only heard of it.

Also, from what he had heard of it, it was just a random black stone that was in this land long before the Tiger sect was even formed.

Was there some history there that he did not know about? Should he actually refuse the offer?

As the sect leader thought that, he caught Alex's eyes who simply smiled at him.

'What are you thinking trying to deny a Saint realm cultivator,' he cursed at himself.

"I would love to make this deal with you, senior," the sect master said. "Thank you for giving us a Saint Spirit vein."

Alex smiled. "Great," he said. "I shall start my work tonight when the disciples have gone back."

He then left to look around the sect with his master who showed him all the new stuff that had come around since he had disappeared all those years ago.

The tour lasted until late into the night when Alex finally started to act on his promise. He pulled out a storage bag and from within it pulled out the Saint spirit vein.

The many elders stood around the sect crater and watched Alex begin.

Chapter 1272: Threading the Needle

Planting the Saint spirit vein in the Tiger Sect was a difficult endeavor. Unlike the other side of the river in the Forbidden Fields, the section of the Tiger sect where he was going to place the Saint spirit vein already had another spirit vein in it.

As such, if he wanted to easily place the Saint spirit vein, he would have to take out the other spirit veins that were already in the ground and replace them with the Saint spirit vein.

However, if Alex could do that, it wouldn't be a difficult endeavor at all.

He knew what was going to happen from the beginning, but seeing it for himself was still annoying to Alex. He used his spiritual sense to check the underground status of the sect and recorded all the various twists and turns the True spirit vein was positioned inside the ground.

Alex carefully pulled out all the dirt from around the spirit vein, not touching any of it in the process.

The task itself wasn't hard at all, but it took some time. Nearly 20 minutes later, Alex finally relaxed a little as almost all the dirt that he could pull out from the ground was outside.

The many elders from around the sect looked at the open ground where everything but the spirit veins had been pulled away from. They were surprised that Alex had even taken away the many stages that were used for fighting during the process.

Alex looked at the spirit vein and frowned.

It would've been so much easier if he could take it all away, but unfortunately, he couldn't do that. After all, there were so many formations around the sect that were currently running thanks to this very spirit vein.

If he took away the spirit vein right now, every single formation would immediately stop working, causing a problem that wouldn't be small in any way, especially when there were so many disciples that were currently inside their homes and many different halls that were relying on these very formations.

Instead, Alex had to thread the needle. He had to send the Saint spirit vein in through the True spirit vein without disturbing it all that much.

He had a level of flexibility on how much he could move the True spirit vein before the formations completely stopped working.

He got started as soon as he could and sent the tip of the Saint spirit vein through the gaps in the ground.

The Saint spirit vein was a bit larger than the True spirit vein, not that size was ever a factor in the quality of spirit veins. Larger spirit veins simply held more Qi in them.

He slowly snuck in the Saint spirit veins, pushing aside the True spirit vein slightly when needed, and forcing the saint Spirit vein itself to bulge a bit if needed.

After nearly an hour-long methodical insertion of the spirit vein into the ground with the other spirit vein, Alex was done.

He wiped his forehead, even though there was no sweat, and turned to look at the elders. "I'm done," he spoke. "You guys can do the rest."

Since the only task remaining was to put back the dirt and place the different fighting stages he had moved, the elders could do it themselves.

Wen Cheng flew toward Alex with a rather shocked expression on his face. "I have never before seen a naked spirit vein," he said. "You must have become very strong to be able to do so."

"Compared to the Saints in the other continents, my current cultivation base is considered average actually," Alex said. "Although the power I can produce with this cultivation base is still better than average."

"What? I can't even sense what your cultivation base is, and it is considered average?" Wen Cheng asked.

"Saint spirit veins are very easily available in the other continents, so the difference in cultivation base is the same as well," Alex said. "That makes cultivation so much easier that you can find a dime a dozen saints over there."

Wen Cheng made a confused look. "A what a dozen?" he asked.

"A dime," Alex said before he realized what he was saying. "Sorry, it's a phrase from the Central continent. I meant there are many Saints in the other continents."

He shook his head to get his mind back on what was happening in front of him. After the recent Soul resonance where he had seen his clone's memories, he frequently recalled those memories, especially the ones from his university days as well as from when Ronron grew up.

He wanted to know what he had missed, what he could never gain again. In doing so, his vocabulary had been affected a bit as well.

It wasn't affected very much, but once in a while, he spoke things that the people around him didn't understand.

"I see," Wen Cheng said. "You did say there were many of them before too."

"Oh right, have you made the decision yet? You're coming with me, right?" Alex asked.

"Most likely, but I can't make the decision alone," Wen Cheng said. "I will have to hear from my wife too and see if she agrees. She will need a few days to decide."

"Take your time," Alex said. "We should have at least 2 more weeks. If you decide to leave with me, you can use the remaining time to say goodbye."

Wen Cheng nodded. "I know," he said.

"You should leave now, master," Alex said. "And keep the other elders away from me."

"Hm? Is something bad going to happen?" Wen Cheng asked.

"Most likely not, but it's better to be cautious," Alex said. "Especially because the intent from it is not going to be very weak."

Wen Cheng nodded and left while Alex dropped down to where the black stele was located.

With a single flick of his wrist, the formations that covered the black stele in an opaque barrier disappeared completely.

The black stele, which was more iridescent than it was simply black, finally showed itself for the first time in the past 3 decades.

The last time it was visible was when Alex had crafted this very formation to hide its appearance.

He immediately closed his eyes and took a few deep breaths to prepare himself.

Previously, he could remain unworried in the face of this stele because he hadn't learned the Human language yet and could only learn anything when he relied on his spiritual sense to translate the words for him.

Since he had now already learned the Human language, simply opening his eyes and looking at the stele was going to be enough for those words to attack him.

He had felt the terror of the Intent behind this piece of rock before, so he wanted to be as prepared as he could be.

The Black Stele contained a skill that helped him create weapons using his spiritual energy. However, that wasn't it. There was more to the skill that he hadn't learned yet.

That was the main reason he was here. He wanted to learn more about this skill.

So, he took a deep breath and opened his eyes to look at the massive black stele that stood before him.

Chapter 1273: Sword

As soon as Alex's eyes fell on the Black Stele, he unintentionally read some of the words that were on it. As that happened, an Intent seemed to enter his mind to fight him.

Alex fought back with his own Intent and easily defeated it. Still, feeling how strong the Intent of the god that had created this black stele was, he couldn't help but feel nervous about what would happen when he seriously decided to read it.

For that, he first needed to pull the black stele out of the ground first.

Alex had yet to check just how large this black stele was underneath the ground. Because of the Intent, he didn't dare use his spiritual sense recklessly around it. He would just have to pull it out and check for himself how large the black stele actually was.

He flew up and grabbed the black stele with his Qi. Fortunately, the Intent didn't attack in this instance. It seemed it was designed to only fight back when someone was trying to learn the technique that was written on it.

