

Alchemy 611

Chapter 611: Light

"Do we go find another caravan now?" Shen Jing asked.

"No, I want to stay here a day or two, see if there is any information I can find to heal my wound," Alex said.

"Won't it be better to just go to the capital and see if the— actually, never mind. Go do what you want to," Shen Jing said. "I will return in a day or two."

"Where are you going?" Alex asked curiously.

"Just to look upon someone, to see if they need my help. Then I will go find the place I've been meaning to for two days now," Shen Jing said.

"Okay, I will wait for you," Alex said. Shen Jing nodded and flew up into the air. Before Alex could even realize it, he vanished.

"Damn, must be fun being a Saint realm cultivator. I wish I could reach there quickly too," Alex thought to himself.

Suddenly, something jumped on his left shoulder, and even without looking at it, Alex pet the cat.

"Did you have fun?" he asked.

"Had fun," Pearl answered. Alex sent out his spiritual sense and saw that the little girl was sad as she left Pearl, but that was life.

"Do you feel sad?" Alex asked.

"No," Pearl replied.

"Why?" Alex asked.

"Pearl has brother," Pearl answered.

"Alright, you rascal. You don't need to make me feel good," Alex said and grabbed Pearl before putting him into his robes.

"Ah right, if someone talks to you from now on, don't speak in human language, okay? Just meow at them," Alex told Pearl before walking into the city.

While Silverleaf city didn't have walls, it still had gates and guards protecting it from all sides.

The guards wore normal clothes, greenish-brown robes to be precise, and didn't stand out amongst the many people walking in and out of the city.

Alex got into the line as well, to soon enter the city. As he looked around, he suddenly heard gasps and exclamations from the gates.

When he turned around, he saw the two guards at the gate bowing toward two people that had just walked out.

One of them was a girl around the age of 26, and another a man of similar age. They were likely older folks, but they looked pretty young.

The woman had long flowing hair and wore a robe of green, no blue color. Wait, that wasn't right? The color was actually red.

No, that too was wrong. The color was purple.

As if they were a bunch of illusions stacked on top of each other, the colors of the robe the girl wore changed depending on how she turned. Not only that, each part of her robe was of different color depending on how the light hit her robes.

Basically, it was a robe of many colors, and thus, had no color of its own. On the left chest of the robe, there was an embroidery in white, that was perfectly visible no matter what color the robe seemed to be in.

The embroidery said 'Light'.

The man was the same. He wore a similarly colorful and yet colorless robe, with an embroidery of the word 'Light' on the left chest of the robe.

"Ah!" Alex thought as he realized who these people were. They were the Lightsworns, the ones that vowed to protect the empire and the royal family.

"Oh, it's the Lightsworns."

"Really? This is my first time seeing them."

"I don't doubt it. They never really come to this section of the empire unless they are needed."

"I wonder what has happened here for them to come."

Many of the people around Alex started speaking in a hushed tone. They all had the same thoughts and questions Alex did.

The girl Lightsworn walked forward and let them know why they were there.

"The newly arrived caravan, did you guys get attacked by bandits?" she asked.

The group of people that had come with Alex looked at each other for confirmation and then shook their heads.

"There were no bandits," one of them shouted.

The girl frowned. "Are you sure?" she asked.

"Yes," the same man spoke. The girl waited for someone to contradict him, but when they didn't, she sighed. It seemed he wasn't lying.

"What do we do now, sister?" the man asked from the side.

"We still have to go find them. It's an order after all," the girl said.

"Sigh, why do we have to be the ones to deal with such weak bandits," the man complained.

"I don't think they are weak. From the reports, they are likely to have True Lords amongst them," the girl said.

"You trust those reports? They came from such weak people. They were likely exaggerating," the man said.

"Still, it's better to be cautious. Let's go check it all out," she said and flew off. The man shook his head and flew off behind her.

As they flew, their clothes once again changed from red to purple to blue to cyan to green to yellow all the way back until they reached red again.

"That's what I'm going to wear one day, aren't I? I wonder how they make them," Alex wondered.

He looked at the two of them fly away and wondered if it was a good idea to hide the information he had.

Certainly, telling them would've ended their work at once, but then that would open a can of worms he wasn't willing to deal with.

How many were there? How did you kill them? How are you alive? How does not a single one of your traveling friends know about this event?

Questions like that would bring more suspicions toward him. So much so that they might think of him to be spreading false information on purpose.

He didn't want that.

The line moved forward, and Alex got to enter with his Alchemist badge. The guards were quite respectable when they saw that.

Alex was really happy with how useful this badge was. Paying a fee in every single town or city he visited would have been troublesome.

Alex wanted to visit the library and the Alchemists Guild in this city. However, the first place he went to was actually the restaurant.

While the restaurant in this town wasn't as fancy-looking as the three-factions restaurant, the food here was still great.

He had the most amazing meal that this restaurant made. He didn't even blink an eye when he paid 70 True Spirit stones for that food.

It was nourishing, and he needed that. After that, Alex was reminded of something by the food, so he went around the city, finding this one place.

The charity for the players.

Once again, Alex decided to go in and explain to the players that were there what was going on.

Similar to last time, he went to help, this time simply slipping through instead of asking for permission.

He told the players what they needed to do, he gave them hope, and once enough people were motivated to change their life, he walked out.

"Here, sister, some spirit stones," Alex said as he handed her a bunch and left.

The girl's face stared in awe when she saw the 60 True Spirit stones fall on her hands just like that.

Chapter 612: Locating the Ingredients

Alex wondered if he should find a place to stay, but it didn't seem necessary to him. Since he was only going to be here for merely 2 or so days, he could spend those times in either the Alchemy hall or the library in this city.

"Huh? This city has no library?" Alex asked a man with surprise. He had been asking for directions to the library when he learned about that.

"No, Fellow Daoist. But I hear the next city has one," the man told Alex.

"Next city? The Rainguard city?" Alex asked.

"Yes, that's the one. It's only a hundred or so kilometers away," the man said.

"Thank you," Alex said and left. That took away one of the things he wanted to do.

'Does this town seriously not have a library?' he thought. Well, now that he thought about it, not every town had a library.

Even the city he considered his home now, the Scarlet city didn't have a library.

'Well, I guess I will have to go read some alchemy book in the Alchemists guild now,' he thought. He wanted to learn more about the land, but it seemed it would have to wait until a while longer.

So, Alex walked towards the Alchemists guild that which he knew the direction of.

-Silverleaf Branch of Alchemists guild-

'They do have a branch in every city, don't they?' he thought. He turned around and looked at the formation guild too, but that one would have to come later.

He walked into the Alchemists guild and walked directly to the left side of the guild. Fortunately, the interior of the guild was the same as the one in the last city.

He arrived next to another Alchemist who was also looking at the board.

He ignored that person and placed his badge on the carving. Soon, a whole load of information entered his brain, regarding the many missions.

Alex looked for a good one and chose it before walking away. He didn't try to look for anyone and only focused on himself.

Once again, he started making pills for as long as he could. Each mission gave him 2 or 3 sets of ingredients, and Alex spent the whole time turning all the ingredients into pills.

In total, he made about 10 different pills by the time it was evening. He could've certainly gone for a lot more of them, but unfortunately, his swollen meridians didn't let him do that.

Once it was evening, he decided to take a bit of break and went to the front of the guild for the receptions.

"Hello, can you tell me if there are any of these ingredients available for me to purchase?" Alex asked.

The girl looked through the list and crosschecked it. "We have Hotfeather Eagle's tail feathers, sir Alchemist," the girl said.

"The tail feathers? Only?" Alex asked. He had just bought that last time too.

"Unfortunately yes," the girl said.

Alex scratched his head. 'Was finding ingredients this hard normally? Have I been terribly spoiled by the northern forest?' he wondered.

"Would you like me to look if there are any places with these ingredients?" she asked.

"Eh? You mean through the other cities, with the other guilds?" Alex asked.

"Yes, sir Alchemist. However... it will cost you 2 True spirit stones per ingredient sear—"

"Do it!" Alex said aggressively. "Sorry about that. Can you please do it?"

"Of course," the girl said and started searching for the ingredients throughout the entire empire.

At the same time, Alex took the opportunity to write some more ingredients, which were the Saint rank versions of the untranslated ones.

The girl searched for those as well.

In the end, she came up with a lot of information, which she transferred onto a talisman and handed to Alex.

Alex paid the 28 or so True Spirit stones, after discount, that had cost him to search the ingredients, and went to a seat on the side of the hall to look through it.

As he went through the locations, the names of the cities, as well as their placement of them on the map, popped up in his head.

He could find almost every ingredient somewhere throughout the entire empire. Most concentrated of them was the capital, which had almost all of the ingredients, including the Blood Spirit Ginger.

"So it's all in the capital huh?" he thought. He wanted to leave immediately, but the capital was about 8700 kilometers away. That was not something he could reach by rushing there.

'Damn, how exactly do people travel such long distances in this empire?' he wondered.

He decided he would use the boat he had with him. If he handed it to Shen Jing, with his Saint realm Qi, it would certainly fly at the speed of light.

He went back up to the lady at the reception to ask if it was possible to purchase the ginseng from here and receive it at the Alchemist guild in the capital.

"Are you sure, sir Alchemist?" the girl asked him with a weird look. Alex couldn't understand what was so weird about that.

"Of course," Alex said.

The girl still seemed to have her doubt as she didn't immediately turn toward the system in front of her.

Instead, she said, "Sir Alchemist, you do know this is a Saint rank alchemy ingredient right?"

"Yes," Alex said as a sense of foreboding fell upon him. He thought for a second and asked, "What's the price of the Blood Spirit Ginseng?"

"It's 3400 True Spirit stones or 34 Saint spirit stones," the girl said with a wry face.

"What?!" Alex burst out in dumbfoundedness. Never in his life would he had imagined a Saint rank ingredient to cost so much money.

However, when he thought about it, it was a Saint rank ingredient. Slowly his thoughts returned to the ingredients he had in his storage bag.

There were at least 20 different Saint ingredients in there. He could make a lot of money if he sold those ingredients, wouldn't he? They would be enough to buy this Blood Spirit ginseng many times over.

'NO!' Alex thought and shook his head. "I guess I won't be buying it then. Thank you."

He had already learned his lesson regarding selling something he owned that was out of his league.

Zexi had nearly killed him last time when he was only a True Master realm cultivator. If Alex sold Saint rank ingredients, he would bring the wrath of Saint realm cultivators from all over the empire.

'Until I have entered the Saint realm, I cannot touch these ingredients or reveal it to the world,' he thought.

After that, Alex took a job that required him to make a bulk of pills at 25% and went back to the alchemy room.

For the next 8 hours, he stayed inside, doing nothing but making pills. Or so, he wanted people to think.

What he really did was make pills for 2 hours, and spent the rest of the 6 hours simply cultivating.

Alex went as far as splitting the pills to increase his speed at making the pills since they were only 25%.

After finishing making the pill, he kept the ingredients and instead cultivated for 6 hours, interchanging between the two methods every hour.

By the time it was time to leave, he felt his meridians swell a little less. After he went through this a few more times, he would probably have to remake the sun again to inflate it once more.

Alex went back to making some more pills for the missions and after morning arrived, he went to the back half of the guild where a small library was kept.

Alex entered the room and saw that it wasn't even a full shelf. Even then, he was at least getting something to learn.

'I wonder if the knowledge regarding alchemy in this empire is any different,' Alex wondered.

He tried to pick out a book, but there was some sort of seal here as well. 'Do I have to pay?' he thought. He wouldn't have expected to have to pay for something as simple as a book called 'Basics of Alchemy.'

After a minute or two of trying to pay, Alex couldn't figure out how to go about it.

That was when a person came by and placed his medallion in the air in front of the shelf, and the shelf opened up to allow a book to be taken.

Alex nearly slapped himself in annoyance for not figuring out something so simple.

He took out the basic alchemy book and got to reading. It wasn't long before he realized that the book truly was for the basics of basics regarding Alchemy.

'Why the hell is something so simple in an Alchemists guild?' he wondered. 'Do newbies need to continuously refer to this book to see if they forgot something?'

That felt correct in his mind, so he went on to take out another book.

The books available were on different subjects. Such as Energy theory, the importance of a cauldron, the difference in types of energy released based on the speed of the ingredient, and such.

Alex didn't feel these information to be extremely important to him, so he kept searching for some book he might not have knowledge of.

That was when he came across 3 books with interesting titles, about something he had never thought about before.

Alex looked at the first of the book and used his medallion to bring it out.

Once it was in his hand, he read the title of the book.

"Side Effects of Consuming too many pills."

Chapter 613: Toxins and Poisons

"Side effects of eating too many pills? There's something like that?" he wondered and sat down to read the book.

At first, Alex didn't give much thought to the book as the title felt more of an attention grabber than something that was actually true.

It was like those clickbait titles he would find on the internet all the time. However, as he kept on reading, his eyes narrowed as things that he hadn't thought of before but were clearly important were mentioned in the book.

According to the book, when one consumed a pill, the pill needed time to take effect. Even after the pill did take, there would be some lingering effects that would take time to leave.

This was theorized to be likely due to the powder of the pill getting stuck on the walls of the meridians as they are sucked in through the bloodstream when the body is trying to absorb the energy.

Alex knew that the bloodstreams of a person did mix with the person's meridians in some places, so there was merit to the information.

But was it really correct? Alex for one had never faced this problem even though there were a few times when he consumed pills consecutively.

'Actually,' he thought. 'Now that I think about it, I never really did eat a pill normally, did I?'

'Aside from the few times when I needed to heal, all the pills I ate would usually turn to Qi, with my body destroying the powder too, wouldn't it?' he thought.