Alex grabbed it tightly and pulled it upward. The ground shuddered as for the first time in over a thousand years, the black stele was being moved.

Alex immediately felt the weight of the object he was holding and was surprised. It was so dense and heavy, that it was a surprise it hadn't sunken even more in the ground.

Alex exerted all the force in his body and pulled on the black stele. He even used his weaker blood aura to wrap it around the stele to pull it better.

While pulling it up, he also simultaneously started moving around the dirt near the stele. The looser the ground became, the easier it became to pull the stele upward.

Bit by bit, the stele started lifting itself from the ground. The weight of stele was heavy, but just enough so that Alex could handle it.

The weight didn't surprise him, but the side of the stele definitely did.

As he pulled the stele upward, he realized that it wasn't just a large piece of rock that was stuck to the ground. It was a long piece of rock.

Not only was it long, it was also in the shape of a sword, which surprised Alex. What was above the ground all this time was nothing more than just half a hilt of the massive sword.

There was no cross guard, but the design of the sword was clear enough that even with half of it still in the ground, Alex could tell what it was.

"What are you doing?" a voice spoke in his head.

"Later, I need to focus," Alex said, ignoring Godslayer for the moment while he continued pulling on the sword.

"Hmm... I was wondering what disturbed my sweet sleep," Godslayer spoke with a hint of hatred in his voice. "It was this thing."

Alex could hear Godslayer, but he ignored it the best he could while he continued pulling. Finally, minutes later, the entirety of the black stone stele, which was actually a black stone sword was revealed.

The massive stone sword was about 2 meters in thickness, 4 meters in width, and nearly 80 meters long. Made with some very dense material, the black sword was a very heavy object that shook the ground as it lay flat.

The sword seemed to have words on only one side, so Alex was free to admire the beauty and craftsmanship of the object in front of him.

"Wow!" he couldn't help but say. "It's not an actual sword, is it? It looks fake, but I don't know much about the gods to accurately tell that."

Having come alongside the senior Yang, this thing was definitely in the Sky God's treasury. Meaning, it was something very important, most definitely belonging to either a strong faction or someone important.

"I can't feel any Qi. It must be fake," He spoke softly.

"Of course, it's not a real sword," Godslayer said. "What are you, an idiot?"

"Go easy on me. I'm not very knowledgeable about the immortal realms. I've seen books eat blood and wells that accurately predict the future. At this point, anything is possible," Alex said.

Godslayer couldn't retort that. "Well, it's not a weapon or an artifact. It's no different than a piece of paper that someone wrote on," he said. "Except that someone is a god and gods like being fancy for no reason."

"Is that so?" Alex asked while he touched the side of the sword. "Maybe there was an advantage to using this."

"Well, he probably chose this material because it was long-lasting. Turning it into the shape of a sword was entirely unnecessary though," Godslayer said. "Well, what could you expect from him."

"Him? This belonged to a man?" Alex asked. "What was he? What was his title?"

"Hmm... was it the Sword god? No, the Weapons god. It was the Weapons god that was always together with the Sword god," Godslayer said. "He was one of the ones I hated the most."

"The Weapons god? How does one become a weapons god?" Alex asked. "Do you have to learn every single weapon?"

"Pretty much," Godslayer said. "Well, gods can simply claim to be a god of something, which can be proven after a few tests. Unless there is someone to counter their claim, they usually end up being named as one, so we can't tell if this person was really as good at using every single weapon or not."

"For all we know, nobody could have claimed they could win against him and he got the name as such," Godslayer said.

"That makes sense, I suppose," Alex said. "He was your enemy too?"

"Yes," Godslayer said. "One of the ones I most despised."

"Do you know why?" Alex asked. "Why you despised him?"

"I—"

Godslayer paused as a few memories flashed through his mind. Not a single one of the images was any bit intelligible, but somehow the emotions they had had still came through and the hatred Godslayer felt increased tenfold.

"I don't know why," Godslayer said. "I simply hate him."

"You hate every god," Alex said.

"No, this one is different," he said. "I don't know why... but this one feels personal."

Alex was surprised to hear that. Personal was not a word that he expected Godslayer to use to describe his hatred. After all, his hatred towards the gods was always irrational.

However, hearing that it was personal, Alex couldn't help but wonder if it was in fact rational hate.

"I want to kill him all over again," Godslayer said with an angry voice.

"Again?" Alex was surprised. "This god is dead?"

"Most definitely," Godslayer said. "I can't remember much from those times, but if what I am thinking is correct, then he was one of my first victims."

"Wait, didn't you say he used to be with the Sword god a lot? If he died ages ago, then did the Sword god live long enough to capture you?" Alex asked.

"Capture me? No," Godslayer said. "I killed that Sword god. The one that captured me is a different one."

"Ah, different one, I see" Alex nodded. "You've really killed quite a lot, huh?"

He wanted to learn more from Godslayer, but Godslayer didn't have anything more to say about the Weapons god. After all, there wasn't much he remembered anyway from that far back.

"Is there going to be a lot of Intents attacking your spiritual world soon?" Godslayer asked. "I want to go back to sleep."

"I'm sorry," Alex said. "But I plan on learning whatever technique lies in here as soon as I can. You might have to stay awake for a little longer."

"Hmm, this thing has a technique in it, huh?" Godslayer asked. "I'm curious what sort of technique it is for the Weapons God to personally write it into something near indestructible while filling it with an immense amount of his Intent."

"So am I," Alex said. "Hearing that he's the Weapons god scares me a bit since he must have a very strong Intent. However, given that he died many years ago, I can only hope that his Intent has faded enough that I can read the words on this without worrying."

"Dammit!" Godslayer grumbled. "I just got some of my powers back, and I already have to use it for you once again, don't I?"

"Hopefully not," Alex said with a slight chuckle. "Hopefully I can learn it all on my own without needing your help."

He turned around and jumped, landing on the massive stone. He was standing on the hilt of the sword and looked down to read the words that were carved onto it.

He had read this part of the stone years ago, but still, he reread it. Not only did he want to see if he missed something, but he also wanted to make sure there wasn't anything here that was hidden behind the Intent.

In case there was some important detail that could only be unlocked once he defeated the Intent, he couldn't skip over the stuff.

So, from the very start, he started reading.

The moment his eyes fell on the words and he read them, he felt the Intent fly out of the text and attack him. He struggled to keep himself straight as the power of the Intent was stronger than what he was prepared for.

Still, just because it was strong, he didn't look away. Instead, he fought back and within seconds destroyed the Intent with his own.

Seeing that defeating the Intent was only difficult and not impossible, Alex started to work faster and faster, reading through everything that was written on the hilt of the sword in just the first 15 minutes.

Chapter 1274: Spiritual Providence

After reading through the hilt, Alex still was capable enough to read through most of the blade of the sword.

He started reading, focusing only on the words of the blade as well as understanding the meaning behind it. He couldn't just look at the words and try to understand them later by remembering everything.