Alex quickly realized that he had no understanding of how pills actually worked. Until now, he had simply gone along with the fact that they worked.

"I see, so it must be true. Pill toxins... they must be quite serious then," he thought. That got him to thinking just how many toxins a normal player's body must have amassed from eating all the pills they did to improve their bodies so far.

'Was that one of the reasons why their cultivation base was so bad?' Alex wondered. That certainly had to be true in some part.

Some of those pill powders themselves could be harmful too, and while one's body could probably fight against such minor harmful substances, ingesting a lot of them could lead to serious problems.

Alex went on to read more of the book and came across sections that talked about remedies if one had a lot of pill toxins.

One of the methods was surprising to eat a pill that dealt with the toxins. Pills made of ingredients that would break down the power that jammed one's meridians and help with the proper flow of Qi.

Another method was to get an expert physician to use their Qi to push the powders through some crack in the blood vessels.

These were the cures of the pill toxins. The book also went on to explain the methods of preventing pill toxins.

The most obvious one was to limit the consumption of pills as much as possible. The less pill you ate, the lesser the chance of pill powder being stuck in your meridians.

The other, more difficult way was to consume pills with very high harmony. Unfortunately for Alex, the book didn't mention why that helped, only that it did.

That was the end of the book, so Alex closed it and fell into thought.

'What's the difference between high harmony pill and a low harmony pill?' Alex thought. It was obviously the difference in harmony.

'Or more accurate, the difference in the amount of energy each pill has taken in,' Alex thought.

From his understanding of the Structure and Composition of a pill, he understood that the more amount of perfectly clumped together the mixture of the powder was in a pill, the better the harmony would be.

'So, does that mean that the powder of the pill that does hold the energy gets easily absorbed and even breaks down into individual pieces of powder, while the one without energy in it simply stays clumped up?' Alex wondered.

If that were true, he could see why pills with high harmony would result in fewer pill toxins, and vice versa.

Alex mulled on the information for a while, taking in everything he learned about pill toxins.

In the end, all he needed to care about were not eating too many pills, and that better pills were always better.

'I can see why pills with higher harmony would be sought after more. It was not just the effectiveness of the energy, was it?' he thought.

Alex went back to the shelf and put back the book, before taking out the 2nd of the 3 unique books.

He read the title of the book to himself.

"Poison pills are almost as important as healing pills."

Unfortunately, the second book wasn't as interesting as he had hoped it to be.

The book about poison simply spoke about how important poison was to an alchemist. It spoke about the minute differences poison could have that not all healing pills could cure.

As such, people needed to learn about poison so as to be prepared against them. Knowing about poisons would help someone create antidotes way easier than not knowing about the poison.

All the book did was make Alex remember to learn how to make poisons. He had been meaning to do that for a long while, but he had forgotten about it due to the events he had been through in the crimson empire.

Alex stopped. 'I have been through?' he thought. That was wrong. He had never been through anything. It was his clone soul that went through everything in his body.

'Why do I think of the events as something I did?' he thought. He had noticed this a while ago, but now it had become way more prominent.

No longer did he think of what his clone soul did as 'someone else's work'. For some reason, it had become his own in his mind.

The distinctions between what he did and what his clone did were slowly but surely vanishing from his mind.

At this point, it wouldn't be wrong to call the current him and the one that was controlled by his clone soul the same person.

'Am I getting used to my body after being suppressed? What is happening?' Alex thought.

Alex didn't have a clear understanding of what had happened outside of the game. Those memories were still very vague to him.

However, the memories inside the game were now as good as his.

He shook his head and focused back on the poison book he was reading. The book didn't really have anything interesting for him to read further, especially since he wasn't used to making poisons at all.

He would revisit it once he had at least delved into making poisons. Now that he had learned about the poisonous swamps to the east of the empire which he would have to visit for the purpose of getting the Two Colored, or Three colored Poison Lily, he would certainly get into it soon enough.

Alex then took out the final book that had piqued his interest among the many on the shelf.

A book named 'Simple Usage of formations in Alchemy'.

Chapter 614: Formations in Alchemy

Formations for alchemy. Alex had always learned these two things separately, yet now, the book was saying that there were ways to use formations for alchemy.

"I wonder how it would work," he thought as he opened the book and started reading it.

As he read it, Alex soon understood that there was nothing simple about this knowledge. Every single page contained a bit of information that would help everyone a lot.

Use formations to help your pill-making. If people in the Crimson Empire were to be told this, they would certainly be amazed.

There were a few things you could do with your formations that would be considered simple usage.

First of all, was something that many cultivators struggled with even after reaching a high cultivation base.

That was flame control. If someone was born without fire-related spiritual roots then those people would have to usually put in more effort during cultivation.

That was to say that they would have something else to worry about while keeping track of the pill and all.

There were also outside influences that would make it hard to control the flame sometimes. Alex remembered how hard it was for his master to control the fire after she had just awakened her Yin Constitution.

He too struggled while making a few pills when he had just awakened his body as well.

If at that time he had a flame-controlling formation that assisted him in changing the temperature of the flame, it would have been a lot of help.

Another thing formations could help was pill forming. Sometimes, one didn't even have to make the pills themselves. Once they reached the last portion of the pill-making process where all that was remaining was to put the powders together to make a pill, a formation could be used to automate that process.

When Alex read that, he wondered how much that could really help him. After all, pills needed to be crafted carefully to reach a high percentage of harmony.

Of course, he didn't doubt that one could reach a certain harmony level with formations. It may have been immortal grade. It may even be divine grade.

But what about after that? At some point, the powders wouldn't clump together so nicely that they allowed energy to be held. Also, formations surely wouldn't bring out every single speck of the powdered ingredient like a human's spiritual sense would.

Not to mention about the thing the Royal Alchemist had told him.

Symmetry.

If he wanted symmetry in a pill, he would likely have to do it himself and not rely on a formation.

There were still other things a formation could help with. There was one that Alex didn't find useful to himself, but would definitely help a lot of the others.

That was using defensive formations while making pills. Using defensive formations, if the alchemist was ever in a situation where the cauldron's energy destabilized to the point that it exploded the cauldron, the defensive formation would save them.

Aside from that, there were many other simple usages such as Qi gathering formation to keep you making pills for longer, or Soul Cooling formation to help you with the mental fatigue of making pills.

Given what formations could do, these truly were the simple ones of the bunch.

Alex put the book back on the shelf and went back to his task of making pills again.

When he entered the pill formation this time, he asked the aid if there were formations here to help him.

"Sir Alchemist, you can use your badge to activate any formations you may need in here. However, please know that using formation will cost you some charge based on how long you use it for," the aid said.

Alex nodded and started making pills once more. This time, however, he decided to use the Flame controlling formation to see how much it would help.

It cost him 1 True Spirit stone every 10 minutes of the formation's usage. If it worked as advertised, Alex wouldn't mind paying that every day.