Because the Intent tended to imprint itself onto one's mind, Alex would have to doubly fight back against the intent if he tried to learn it later.

As such, even if it was a bit harder, he had to learn everything at once.

Alex wasn't just fighting back the Intent on the blade either. He was using it as a whetting stone for his own Intent to get it to become sharper and stronger than it already was.

If he could handle it all to a certain extent, his Intent would improve by leaps and bounds. And if his Intent improved a lot, so would his usage of Dao.

Beads of sweat dropped from his body while his back was entirely drenched. He stood there with his jaw clenched as he struggled to read the words on the sword.

No one was around, as per his instruction, but if they were, they would currently see an Alex with veins popping all over his face and neck.

This felt way more straining than back when he had learned the Hell Emperor's Divine Battle Array or when he had tried to recall this book from memory.

Having to directly combat the Intent of a god, albeit a false one for this long was just as hard, if not harder than what one would expect.

Alex moved down the sword, an inch at a time, as he slowly read everything while understanding it all.

By the time he was on the last few lines that were carved onto the black sword, Alex had all but understood the technique that was in there completely.

The technique written in the sword was called Spiritual Providence. It was a technique that was divided into 3 different stages, all of which could be learned at any time without having to worry about one's cultivation base.

The only requirement for the technique was that one had a robust spiritual sea and a great talent to make use of the spiritual energy in that spiritual sea.

Spiritual Providence as a technique was used using weapons.

The first stage, which Alex hadn't even learned yet, required one layer of their spiritual sense on top of their weapon to use as an additional attack with every swing of their sword.

Until now, Alex had only been learning how to shape the spiritual weapon. To complete the first stage, he had to now layer that illusory weapon on top of his real weapon.

He had been surprised to find that what he had learned until now and had taught so many of his friends, wasn't even half of the first stage of three stages.

The attacks made using these techniques bypassed the physical body and attacked the spirit itself in most cases. None of the attacks were necessarily damaging, but they were capable of temporarily stopping the connection between the spirit and the body at the point of impact such that anything below that point was all but paralyzed.

Alex had seen this happen himself when he used the spiritual sword alone. Now, he could use both the spiritual sword and his normal sword at once, and have the same effect on his enemies, if not better.

The second stage of Spiritual Providence simply taught one how to layer their spiritual energy on the attacks themselves that flew out of their weapons.

In Alex's case, any sword slashes or swings that did not involve the sword itself physically attacking his enemies could also have a spiritual element to the attacks.

It was a simple change from the first to the second stage, but the application of the technique improved so much that the two stages deserved to be separate.

The third stage, which Alex was close to finishing, was quite weird. It did not seem to follow a pattern with the first or second stage, and instead simply taught how to create a barrier using the spiritual energy that was already on the sword to block spiritual attacks that was directed at him.

Alex thought it was weird, but he didn't have the luxury to wonder why. He was still facing the final remaining bit of Intent from the sword that was still attacking his mind.

Godslayer was still awake and was looking outside through Alex's eyes. He had not only stayed awake because it was impossible to sleep in a situation where the spiritual sea he remained it could crumble at any moment from the Intent of the weapon's god.

He was also staying awake because he was worried about Alex.

Worry was not an emotion he would have ever thought he would feel for other people. He had worried a lot of times in the past, but it had always been for himself.

Never had he seen the human he was controlling get hurt and get worried that he might be in pain. That sort of thought never even crossed his mind as he used hundreds if not thousands of people's bodies to launch attacks on unsuspecting gods.

However, for the first time, he was worried about Alex, albeit just a little bit.

'Why am I worried?' Godslayer wondered. Had something changed? What had happened to his cold self that wanted nothing more than destruction before? Had he changed this much in just half a century?

He knew about the properties of the Death and Darkness aura. They were bad to a human, but they weren't good to objects either.

Anything with too much death aura or darkness aura was usually considered a bad thing. Darkness in particular was known to ruin humans and artifacts by corrupting them and changing their mindset to be laxer on themselves and strip away any ethics and morality that kept them restrained.

Godslayer basically bathed in Darkness aura every day for thousands and thousands of years when he was in his prime. However, after being imprisoned for so long, his Darkness aura had all but vanished.

When Alex absorbed it all back when he had first tried to take over his body, that was the first time he had been without it. That was perhaps the first time ever since he had been created that he had been able to think clearly.

Now that he had spent a few years without much darkness aura to corrupt him, he was starting to learn and grow. For the first time in his life, he was starting to not obsess about killing gods.

He hadn't learned it on his own of course. Alex had to teach him to not obsess over gods like he always did.

There was still part of him that wanted to go kill gods as soon as he heard their names, but there was now enough of him that could restrain him.

He did not want to admit it to Alex, but thanks to him, he was growing again after so many millennia. As such, he was also starting to form a bond with him and was thus worried about him when he saw the state of his spiritual sea.

Alex felt like he could keep going, but he was at the last of his mental capacity to still create as much Intent as he was to fight back the sword's Intent.

His mind didn't register any of the warnings his body gave as he got closer to the end. Perhaps because the finish line was so close, Alex started getting desperate and somehow it became even harder to fight the Intent.

Still, he didn't give up. He continued fighting the Intent until the very last word of Spiritual Providence.

The moment he read the last word, he immediately used what mental capacity he had to grab all of the swords at once with his Qi and put it into his storage ring so that no one else could read it.

After he was done, he stopped trying so hard, and as his body relaxed, the fatigue and pain that had gathered in such a small period of time all came back to him at once.

The moment he felt everything, his eyes went white and his body collapsed to the ground. He had fallen unconscious.

Everything seemed dark to Godslayer as Alex himself wasn't seeing anything right now. He worried for a moment that Alex had been hurt. However, when he saw the Spiritual sea grow tranquil again, he understood that the fight against the Weapon God's Intent was finally over.

What little damage the spiritual sea had taken was starting to heal, telling Godslayer that there was nothing to worry about at all.

Godslayer returned to the side of the silver mountain that hung in the air and went back to his long sleep.

Alex woke up on the ground sometime early in the morning. He woke up and looked around to find out that nobody had come for him in the entire time he had remained on the ground.

He had ordered everyone to stay back, and it seemed that they had done it even after Alex was unconscious. He didn't know whether to praise their obedience or insult it.

He shook his head and cleaned himself of any dirt before looking at the surroundings properly. The Black Stele, the staple of the Tiger sect, was gone from the crater it had formed, and it was with him now.

Now that he was done with what he wanted from this sect, it was time to let them be and do his own thing.

Chapter 1275: Training

"Hmm... it's also capable of defending an artifact spirit from taking any damage," Alex thought as he carefully checked through the technique after he left the Tiger sect.

He was more than surprised with how good Spiritual Providence was, and yet it kept on surprising him even more. Bits and pieces of the technique that weren't outright stated were starting to make sense to Alex when they did not before this.

The technique was also something that was completely different from normal Qi techniques as it used Spiritual Energy to function, and thus could not be improved or changed using Alex's own Dao of Techniques.

He stood in his mother's front yard and practiced with Midnight in his hand while a white sword only visible to someone's spiritual sense tried to layer itself upon it.

Alex could create the sword and even place it upon Midnight, but when he moved the two, there were delays between the movement that caused problems.

It wasn't like Alex had to move a sword with his hand and a sword with his mind at the same time, but it still took his full attention to keep the layered spiritual sword on Midnight. Otherwise, the two swords split themselves, or the spiritual sword simply dissipated afterward.

"This isn't something I can learn in a single day, is it?" he thought to himself.

For now, it was going to be just him that was going to be learning this technique. Because he had to fight the Intent once more and write it all down for his family and friends if they wanted to learn it, he was fine with making them wait.

He practiced for the entire day and even by the end he was barely anywhere close to being completely good at the first stage. He could make it work if he gave it all his complete attention, but that wouldn't fly in a true battle.

He needed to be so good at the technique, that it was but a muscle memory to him that he could do without thinking.

The second stage was likely to be problematic for him if he was struggling with the first, but the third was still viable given how different it was.

But he didn't have time to practice that right now.

As he was practicing, he heard someone in front of the front gate trying to grab his attention.

Alex turned and found an old man standing there, looking at him with a wide smile. He had never seen this person before, so seeing him smile too friendly at him made him curious as to who he was.

"Can I help you?" Alex asked.

"Yes, please," the old man said. "This must be Alchemist He Lin's house, right? I'm looking for someone named Yu Ming. I'm wondering if that is you, young man."

"That is indeed me," Alex said, his curiosity increasing even more. "May I know who you are?"

"Ah! I am but a humble messenger of his majesty who has come here upon his request," the old man said. "His Majesty has heard of your arrival to the Scarlet City and wishes for you to go visit him in the Cardinal City."

"Ah, you're from the royal family, huh?" Alex said. "Sure, I'll visit it."

"Thank you," the old man said. "Will you be leaving today or tomorrow?"

"More like a week later," Alex said. "I have a reason to meet your emperor, so I will visit him when I have the time for it."

The messenger was surprised. "But his majesty wishes for you to meet him as soon as possible," he said. "You should be leaving today, but his majesty has allowed for you to leave tomorrow as well. However, a week later is entirely not reasonable."

"I'm afraid your emperor is going to have to find reason in it," Alex said. "Tell him I'll find him myself, but it won't be anytime soon."

After saying that, he went back into the house, leaving the messenger dumbfounded and unable to think of what to do.

He quickly sent a message back explaining just what had happened and finally received another order. "Let him do as he pleases. Don't offend him and swiftly return back."

The old man finally left the front of the house and left back for the capital city.

Alex spent the next day with his father and the rest, going around the city as he hadn't done so before. It took him half a day of time to go through most of the city and see all the things that were there.

He also had to search for ingredients for 2 separate things that he wanted to do as soon as possible.

One of them was making the paste for the Demon Eyes, which he could delay even after they returned to the Southern Continent.

The other one, however, was the most important thing he could do while he was here, and he did not want to waste any time before doing it.

Still, he didn't find most things he needed and was going to have to rely on either Bai Jingshen or the Luminance empire to aid him.

The older Alex that was with them also suddenly spoke.

"I'm planning on going to the west to sister's home so she can say goodbye to her family," the older Alex said. "Father will be leaving with me as well. What do you think?"

Alex nodded. "That's a good idea," he said. "Let Uncle Keng and Aunt Nangong know about the situation as well. They won't come most likely, but present the offer to them all the same. If possible, sister Luo Xing should hear about this as well."

He had presented the idea of moving to the Southern Continent with him to everyone, and almost everyone on the Tiger sect's side of things had accepted it. His Master, Cai Ping, his sister, and Du Yuhan were all but guaranteed to go with him.

His brother Liu Xun on the other hand still hadn't made a decision. He had a fiancée here who he apparently loved very much. His fiancée had a family who she couldn't leave, so Liu Xun was having trouble making any decision.

On the Hong Wu sect's side of things, it was still unsure who exactly was going to leave and who was going to stay. The only person confirmed to leave for now was his martial uncle who had nothing keeping him attached to the sect except for his loyalty to it.

The next day, a few people gathered to say goodbye to the ones that were going to be leaving for a while.

Alex, Liz, and Helen were ready to leave for the Beast realm. Graham wanted to come along as well, but in Alex's absence, he was the strongest one here and had to thus stay to protect his children and grandchild.

Ronron was still in the sect, so she couldn't come and many of the others had responsibilities as well, so the number of people there to say goodbye wasn't that many.

It wasn't like the three were going to be leaving for a long time either, so there was no point in saying goodbye.

After a short farewell, the three people flew away from the city, going toward the forest to the south. From there, they got onto Alex's boat and flew toward the Beast realm.

Chapter 1276: Transaction

Alex arrived outside the Beast realm with his mother and aunt, and the beasts that were keeping guard let them go in after a beast came out to get them.

After they entered, they were taken to Bai Jingshen himself, who was chilling in the garden again, alongside his 7 wives and concubines. Scarlet was there as well close to them.

"You are back," Bai Jingshen said as soon as Alex and the rest arrived in the garden. "Oh, and you've brought your mother back this time around."

"Greetings, seniors," Helen bowed toward the ruler of the Western Continent and his wives.

"You haven't improved since you left," Bai Jingshen said. "If that was the case, you shouldn't have left at all."

"It's... it's alright," Helen said.

"Mother," Alex called out and brought her over to Scarlet. "This is Scarlet, the phoenix I told you about."

"Oh," Helen reacted quickly. She bowed once more. "Greetings, senior. I am Alex's mother, Helen."

Scarlet looked toward Helen and got up. "Greetings," she spoke. "You do not have to call me senior. I am bonded with your son, so we can be considered as close as a family."

"Then..."

"Just call me Scarlet," Scarlet said. "Your husband does so anyway. Speaking of which, where is your father, Alex? And your daughter?"

"They're in the city with my clone. They won't be coming until the end," Alex explained. He quickly turned around to Bai Jingshen and asked, "How's Pearl? Any news?"

The White Tiger shook his head. "He hasn't come out yet," he said.

"Any idea when he will come out then?" Alex asked.

"Can't tell," Bai Jingshen said.

"Do you not know how far along he's progressed?" Alex asked.

"That's... not how evolution works in this case," Bai Jingshen said. "If it were normal evolution, he would have slowly progressed through the evolution. But since he is trying to do it forcefully, the evolution will be almost instantaneous. As for when it will be, that is something only a seer would be able to divine."

"I see," Alex said. "So it basically all up to luck, huh?"

He sighed a little but didn't lose hope. He knew Pearl and he knew how hard-working he was. He wasn't going to give up so easily and would definitely come out sooner or later.