He started the formation and increased the temperature to what was needed for the first ingredient.

"Hmm?" Alex had to stop putting in Qi as soon as he started. The moment he used his Qi to even increase the fire's temperature to any level, it immediately shot up the temperature.

He required what he believed to be 30% of his originally required Qi to reach the same effect, and the time it took for the fire to get hot was a bit faster as well.

Considering he had the Flame Mastery scripture which helped him control fire at a level not many could, he could see how this formation would help the other alchemists.

Alex needed to get used to the formation, so for the first few minutes, he kept track of how quickly the formation increased and decreased his time.

Once he practiced a few ingredients, he started getting used to the sped-up creation process and made the pill in just under 10 minutes.

The pill came out to be at 43%, despite him having a slightly hard time towards the start due to the change in speed.

Now that he got used to it, he would make the better and better pill.

For the next 6 hours, Alex continued making pills, spending close to 30 True spirit stones using the formation alone.

While he certainly could work without the formation, it did speed up his process by just that bit.

So, he had continued using it.

Around late afternoon, Alex left the guild to go out and visit the city. For the next 3 hours, he did nothing but roam the city.

He saw the many people going about their own life, each one as real as the next one.

He couldn't believe that at one point he had thought these to be fake people.

Not just him, millions upon millions of people from his homeworld, the fifth continent.

'I wonder if they know this world is real or not? My clone did, but maybe after not finding a way back, he already forgot about it,' Alex thought.

After all, that was what he would do.

'He most likely doesn't know he is the clone. Poor guy, living a life with a bad body, it will be tough for him,' Alex thought.

Along the way, he saw many different guards patrolling the city. Yet he didn't see the guards that had colorful clothes. The Lightsworns.

'Hopefully, they found the corpses and weapons on the ground and learned about their deaths already,' Alex thought.

Alex walked to another restaurant and sat inside, ordering some of the most nourishing food on the menu.

He also brought Pearl out to feed him a bit. Now that Pearl was a True beast, he could also devour a lot.

Not long after, the food appeared and nearly filled the entire table he was sitting on.

Some of the men and women turned their heads to watch him eat so much. A few of them even had shining eyes, as if they found something captivating.

Alex enjoyed his meal as slowly as he could and left the restaurant. When he did, it was already evening outside, and the sun had just gone down.

Lanterns, as well as light artifacts, started shining all over Silverleaf city, giving a lively appearance to the city.

Alex smiled when he saw all that, reminding him of the Hong Wu sect.

He started walking back towards the guild. Along the way, however, he had to stop.

"Would you fellows mind telling me what you are doing following a man like me in this nighttime?" Alex asked, turning around to look at 3 thugs who were trying to be discreet in their following.

"I would suggest you follow a girl instead of a man like me, but that might be bad since I don't think your intentions are very good, are they?" Alex asked.

In the middle of the street, saying such a thing with such loudness had obviously started to make the crowd of people focus on them.

The three thugs immediately looked flustered. "Brother, what are you saying? We are just walking along minding our own business. We aren't following you," one of the men said.

"Oh," Alex said, giving them a light smile. "I'm sorry to have stopped you like that. Then I suppose you wouldn't mind going on your way then."

Alex didn't want to bother with these men, so he left them a way out. With their Bone Tempering realm cultivation base, it would only be bullying to do anything stupid like bait them into attacking him after going into an alleyway.

However, when Alex did give them a way out, they didn't leave at all. Instead, they started at him with their eyes wide.

It wasn't just them, even the crowd behind them had started to stare at him with wide eyes.

'What's going on?' Alex thought and looked the crowd at the side. That was when he realized that they weren't staring at him, but rather behind him.

Alex sent out his spiritual sense behind him and nearly yelped in surprise when he realized who was standing there.

He immediately turned around, and the colorful lights reflected in his light. Even at the night, those robes changed colors like a rainbow twisting itself as it moved through the sky.

The Lightsworns that he had thought had already left the city were standing in front of him and the crowd.

And for some reason, they were staring directly at him.

Chapter 615: Mosquito

'Are they staring at me?' Alex thought with a surprised look on his face. That was when he saw a talisman floating in front of the man and woman, blinking with a soft light as it slowly flew towards him.

Alex thought of moving back, but there was no threat from the talisman at all. He caught the talisman before it could touch him, and when he did, it turned bright and burst into a million lights, all of which started coating him.

The girl canceled the talisman's locator since they had already found the person they wanted to find.

"Fellow Daoist, would you mind coming with us?" the girl asked.

Alex looked at them with a weird look on his face. "May I ask why I am being called?" he asked.

"It is regarding a certain bandit group that you have been in contact with recently," the girl said.

"Why are we wasting our time talking, sister? Let's just grab him and leave," the man next to her said.

The girl shook her head and gestured to Alex as she said, "the situation is a little more complex than you think."

The man turned towards Alex to see what she meant by complicated when he noticed something peeking out of his chest.

'Was that... an Alchemist badge?' he thought. If it really was an alchemist badge then they couldn't be hasty with doing anything.

Offending an Alchemist was the same as offending the guild. The consequences would be too extreme. Not to mention, the kid in front of him was a True Earth alchemist.

"Brother, we can talk in the alchemist's guild if that is where you wish to converse with us," the man said, now understanding the situation.

The girl was a little surprised that her partner even had a brain that could think anything other than fighting and resting.

"Very well," Alex said and left with the two. The two of them moved to either side of Alex as he walked back toward the Alchemist guild.

The three thugs nearly pissed their pants that they had nearly gone ahead with their plan of looting someone that was about to be escorted by the Lightsworns.

Had they arrived at the wrong moment, they would've become mincemeat at the hands of the Lightsworns. They quickly thanked lady luck and made their way back to their homes.

After a few minutes, Alex arrived at the Alchemist's guild and walked towards the corner away from the customers.

The customers and receptionists looked with surprised expressions when they saw Lightsworns enter the guild.

When they saw an Alchemist with them, they were even more surprised.

One of the receptionists immediately stood up and walked toward them. When she reached the Lightsworns, she bowed towards them in greeting but ignored them afterward.

"Sir Alchemist, do you require any assistance?" she asked.

"There's no need," Alex said. "If there is, I will let you know."

The receptionist nodded and went back to the reception.

Alex was surprised that she came to help him so fast. Likely all the receptionists were trained in such a way to help the alchemists in whatever problem they encountered.

'She was likely going to find me a lawyer equivalent, wasn't she?' he thought. He was liking the guild more and more now.

"Can we ask you some questions now?" the girl asked.

"Yes, go ahead," Alex said. There was nothing he could really do now aside from answering their question.

"What's your name?" the girl asked.

"Yu Ming," Alex said.

"Where are you from, brother Ming?"

"Riverweed city," Alex said.

The girl quickly took out a map to see where the city lied and when they realized that it was on the same path as the bandit's location, she put it back in.