Bai Jingshen watched Alex's face grow resolute after hearing the news and smiled slightly. "Right, here you go," he said while bringing out some things.

Alex looked at what was brought out and his eyes widened slightly. "You found it?" he asked excitedly.

"It was a little hard to find, but I did so in the end," Bai Jingshen said. "I had to send my beasts throughout the land to search for one of that ingredient."

Alex took the pile of boxes that Bai Jingshen had given him and looked through each of them to check through the ingredients. Every single one of the ingredients he needed was all there, including something he could not find in the Southern Continent at all.

"Thank you," Alex said sincerely.

Bai Jingshen nodded and gestured to the pile of ingredients. "What are they for exactly? Some sort of pills?" he asked.

"Pills? No, they're not for pills," Alex said. "I'm going to make pastes out of them."

Bai Jingshen paused for a moment and even Scarlet turned her head. Liz and Helen looked confused as well.

"Why are you making a paste? Pills are obviously superior," Bai Jingshen said.

"Yes, but what I'm doing requires pastes instead of pills," Alex said.

"What exactly are you doing?" Scarlet asked. She was quite curious as well.

Alex took a moment to quickly go through his head to see if it was a good idea to tell what he was going to do. In the end, he saw no reason to hide it.

"I'm going to help my family learn an eye skill that will improve their eyes massively," Alex said.

"Hmm, an eye technique huh? Not bad," Bai Jingshen said. "Is it good?"

"Very," Alex said.

"Can I learn it too then?" Bai Jingshen asked.

Alex paused for a second again. "I'm not sure if you can learn it. It requires one to destroy their eyes using this paste and heal them back to become much better than it originally was. The technique primarily works on human and devil eyes, so I'm not sure if beasts can use it or not," he said.

"Don't worry," Bai Jingshen said. "I will simply remain in my human form while I make use of that paste. That's assuming it works on me at all."

"Hmm, this paste might be too weak for you," Alex said. "It's better if you skip it until I try and find some Immortal ingredients that can be used as substitutes to improve the level of the paste. You can give it a go then."

"Hmm, if I am going to need pastes corresponding to my cultivation base, then I'm going to have to wait for a long time," Bai Jingshen said.

"Hopefully, I can go to the Immortal realms soon. By the time you can go back to your land of the Blessed Sun, I should have done it all," Alex said.

"I still doubt it, but I suppose it won't hurt to just wait and see if you can do what you said," Bai Jingshen said. "Anyway, now that I've given you what you want, time for you to keep your end of the promise."

"Don't worry, brother Shen. I will make all the pills you need. In fact, I am going to make such good pills that you will definitely want more from me in the future," Alex said proudly.

"Well, you are already quite proud of your pill it seems. Whether your pride is justified or not, we'll see," Bai Jingshen said. "Nuanhuo has told me your alchemy level has increased quite a lot since the days I was with you, so I'm curious to see what sort of pills you will make."

"Okay," Alex said. "I will make one soon."

"Not one," Bai Jingshen said. "I have all the ingredients prepared, so you should make as many as you can."

"Oh," Alex was surprised. "Do you want me to make them as right now?"

"The sooner you do the better," Bai Jingshen said. "In fact, the sooner you make them..."

Bai Jingshen pulled out something from his storage artifact and put it in front of him.

"... the sooner you will get this."

Alex didn't even have to look at it before his nose caught a hint of what it was. The thick scent of blood drifted around the air, letting everyone know what it was.

"This is... did you really gather all the blood?" Alex asked.

"I asked every Saint beast to give me as much blood as they could. At the same time, my wives and I gave some of our own blood as well," Bai Jingshen said. "How good will this do for you?"

Alex couldn't help but smile when he saw that.

"It's great," Alex said. "Blood without Blood Essence is significantly worse than Blood with Blood Essence, but the overall quality of this should still be way better than what I'm used to since it has 8 different Immortal's blood in here."

Chapter 1277: Making Pills

Alex was shown the way to a room that had been prepared for Alchemy. The one that brought him there was Luo Beihan, the 2nd concubine of Bai Jingshen who was in her human form at the moment.

She wore a simple orange robe with black stripes all over it, seemingly generated out of nothing to fit her tiger aesthetics.

"Here is the room," the woman said. "It is made according to my request, so there may be things you won't like in there. Please let me know if such a thing does happen."

"I will," Alex said and looked around. The formations on the floor were simple Saint rank formations and not immortal rank formations as he had hoped from them, which disappointed Alex a little.

'I suppose it would be stupid to make an immortal rank formation since it won't be able to run on Saint Qi,' he thought.

"Do you need a cauldron, young man?" the woman asked.

"No, it's alright. I have my own," Alex said and looked around the room to see what he could immediately figure out.

"You have the flame control formation there, the elemental control formation there. You can improve your ingredients over there on that formation. You can even get that formation's aid in helping take automatic control if you feel like taking a break, although I advise not using it. It usually leads to the pills turning out bad," the woman explained.

"Thank you, senior, but I won't be needing any of these things. I will be fine as long as I just have the fire," Alex said.

"Oh... okay," the woman said. "Here are the ingredients just like you said. I'll be back later to check on your progress."

"Thank you," Alex said and sent her away.

He closed the door and sat in front of the formation that created fire. That was the only one he was going to need after all. Still, he appreciated the rest of the formations that were set there.

'I can see how they are useful to the average alchemy enthusiast,' he thought. He activated the formation for fire and pulled out Memory from his storage ring.

"Finally, I will get to make some real pills with you," Alex said and pulled out the ingredients.

There were 3 types of pills that had been requested of him. They were pills that improved one's cultivation speed, pills that healed a person, and pills that got rid of poisons.

These were the only 3 types of pills that the White Tiger had requested of him. While only 3 types of pills, the sheer number that was requested of him was going to take Alex at least a week to finish. And that was if he didn't lose any energy.

If he was being realistic, it was going to take him about 10 days in total.

He started separating the ingredients according to the recipes, and once everything was done, he finally started.

* * * * *

Liz had already left with another wife of Bai Jingshen to be taken to where Hao Ya was currently at. She was going to help with the Teleportation formation that was some distance outside of the palace.

She had been there last time too and was going there once again today.

Helen stayed with Scarlet, talking with her about various things that she wanted to know about.

Bai Jingshen talked with them as well as he had nothing to do at the time. Inwardly, he was very worried about Pearl and couldn't focus on anything else. However, he also knew that there was nothing he could do for Pearl right now.

As a result, he was stuck between knowing there was nothing he could do and wanting to do nothing else.

"How good is your alchemy skill, young lady?" Bai Jingshen asked. "Can you help your son?"

"I wouldn't say it's great," Helen said honestly. "I'm only a new Saint and I haven't had much experience making pills, so I don't think I can compare to my son. At the very least, I won't be of much help to him."

"Hmm, I thought you could help him so he can leave early," Bai Jingshen said. "I would make Bei Han make the pills, but she can't use Immortal Qi in this world, or she will be in trouble too."

"How good are your concubine's alchemy skills?" Scarlet asked. "Is it as good as Alex's?"

"I don't know his skill just yet, but my wife can make Immortal-grade pills easily. Making pills with 80% to 90% harmony is something she does on a daily basis actually," Bai Jingshen said proudly. "She's not comparable to actual alchemists, but compared to those of this world, she's infinitely better."

Scarlet couldn't hold in the chuckle. "I can see where you are coming from," she said. "But I'm afraid you are underestimating the alchemists of this world a little too much. It seems you forgot that most of them in this world have knowledge that can only be found in the Immortal realms."

"Hmm, you're right," Bai Jingshen said. "I did not consider that. Are you saying the young man Alex can reach the same level in pill-making as my concubine?" Bai Jingshen asked.

"Reach the same level as your wife?" Scarlet scoffed at those words. "Alex can—"

Scarlet's words paused in her mouth as she looked up. Bai Jingshen was already looking up and a few of his wives and concubine also noticed it around the same time.

Helen was confused as to what they were looking at. She looked up at the sky, but there was nothing there at all.

However, a moment later, as if out of nowhere, the thick black cloud covered the entire sky with lightning scattering throughout.

Bai Jingshen got a little alert immediately, surprised to see Heavenly Judgment appear out of nowhere. "What's going on? Why is Heavenly Judgment—" He paused for a second when he realized that the

strength of the lightning in the sky was nowhere close to being as strong as Heavenly Judgment lightning.

"No, wait. Is that...?"

"Pill clouds," Scarlet explained. "The young man you sent inside to make pills for you can create pill clouds."

"But... how?" Bai Jingshen was truly surprised. "Don't you need extremely good ingredients to create Pill clouds?"

Scarlet shrugged. "Don't ask me. I don't know how he does things," she said.

The first lightning strike struck down from heaven and Bai Jingshen clearly saw it being blocked by Alex inside the alchemy room.

Another two lightning strikes fell from the sky as well and were easily blocked by Alex.

"3 pills veins," Luo Beihan spoke. As an alchemist of some practice, she knew how difficult it was to reach where Alex had, not to mention continue growing from there.

"He's not even halfway through the Saint realm and he can make pills with pill veins, huh?" she couldn't help but think in surprise.

2 more lightning strikes fell from the sky and only then did the cloud disappear. Alex had put a stop to the pill cloud at that point, stopping the lightning as well.

Bai Jingshen looked at the dissipating clouds and couldn't help but put on an excited smile. "I made the right choice asking him to make pills for us," he said softly. "I can only imagine the quality pills he will continue to produce."

Chapter 1278: Obstacles for Pill Clouds

As time progressed, pill clouds continued to form multiple times within the same hour, confusing, exciting, and bewildering everyone but Scarlet who was used to it by now.

"No way! How does he keep doing this?" Bai Jingshen asked. He had been excited about the prospect of making free use of an alchemist who could form pill clouds, but the extent to which it had reached was beyond his wildest imagination.

"This... this is impossible," Luo Beihan who was next to them commented. The other wives and concubines nodded as well, but they weren't as knowledgeable in the ways of alchemy so they didn't comment much.

As the lightning strikes continued, Bai Jingshen was getting way too curious to not speak up.

"Nuanhuo, tell me. You must know. How is he doing it?" he asked Scarlet.

The phoenix simply shrugged. "I don't know, I never bothered to learn. As far as I can remember, he's always been able to make pill clouds. The pills he got me always had the pill veins," she said

"What? He's been able to do this since before you two met?" the White tiger was even more surprised. "And is it always this consistent?"

"Yep, once he starts, the sky stays cloudy for the rest of the day. The people in our capital have already gotten used to the random lightning strikes that happen any and all the time," she explained.

"Is... is what my son doing that great?" Helen asked. All of this was very new to her, but seeing how the group was reacting, she couldn't help but feel proud.

"Great doesn't even begin to explain just how good what he is doing is," Luo Beihan explained. "Even in the Immortal realms, being able to produce pill clouds is a sign of an experienced alchemist. Even with all the best conditions, only 1 in every 1000 alchemists can produce such a result."

"1 in 1000?" Scarlet was surprised. "That doesn't sound that hard then."

"No, it doesn't," Luo Beihan explained. "But that's because it really isn't that hard for an experienced alchemist if the criteria are met."

"Elaborate a little more," Bai Jingshen asked.

"Okay, if we are to assume that an alchemist can make no mistake when following a perfect recipe, then there will still be 2 things that will hinder him from making a perfect pill."

"The first obstacle will be finding ingredients that are teeming with energy in it. If the ingredient isn't like that, it's quite hard to make pills with a very high harmony."

"The second obstacle is the act of forming the pill itself in the end. If you make a mistake there, even if you had perfect ingredients, you can still fail to make a pill with very high harmony."

"It is only when both of these problems are taken care of that one can make pills that form pill clouds," Luo Beihan said.

"There are a few ways to get rid of the problems. In the instance of the 2nd problem, you can find a good pill-forming technique that can help you on its own. Most people end up using techniques that allow you to make 4 or more pills at once so that the chances of having a single pill that reaches 100% harmony is increased by just that much."

"I don't know what sort of technique the young man is using inside, but I don't think it's that far off," she said. "But to begin with, this problem isn't that hard to take care of. It's the first one."

"The problem with ingredients is that it is very, very rare to find ingredients that are teeming with energy. As far as I'm aware, there are only two ways to get them. You either have to be at the perfect place at the perfect time to find the ingredients naturally, or you have to artificially inject energy into the ingredients."

"And that's where the problem is," she said. "You can't manipulate an energy to inject into an ingredient if you don't have a basic dao of that element."

"I simply can't imagine how that young man is possibly injecting energy into the ingredients I gave him. Could he have a basic dao of all 7 of the elements?" she wondered.

"No way," Scarlet said. "He only has a Fire Dao and a Metal Dao. He doesn't have the other 5 Daos."

"Then... no, how is he doing it?" the beast couldn't comprehend.

"Are you sure there is no other way?" Bai Jingshen asked. "What if you have a spiritual root of that element, but not the dao?"

"It wouldn't work. The energy a spiritual root produces is specific to that person alone. His energy can never match the energy of an ingredient even when it is the same. You can only do so with a Dao," the woman said.

"But he doesn't have all the Dao," Scarlet said.

"That... I don't know what's going on then," the beast said. The more she explained how it worked to the others, the less she understood what could be happening herself.

She could understand that Alex might have a good pill-forming technique, but how was he tackling the problem of the ingredients? She knew for a fact that the ingredients she had given were barely good enough to produce pills with 85% harmony.

"Well, then there's only one way to find out," Bai Jingshen said. "The young man can tell us himself."

They watched the lightning strikes stop after a few minutes and Alex walked out to the garden where everyone had been waiting for him.

The dark clouds had left the sky and the sun finally shined, albeit from the very west.