"What is your affiliation with the bandits?" the girl asked.

"Affiliations? I don't have any affiliations," Alex said.

"That's a damn lie," the man said from the side. "The talisman that tracked you down had the bandit's aura in it. It was an Aura tracking talisman, and it led us right to you."

"Oh," Alex said. "That's because I killed them partially."

The two Lightsworns immediately frowned. "You killed them?" they asked. The man and woman instantly judged Alex's cultivation base again, only to find out it was still in True Disciple 3rd realm.

That couldn't have killed anyone at all.

The girl suddenly moved her hand, and Alex thought she was about to attack him. However, she was just reaching her storage bag.

The girl then brought out a talisman and suddenly placed it on Alex's forehead before he could say anything.

Alex felt a rush of non-harming energy pass through his body and a moment later, the talisman fell.

-True Disciple 3rd realm-

That was written on the talisman. "Why did you do that?" Alex frowned.

"Sorry, we needed to find out if you were perhaps lying," the girl said as she picked up the talisman. "However, it doesn't look like you are."

"Of course, I'm not," Alex said.

"Then why were you lying?" the girl asked.

Alex was confused. "What? When did I lie?" he asked.

"You said you killed them. With your cultivation base, that's not possible at all. Also, to gain this much aura, you couldn't have killed them using any other method than direct fighting," the girl said.

Alex took a deep breath and reigned in his anger. "Partially. I said I killed them partially. I only killed the ones I could. I can't kill them all obviously," Alex said.

"Huh? Oh," the girl only then understood. "Who else was with you?"

"Uh, it was one man called Shen Jing, that's all," Alex said.

"Where is this man now?" the girl demanded.

"Behind you." A voice floated from behind the girl and boy, scaring them. They immediately took out their swords and pointed their swords at him, fully scared of him.

'What the hell? How did I not sense him approaching?' the girl wondered. 'He's hiding his cultivation base as well.'

"Are you... Shen Jing?" the girl asked, looking at the newly arrived Shen Jing up and down.

"Yes, I am," he said. "Who might you be?"

"We are the Lightsworns, sent to investigate the case of a bandit group terrorizing local merchants and caravans," she said.

"Oh, those bandits are dead now," Shen Jing said.

"And you killed them?" the girl asked.

"Haha, partially," he said, repeating Alex's words.

'How long has he been here?' Alex wondered. It wouldn't surprise him if Shen Jing had been here the entire time waiting for the perfect time to enter.

The girl frowned. She took out another talisman and watched it move. Once again, it drifted towards Alex and turned into a burst of light.

"You have no aura of the bandits on you," the girl said with a cold look in her eyes as if she had found someone in the midst of lying.

"Why would I have their aura?" Shen Jing asked as if ignorant.

"If you killed them, then their aura would be on you," she said as if that were obvious.

Shen Jing simply shook his head. "They were too weak to place their aura on me," he said.

"No matter how weak, their death should have placed an aura on you," the girl said with an annoyed look. She really didn't like how Shen Jing spoke.

"Girl, does your cloth drench in blood when you kill a mosquito?" Shen Jing asked.

The girl's eyes narrowed with more annoyance in her eyes. "Are you comparing late True Lord realms as akin to mosquitoes?" she asked.

Shen Jing gave a foolish look. "Haha, I suppose it's a little inaccurate. But I don't know any bugs that are weaker than mosquitoes, but just as annoying," he said.

"HAH! Weaker than mosquitoes. That's quite arrogant of you. You think we will believe whatever your mouth shits out—"

Suddenly, the floor below the girl cracked as she fell to her knees. Her entire body tried to crumble in on itself as sounds of cracking bones were heard from all over her body.

Shen Jing's entire demeanor suddenly changed. "Mind your attitude girl. Just because I like talking to you as equal doesn't mean you get to disrespect me," he said.

Blood veins popped up all over her body, threatening to burst at any moment. Her organs felt like they would burst out of her stomach, which her heart tried to give in at every other moment.

Her brain tried to shut down to protect her, but for some reason, she could clearly use all of her senses.

And that only made the situation worse for her.

Her face soon became blue from the pressure as blood started trickling down her nose. Then her mouth. Then her ears. Finally her eyes.

The man behind her wanted to help, but he wasn't in the condition to help either. While the pressure he felt wasn't hurting him, it was stopping him from doing anything else.

Only Alex there felt no pressure, as that was how Shen Jing intended it to be.

The girl's robes had already lost their color and were instead mostly black from the blood pouring out of the random tears in her skin from the pressure.

"Brother Jing, you should stop. If she dies, we will be in trouble," Alex said.

Shen Jing was about to say something but shook his head instead of as he kept the information to himself.

Finally, he released the pressure. The girl fell to the ground, taking deep breaths and then coughing out blood.

Shen Jing got on one knee and looked at her. "Do you believe me now, mosquito?" he asked.

The girl couldn't answer from the pain and fear she was feeling.

A smile crept back on Shen Jing's face. "Well, don't worry about your injuries. As luck would have it, you are in the one place where you can trust you will get healed."

The Lightsworn man took the girl away and fed her some pills to heal her. She would likely be in pain even after eating the pills but that was the best they could do for now.

"Did you really have to go that far?" Alex asked. He wasn't sure what to think of Shen Jing anymore. He stopped looking like a gentle elder brother, and instead looked like a sociopath who would kill him without a second thought.

'Are all Saint realm cultivators this eccentric?' Alex wondered.

"You're right. I went a little too far. But I always feel anger brewing over me when someone disrespects me. My pride doesn't allow that," Shen Jing said.

Then, a smile came upon his face. "Anyway, I came to get you. we should leave now," he said.

"Right now? Is there a caravan leaving this late at night?" Alex asked.

"Oh, we won't be using a caravan. Not that you can find a caravan go to where we're going," Shen Jing said.

"Ok, let me deal with some things here. I will be ready in a few minutes," Alex said.

"Sure, take your time," Shen Jing said.

Alex nodded and took out a talisman and read it. It was the list of ingredients and where one could find them.

Alex knew he could find most of them in the capital, but since they would visit some other cities along the way, he thought it would be best if he kept a mental note of what the cities were.

It would always be better to get something early than late.

"What are you reading?" Shen Jing asked curiously.

"It's a list of ingredients for my healing pill and where I can find them," Alex said.

"Oh, what does it say?" he asked.

Alex handed the talisman over to Shen Jing. Shen Jing just took it with a weird look on his face and asked, "Does it have pictures? I love looking at pictures."

Alex sighed. "You can't read, can you?" he asked.

"Nope!" Shen Jing said, a little proud even.

"Are you a player?" Alex finally asked. He had been meaning to ask this question, but the last couple of events dissuaded him from this fact.

However, now that he found out that Shen Jing couldn't read, which was true of Players due to the changed language in the outer world, he was sure that Shen Jing had to definitely be a player.

"What's a player?" Shen Jing asked, immediately killing Alex's theory.