"Oh, it's already late afternoon," Alex said with a surprised look. "I didn't realize I had been inside for so long."

"Are you doing well? Are you overexerting yourself?" Bai Jingshen asked after he walked.

"Overexerting? No, not in the least. I can keep going for another whole day," Alex said.

"Is that so," the White Tiger seemed amazed. "Alright, we called you here to explain what is going on. How are you causing so many pill clouds to form one after another?"

"I have only formed pill clouds on 10 different instances, young man, and that was over the course of thousands of years. You have beaten my record in just a day alone. How are you doing this?" the female tiger asked.

"I'm just doing what I do normally, I guess," Alex said. "I don't know what to tell you guys other than that."

"Beihaan here explained to us that pill clouds are difficult to form without a good set of ingredients, which you don't have. How are you circumventing this problem to make lightning fall one after another?" Bai Jingshen asked.

"Oh, that's simple," Alex said. "I'm using World Defying Mushrooms."

"World... what?" Luo Beihaan looked confused and so did most of the people there.

"World Defying Mushrooms?" Bai Jingshen thought for a bit. "I've heard that before somewhere."

"It was in the book I read to you once, my lord," the Lynx, Bai Jingshen's first wife spoke. "World Defying Mushroom is a mutated descendant of the World Tree. It's a mushroom with neutral energy that can copy any energy it comes into contact with upon being heated and adds to that energy."

"That's right," Alex said. "I'm using the mushroom each time I make the pills, so the lack of energy in the ingredients is taken care of easily."

"Such a thing exists?" Luo Beihan couldn't help but ask.

"It's a very rare ingredient from what I can remember reading," the lynx explained. "Most alchemists don't even know about it because it's just that impossible to find."

Alex nodded when he heard that. It was indeed very rare. Even in the Forbidden Orchard, he could only find very few mushrooms nowadays.

"And you're spending those mushrooms to make pills for us?" Bai Jingshen asked.

"I found a place with quite a few of those mushrooms, so I can afford to use them," Alex explained.

"I see," Bai Jingshen said. "Thank you for taking the extra step that you didn't have to. Thanks to you, my subjects can now enjoy 5-veined pills."

"It's nothing, brother Shen," Alex said. "It's a shame I couldn't get them 6-veined pills like I normally made."

"Hmm? 6 veined pills?" Bai Jingshen's eyes narrowed. "What's stopping you from making those right now?"

"Oh, 6 veined pills require me to handle Saint Soul realm lightning strikes. I could handle them when I had my blood essence before, but after I gave it away, I have to rely on my cultivation base right now. Even that I'm finding to be a little worse than normal, but not by much."

Bai Jingshen's eyes narrowed. "Wait, are you saying that if you improve your cultivation base or your blood aura, you can make better pills?" he asked.

"Uhh... I would have to have a Saint Soul realm strength again for it to be possible, but yes," Alex said.

Bai Jingshen brought out the pool of blood he had once again. "If that is so then stop making pills. You have made enough for today," he said. "Go into closed cultivation right now and use this pool of blood to improve as much as you can."

"Really?" Alex asked excitedly.

"I need a guarantee that you can make 6-veined pills if I give you this though," Bai Jingshen asked.

"I guarantee it, brother Shen," Alex said. He was only a single cultivation realm away from that anyhow.

"Very well then. Go ahead. We will be waiting for you to be done with it," Bai Jingshen said.

Alex thanked the white tiger and was taken away to a secret room to cultivate for as long as he could.

Chapter 1279: Blood Absorption

Alex walked away with the blood that was stored in some sort of limitless gourd that Bai Jingshen gave him. He was taken to a separate room that was apparently meant for cultivation.

As soon as he walked into the room, some sort of formation activated, and an aura that he barely could feel started appearing around him.

"Time manipulation?" he couldn't help but ask when he walked in.

"Huh? How do you know that?" the leopard who brought him there was surprised that he knew that at all.

"I can feel it," Alex said. "I can tell whenever there is time manipulation happening in the surrounding."

"Wow," the female beast couldn't help but say. "I guess that makes sense since your aunt can do the same."

It wasn't why he could do what he could do, but Alex didn't bother to make her understand. "You can take your time cultivating in this room. Time moves faster here than it does outside, so you can cultivate for a long time here while only a few days will have passed outside," the leopard explained.

"I see, thank you senior," Alex said and sat inside.

The room locked up and the time aura thickened. Alex tried to see if he could do something with the aura but quickly realized he was way too oblivious about time to make any sort of progress in learning about it.

So, he ignored the aura and focused on the task before him.

He pulled out Memory and increased its size by a large amount. There was a lot of blood in the gourd, so he needed a place to pool it all up before he began.

He started filling the cauldron with all the blood inside and stopped around halfway through when he realized there was just too much to absorb at once. He needed to do it little by little.

He put the gourd aside and pulled out the Blood God's manual from his soul space. After it appeared, he flipped the book to the 1st page. This was the first time he was going to absorb blood not just to improve his own blood aura, but also his cultivation base.

The book had clear instructions on how to do so, so he needed to reread it once to make sure he understood what he was doing.

Once he read through it all, he placed the book back into his soul space and started using the absorption technique.

Slowly, the blood aura that was within the blood and in the air by this point was slowly pulled into Alex's body. At the same time, Alex used the aura to improve his own blood and cultivation base.

He focused on the absorption technique to the best of his ability to improve both at the same time, but to his surprise, the blood aura that was going into him started disappearing.

He worried at first that he was doing something wrong. Since this was the first time he tried to purposefully improve his cultivation base with such a strong pool of blood while obviously having a much weaker blood aura and cultivation base, he thought something had gone wrong.

However, a moment later, he started feeling better than ever before. It felt as if he had been sick his whole life without realizing and just today the sickness had been healed and he was healthy again.

The feeling confused Alex for a bit until he realized what was happening.

"Oh, my blood essences are reforming," he thought. The blood aura from the blood in front of him was first directly fixing the main issue of his body.

Without a vigorous blood essence, neither his blood nor his cultivation base could ever go through much improvement. As such, his body started using this instance of him cultivating to improve upon that first.

Second after second, minute after minute, Alex continued absorbing the blood aura without stopping while letting his body use it all up.

Hours passed in the blink of an eye but he was nowhere done with absorbing even just the blood in the cauldron in front of him. He took a small break from the constant absorption and used the time to prepare himself for what was going to happen soon enough.

After he was done resting for a few hours, he started once again.

Alex couldn't tell how long it had been before he was unable to draw out any more of the blood aura from the pool of blood in front of him. Without any use for it anymore, he got rid of the blood and filled up the cauldron halfway through once more.

Then he started once again.

It was only after this session of absorption that Alex felt that something other than his Blood Essence was getting improved. It seemed he had finally fully fixed the problem of his absent Blood Essence and now he can focus on the rest of it.

Alex put half of what he absorbed into his cultivation and the other half into improving his blood aura.