Alex wanted to ask if he was from the Central Continent, but he wasn't sure if he should. That was practically giving away the fact that Players came from the Central continent.

"Which continent are you from?" Alex asked.

"That's a stupid question," Shen Jing said. "You should know by now that the teleportation formation to the Western Continent has been destroyed by the outsiders."

"That doesn't answer my question," Alex said.

Shen Jing smiled. "It doesn't, does it? Well, this should then. I am from the Western Continent," he said.

"Were you born here?" Alex asked.

"No, but I've been here long enough that I can be considered belonging to this place," Shen Jing said.

"So you're really not a player?" Alex asked.

"Player... hmm, I feel like I heard this word before, but I forgot where," Shen Jing said.

Suddenly, his face changed as if he remembered. "Ah, right! In the Central continent. That senior who said he made a game. You guys were called players, right?" Shen Jing said.

Alex's eyes suddenly went wide. "You've met the creator?" Alex asked with very wide eyes.

"Oh yes," Shen Jing said. "Not very long ago either. He was really troubled about the fact that someone destroyed his game."

"YOU KNOW THE CREATOR!" Alex shouted.

Shen Jing scratched his head under his golden hair and said, "Yeah, I think I said that. Although, I just met him there by chance. I was actually trying to meet a friend who stayed with him," Shen Jing said.

'Is he talking about sister Hao Ya? Makes sense since they are both Saint realm,' Alex thought.

"How did you travel between the two continents?" Alex asked.

"I have my ways," Shen Jing said.

"C—"

"No, I cannot take you there," Shen Jing said before Alex could say anything. "I'm not trying to keep you here, but I genuinely cannot take you there."

"Even if I were to take you, you would die on the way there. That continent now has a terrible Qi storm surrounding it that will kill you before you can even enter it," Shen Jing said.

That went in line with what Hao Ya had told Alex. "You don't have any teleportation talismans?" Alex asked.

He had his own, but it was an unreliable one. It would take another 10 years before it was usable at all, even then, its randomness would make it a bad device to use as aim to enter the continent.

"Unfortunately, I am not so rich at the moment. I am what you would call broke," Shen Jing said.

Alex doubted it, but he still nodded. "I see," Alex said. "Can you tell me more about the creator then?"

"I promise I will give you some information about him from time to time," Shen Jing said with an annoyed face. "Can we leave now?"

"One second," Alex ran up to the receptionists and took out nearly 200 pills that he had made since he had become an Alchemist for the guild.

These didn't include the healing pills and other sets of pills he would likely need along the way. It only included normal pills that helped in cultivation or helped remove bottlenecks slightly so one could breakthrough.

The receptionist was shocked, but she didn't show it on her face. She quickly took it and had a formation check it all within a minute.

She got a list of the pill names as well as their harmony level. When she saw pills with nothing but 35-45% of harmony, she couldn't help contain her shock. Some of these pills were even at around 48%.

This was a man on the verge of being a True Heaven Alchemist, and he was so young.

Alex had made exactly 4 pills that went 50% or 51% in harmony in the last 10 or so days but decided to keep it under wraps so as to keep some aces up his sleeve.

Once the receptionist said that the task was done, Alex thanked her and moved to the two Lightsworns that were staying by the side.

"I'm sorry for what the senior did to you earlier. Please take this healing pill as an apology," Alex said and handed the girl a 40% healing pill before leaving.

He really didn't want bad blood with the Lightsworns as that might end up becoming his only way to heal his arm in the end.

If for some reason he was barred from becoming a Lightsworn, that would be terrible.

After realizing all that he needed to do was done, he went back to Shen Jing, and together they left the guild.

Shen Jing quickly brought Alex outside the city, which made Alex very confused.

"What are we doing on the eastern side of the city? We should go to the western side. That is where we can go towards the next city," Alex said.

"Who said we're going towards any city?" Shen Jing asked with a smiling face.

"Eh? If we're not going to a city, then where are we going?" Alex asked.

Shen Jing looked at Alex and asked, "Remember a few days ago when I told you to stop focusing on getting strong, and just focus on getting your arm back?"

Alex looked at him with a confused look but nodded. "Yes, although I don't understand why you would want me to stop becoming strong," Alex said.

"I never said that you should stop becoming strong. I only said that you should stop focusing on it," Shen Jing said.

"Huh?" Alex was still confused.

"That was because I was going to focus on making you strong. And today, I've found the place where I can make you strong," Shen Jing said.

"Oh," Alex's confusion still remained, but curiosity took over his emotion. "Where are we going?" he asked.

"That's a secret for now," Shen Jing said. "Pearl, come out."

Pearl poked his head out of Alex's robe and meowed with his tiny little mouth. Then, without any hesitation, he pushed his little legs on Alex's chest and shot out of the robes, before arriving at Shen Jing's palm.

Alex couldn't help but wonder why Pearl so easily accepted Shen Jing's every word. He had said that Shen Jing was friendly, but was he being truthful?

Or maybe Shen Jing had used some sort of technique on him. Or maybe, Shen Jing had a body constitution that made one friendly towards him, but it didn't work on Alex because of his body constitution.

Either way, Alex didn't fully believe that Pearl was being entirely truthful. There had to be something here that Pearl wasn't able to understand.

Shen Jing then put Pearl inside his own robes and grabbed Alex by his. Then, he shot off.

The speed. Holy shit, the speed.

That was all Alex could think off when he felt his body rip the air apart him.

Immediately, he used his movement technique to clear the friction around his body, but the speed was so fast that his own Qi wasn't keeping up with all the friction that was being removed.

If Alex didn't have extra-wide meridians at the moment to pump out enough Qi, he was sure the air would rip his body apart.

Chapter 617: Training Location

Alex didn't know how much time had passed as all of his focus was gathered on the fact that he had to stay alive.

Then, it all vanished. As if he came to a lurching halt, Alex felt his innards move along with the previous momentum, while his outer body had already stopped.

If not for the body cultivation, his organs might have popped out in different places.

"We're here," Shen Jing said and threw Alex down.

Alex quickly balanced himself in mid-air and flew. When he looked down, he could see nothing but massive forest that grew on flatlands and hills.

"Where are we?" Alex asked.

"This is the eastern forest," Shen Jing said. "It's a piece of untouched land that only the bravest of humans dare to come."

The Dreaded Mountain range. Alex had read about it. People wanted others to know how terrifying this place was, so they named it such.

True beasts were common in many of the mountains, with existence of Saint Beasts not being very rare either.

'I am to train in such a place?' Alex thought.

Suddenly, pressure gathered around Alex. Alex could barely ignore the aura and keep flying, but that was very hard for him.

"Not bad," Shen Jing said from above him.

Then, A beast showed up below him. It was a massive bird that had red feathers and an Eagle's head. Alex looked at the bird in fear and surprise.

Saint realm. This bird was definitely in the saint realm. It was only afterward that he got back enough of his wit to recognize the beast's species.

'A Hotfeather Eagle?' he thought in surprise. 'Is this a coincidence, or did he know there was this beast here.'

"Pipe down," Shen Jing said, putting out his own aura that suppressed the bird.

"You have barely entered the saint realm. Don't show off just because of that," Shen Jing said in a soft voice, but that sounded like a booming voice to the eagle.

It quickly kept away its aura and waited for Shen Jing's words.

"This child will train in your mountain. You are not to interfere with his training," Shen Jing said.

"Yes, senior," the eagle spoke.

"Go, I won't bother you," Shen Jing said.

Seeing the opportunity, the eagle quickly flew back to where it had come from, leaving a gust of wind in its wake.

"I am to train here?" Alex thought, looking down at the massive mountain range. He could see the roaming beasts both in the air and on the ground.

Even from high up, he could tell they were strong. Very strong.

"Yes," Shen Jing said. "You will have to survive in the forest, all alone."

Alex nodded. That was expected from where he was. "Can you tell me why you're helping me?" Alex asked. "Did the creator put you up to this?"

Shen Jing cocked his head to the side. "No. Why would the creator put me up to this? Are you important to him somehow?" he asked.

"Never mind then," Alex said.

"Alright, come here," Shen Jing called him. Alex flew back up to where Shen Jing was.

Suddenly, Shen Jing attacked. The attack was so fast that Alex couldn't see it coming.

When it struck him on the face, Alex tumbled backward for a few dozen meters before coming to a halt.

The attack wasn't very hurtful, but it did burn him a little on his face. Alex quickly turned towards Shen Jing and asked, "Why did you hit me so sud—"

He stopped. Something was wrong. He saw a golden light in front of him. What was that? Was he surrounded by a golden barrier?

Alex put his hands forwards to touch the golden barrier, but he couldn't see his hands at all.

'What's going on? And why is my face in so much pain?' he thought. He tried to touch his face, but still, he couldn't see his arms.

Alex blinked, and that did nothing to block the yellow light. Understanding of what was happening dawned on Alex as he quickly put his hands on his eyes, to cover the outside light.

He could still see the golden light.

There was no golden fog or barrier blocking his view outside. No, it was in his own vision.

Alex quickly sent out his spiritual sense and as expected, there was nothing outside. He then sent his spiritual sense into his eyes, and he could see a wall of Qi erected inside either of his eye sockets.

"What did you do to me?" Alex asked, horrified.

"You are going to train without your eyesight. With something so great as Spiritual sense, I can't have you only occasionally using it. You should be constantly using it, and this is going to teach you regarding that."

"Also, this is to make you stop relying on your mental attack to solve anything and everything. People have mental defense a lot more than you might think. It's about time you start looking for other ways to defeat your opponents," Shen Jing said. "Don't worry about your eyes, I just have to remove my Qi and they will work normally again."

Before Alex could even say anything, he felt something rip away from him. He put his hand out in horror, but before he could even grab onto them, his storage bags were ripped free from him.

Shen Jing grabbed the 8 or so storage bags Alex had, juggling them in his hand. "So many storage bags. You should learn to only take a couple of them with you. Not all of them," Shen Jing said as he started looking into the storage bags.

Alex feared for what he may find, all those saint-rank ingredients. Was he going to get jealous of Alex and kill him to take them all? Was he going to take the sword instead? What about the books he had?

Just as he was thinking that, Shen Jing brought out the sword. He held it in his hand, his eyes shining with surprise.

"Damn, this is a good sword. Perfect craftsmanship," he said as he looked at the edges of the sword. "It might actually cut me too," he said jokingly, but that didn't sound like a lie.

"This sword is a piece of art, and I love it. As such, you will not get to use this sword in this training," he said and brought out another sword.

It was a True Mortal grade sword, with a black hilt, straight, golden crossguard, and a silvery blade about a meter long.

It was shorter than the Steel Sword he was so used to, but it was better than nothing. Actually, since it was a True Mortal sword, it was better than many things.

Unfortunately, however, it couldn't compare to the nameless sword that Shen Jing had taken.

"Take this," he threw the True Mortal sword towards Alex and looked back into his storage bag. After a while, he brought out the cauldron and threw it at Alex.

"I suppose an Alchemist must have his cauldron with him at most times, right?" he said and continued looking through his storage bags.

Then, he brought out a variety of different pill bottles. "Choose 3," he said.

"What? Only 3?" Alex asked in surprise.

"Yes, now choose," Shen Jing said.

Alex didn't understand why he was only getting 3, but he chose 3 healing pills, each and every single one of them above 50% in harmony.

"Good," Shen Jing said, passing along the 3 bottles while keeping the rest back in his storage space.

He brought out formations from the storage bag next, and this time Alex got to choose only 2. Shen Jing then finally gave him 20 True Spirit stones.

"Alright, time for you to go down and train," Shen Jing said.

"Eh?" Alex looked at him with surprise and confusion as the sword, cauldron, 3 pills, and 2 formation plates hovered around him along with the 20 spirit stones.

"Can I get a storage bag to keep all of this?" he asked. There was no way Shen Jing was going to send him down to the beasts with all of these things floating around him, right?

"But I already did," Shen Jing said with a smiling face, as the storage bags in his hands suddenly disappeared somewhere.

Alex checked himself and said, "I don't have it on me though."

"Then what's that on your finger?" Shen Jing asked.

Alex looked at his finger and saw the golden ring with ruby on it. "The storage ring? I can't access it yet. It's apparently from someone really powerful, and it had his imprint on it."

"Breaking through this would take me ages," Alex said.

"Yes, but you have to start somewhere, right?" Shen Jing asked. "Well, it's about time you start using it then. Unlock whatever small part of this you can access and store your items in there."

"Now then, go on," Shen Jing said.

Alex nodded. "Come on Pearl, let's go," he said.

However, Shen Jing put his hand on Pearl, keeping him in his robes. "You will train alone. I will help train pearl myself," he said.

"What? Alone? For how long?" he asked.

"Until your body and Qi are equal," Shen Jing said.

"Body and Qi are equal... that means until my cultivation base reaches True Lord 1st realm?" Alex asked.

"Yes, or more if you want. Also, you are not allowed to hide your cultivation base down there. If you hide your cultivation to sneak around the beasts, then I will come to beat you myself," Shen Jing said, making Alex shudder a little.

Alex nodded. "Okay," He said and turned around to look at the forest down below. For the foreseeable future, he was going to have to live here.

No, live was not the correct word. He would have to survive here.

Chapter 618: Trouble Before the Training Starts

Alex placed all of his items inside his cauldron and flew down towards the forest with fear in his heart.

There were so many beasts down there. Was he going to be fine at all?

He only had 3 healing pills, so until he made some more by finding ingredients in the forest, he would have to be extremely careful of everything.

Fortunately, he had brought a fire-making formation plate with him that could work for a while, but he wasn't sure how long it could sustain him.