While his blood aura had no problem improving, his cultivation base wasn't so easy to improve quickly.

The blood aura he took in was being converted back into his most basic form, Qi. As the Qi started accumulating in his dantian, it crystallized more and more.

When he had reached Saint Foundation 9th realm, 90% of his dantian had already crystallized, with crystal pillars covering the entirety of it. The yin and yang sources inside his dantian had also been encased inside these pillars by now, although that didn't seem to affect it at all.

Now that he was cultivating to improve his cultivation base, more crystalline structures formed in his dantian, threatening to fill it up completely.

Alex focused as much as he could on completely crystallizing the Qi at that moment. Using the fresh third batch of blood, he was able to do so without any worry of running out of the blood aura.

As he absorbed more and more, and the dantian was now completely crystallized into a single ball rather than many different pillars crisscrossing inside, Alex had finally touched onto the step in his cultivation journey where his spirit that was currently tied to his body slowly separated itself from it.

The separated spirit moved into the dantian's crystal ball while still leaving a small connection with the body so that it could move back if it needed to.

Once the spirit landed inside the crystal ball, the next phase of his cultivation realm began.

The white crystal started shrinking all of a sudden, separating itself from the walls of his dantian. It was a slow and tedious process, but as Alex continued cultivating, the crystal continued shrinking.

As it shrank, the white crystal gained some slight yellow color to it. The more it shrank, the more yellow it became.

By the time the crystal was but a tenth of its original size, it had turned completely golden.

A Golden Core had formed inside of his dantian.

Alex was now but a step away from entering the Saint Core realm, and that was when the final step in the journey began.

Without any warning, the Inner Demon started its assault on Alex's mind.

Chapter 1280: Multiple Tries

The Inner Demon began its fierce attack on Alex's psyche by trying to rile him up using words that could make Alex feel like there was some truth to them.

There wasn't much the Inner Demon could use to attack Alex, he had taken care of most things already on his own. The only thing remaining was Pearl, and the Inner Demon hammered away at that part of his mind.

It constantly told him just how much of a mistake it was to send Pearl to the ritual room when he knew he was going to die.

However, Alex found it easy to not listen to the Inner Demon this time around. Why would he? He had Immortals and Divinities telling him that it would be fine, and he trusted Pearl more than anyone else to succeed through it all.

The blood that was in him now was given to his mother by someone that the gods were afraid of. It would be a miracle for Pearl to fail at this point.

The only other target for the Inner Demon was that Alex was most likely going to die given the prophecies he had heard. However, if that was bound to happen, there was no way Alex could change any of that. If he could, he would, so there wasn't much to think on that side either.

The Inner Demon tried to tell Alex that he wasn't the one that the truth of this world was waiting for, but then again, why would Alex care about that? If he was, he would be happy to learn something, if he wasn't, he would be happy to not bear the burden. Either way, he would be happy with the outcome.

The Inner Demon vanished not long after in what was the easiest battle Alex had ever fought with it. He himself was surprised that he had completed the hurdle so easily.

The feeling of power filled his body as he finally landed with both feet on the Saint Core realm. However, that was not the end at all.

In fact, it was only the beginning.

Now that there was no more Inner Demon to worry about, Alex went all out with his cultivation, even eating cultivation pills to aid him throughout the time when he was closed inside the room.

Time passed slowly and fast for Alex, making him completely oblivious as to just how long had passed outside or inside. All he knew was to replace the blood in the cauldron every few days and continue.

His cultivation base slowly improved with his blood aura taking the lead thanks to the gap in his cultivation when he was breaking through. It was stronger than the cultivation by a decent gap and continued to stay ahead, even though the cultivation base followed behind.

After what felt like a very long time, Alex changed the blood inside the cauldron for the final time.

The last stretch of the journey should have been easy for him, or so he had thought. However, when the blood poured into the cauldron, every single cell in his body told him to run away.

This was not the blood of something ordinary at all. All of the 8 immortal's blood had been the last to pour and it was all inside the cauldron right now. And the aura it produced terrified Alex. He wasn't even sure if he could tame the aura at all, let alone absorb it.

However, now that he was here, he wasn't going to stop at all.

Even if his body was going to break apart from trying to absorb it, he was going to do it all.

* * * * *

Liz and Hao Ya were busy with their work, trying to fix the formation.

"Alright, another talisman," Hao Ya asked and placed it into the massive formation. Once the talisman was placed there, she asked the beast that was controlling the formation to activate it.

The formation activated for a split second to send away the talisman that was on top of it. Once the talisman was gone, they waited for a minute or two to see what happened.

After seeing no response from the formation at that time, Hao Ya was sure she had failed once again.

As soon as the failure was apparent, Liz put up a bubble of sped-up time around the formation and them.

"Let me try a little to the right this time around," she said and went on to work on the formation's setting to change the teleportation location slightly away from where it was just now.

She needed to do it enough time until the talisman teleported around where her master was. So, after spending nearly an hour changing the distance and direction a bit more, she tried again.

Liz put down the time bubble, and another talisman was sent away once again with no response from the other side.

"A little further this time around," Hao Ya told herself and tried again.

Liz did her best to form a bubble around them whenever they weren't using the formation. That way, they could move in sped-up time so that there was virtually no time wasted in between each use of the formation.

Liz's bubble had been a massive support to the group. Time moved so quickly inside of it that to the people outside it looked like they were nothing but a blur.

She was single-handedly speeding up time in a large area by the amount that would require multiple saint spirit veins working with multiple time-speeding formations to do at the same time.

Everyone involved there was more than surprised by just how amazing she was at slowing down time. Even Hao Ya felt envious of Liz's body constitution and how useful it was.

"Aren't you tired?" Hao Ya asked.

"Me?" Liz looked at her. "A little, but I can keep going for another day straight. It's already been so many days that I've grown used to the being fatigued by now."

"Alright then," Hao Ya said and worked on the formation again.

They kept at it for almost a day before they decided to take a break.

"It doesn't look like it's reached again," Hao Ya said. "Let's go take a break. You need to cultivate overnight to be at your best tomorrow."

Liz nodded. "I'll do as you sa—"

Everyone quickly turned around as the formation behind them activated on its own for a second. They quickly turned around to find the formation empty, except for a single talisman at the center.

Hao Ya stuck where she was while Liz was the one that moved on ahead and grabbed the talisman. She read through it with a surprised face.

Hao Ya finally reacted and asked, "What does it say? Quickly!" she urged Liz to answer, who complied easily.

"It's just a single sentence," Liz said. "It says 'Good job, Hao Ya'."

Hao Ya's face broke into a smile when she heard that. "We did it!" she shouted.

Liz couldn't believe it. "Really?" she asked.

"Master got our talisman and sent back a message. We really did it," Hao Ya said. "Finally, we are ready to send everyone back home."

"Then..."

Hao Ya nodded. "It's time to spread the word," she said. "It's time to call all the players here so they can be sent home."