Just as he was thinking that a voice drifted into Alex's ears. "You don't have to stay in one place. You can move around if you want to," Shen Jing's voice said.

Alex sent his senses towards the sky, but he couldn't see Shen Jing at all. He was more than the 100 meters distance Alex could view at the moment.

Alex thought of flaring his spiritual sense to see, but destroying your only sense of sight seemed an idiot to him.

'He took Pearl away. Is Pearl going to be okay?' he wondered. He trusted Shen Jing with everything he was about to do, and yet he didn't trust him with Pearl.

'Do I care about Pearl more than myself?' he wondered. 'I can't afford to do that. I need to care for myself right now.'

Suddenly, something flew up to him from his right side. It entered his senses way too quickly, and Alex could barely react in time.

He instantly used his teleportation skill, but in mid-air, there was only 2 place he could teleport to.

That was either his shadow on the ground or the shadow on the underside of the beast that entered.

Since he couldn't see the ground at the moment, he felt better just teleporting underneath the beast.

With a flicker, he disappeared from where he was and appeared under the bird. Then, his sword lit up with golden light that was surrounded by a prominent white outline.

With a slash, Alex put a long gash underneath the unsuspecting beasts, but the damage wasn't deep enough.

He then heard the beast smash onto something as it disappeared out of his view.

'No!' Alex thought as he realized what had just happened. The beast had struck his flying cauldron, and now it was gone out of his senses.

"Where did it go?" Alex cried out, but he couldn't see the exact direction it went.

Just then, the beast entered his senses once more and Alex finally cared managed to see what it was.

It was a giant flying bat of green color. If Alex remembered correctly, this was an Emerald Wildbat.

'True Lord 3rd Realm?' Alex thought as he sensed its cultivation base. This fight was going to be tough for him. Especially without the amazing sword, but hopefully, the mixture of his cultivation and body helped him a bit.

'It should,' he thought. 'The bat is already bleeding.'

SCREEEECH!!

Suddenly, the bat let out a loud screeching sound that made Alex's head hurt, however, since he was looking through his senses, to begin with, he did not have any problem keeping track of what the bird was doing.

As the bird flew towards him, Alex once again flickered behind the bat's shadow and made another cut.

The bat was truly furious this time around. It was used to its prey not fighting back after they heard its voice, but Alex didn't falter at all. Instead, he fought back and hurt him.

'Dammit! The bat is acting cautiously,' Alex thought. The bat was no longer charging without thought. Instead, he was constantly spinning in mid-air, trying to look out for Alex who was somehow appearing behind him each time.

Alex gripped his sword tighter and poured his Qi into it, turning it golden again. With all the metal Qi in it, he was sure that one good attack would kill the bat.

So, once he was fully prepared, he burst into speed towards the bat. All of his concentration was on the bat, while the bat was concentrating both on Alex, and the position behind him where Alex might appear.

Suddenly, Alex disappeared from the bat's view. So, the bat turned around, expecting Alex to appear there, but he didn't.

Instead, it felt Alex's aura arrive behind it. It had fallen for Alex's trap.

Alex swung his sword, as hard as he could with a single hand and cut the bat's right-wing in half.

Then, while the bat was flustered, he swiftly teleported behind it and hit the bat on the neck.

The sword only went in half as deep, not managing to cut the bat's head off entirely, but that alone was enough.

The bat's eyes went wide as it died and started falling to the ground.

Alex huffed in mid-air, taking a small break while checking on himself. 'I can fight up to True Lord 3rd realm if I combine my body cultivation, Qi cultivation, and Sword intent,' he thought.

He hadn't realized this last time around when he fought the bandits. He felt his meridians hurt quite a bit, and also felt his Qi deplete a lot.

He needed to cultivate to replenish this, but where was he to go. He flared his spiritual sense for a bit, but he couldn't see a single thing around him as he was still in mid-air.

'Dammit! Where the hell did my cauldron fall off to?' he wondered. During the battle, he had lost track of which direction it had fallen in as all directions looked the same to him.

He also felt something weird about the battle just now. As if something was missing. Something that woul—

'Ah! The system notifications. It's missing,' he thought. 'Does that mean I won't get the cores and ingredients automatically now?'

He hadn't fought a beast since then to realize that this was how things happened. Now that he did, he frowned.

'So I have to carve the things out myself, huh?' he thought. That meant he needed to fly down right now and find that bat's corpse.

Since the bat had fallen through the sky, to fall along the same trajectory, he decided to free fall as well.

As he let gravity take control of him, Alex fell through the sky, the wind whipping past him as he put all of his focus into seeing anything enter his spiritual sense.

When he saw a tree enter his vision, he slowed down and slowly descended to the ground. Just as he saw the ground, he found the bat's corpse as well.

And alongside it, many hungry beasts with a cultivation base in the True realms.

'Shit!' Alex thought and immediately flew away from there before any of the beasts could see him as a threat.

Some of the beasts there were just as, if not stronger than Alex himself. This was truly a terrifying place and Alex was running low on Qi.

'I need to find a place to cultivate very fast,' he thought and expanded his spiritual sense to the furthest reaches he could.

After a while, he sensed a giant tree with a snake living on it. Thankfully, the snake wasn't very strong. It was likely guarding the fruit on the tree from what Alex could see.

'Fivefold pear, huh? I can make a healing pill with it. Although, I will need a lot of the other materials.'

Alex fought the snake, but it wasn't even a fight. He wanted to simply fight off the beast and send it away as he was invading its home, but the snake seemed to want to fight to the death.

So, Alex fulfilled its dream and cut it in two. He then cut the snake, along its lower section and pulled out a core from inside of it.

He looked at the rest of the snake and sighed. While the snake could be used as an ingredient in some pills, he currently had no place to keep it, so he threw the corpse away.

He hoped that would attract other beasts away from this location.

Then, he jumped into the crown of the tree and finally relaxed. He could see a few beasts inside his senses, but they weren't focusing on him at all.

Once he realized that he was relatively safe, he turned invisible for the extra safety and started cultivating the Five Yang Divine Path.

Chapter 619: Night Lynx

Alex put as little concentration as he could afford into the cultivation itself while keeping everything else on the outside.

He kept track of the beasts that walked into his spiritual sense's range, and those that walked out of it.

At the same time, he started thinking of what he needed to do next. He hadn't even got to think about anything previously before the bat attacked him.

Now, he finally had some time.

'First of all, I need to go find my cauldron. If everything is fine, it will still have its lid on it. Otherwise, the items may have been scattered. At that point, I can forget about finding anything,' he thought.

'Still, I need to find the cauldron if nothing else,' he thought. He was glad that he had his sword in his hand at the time, or he would have to survive in this forest without a sword. That would have been terrifying.

He then focused on the beast's core in his hand. That was a True Disciple 8th realm core. Did he dare eat it? What would happen if he ate something that was so far above his own cultivation base?

He didn't know yet, but he needed to at some point, so why not now? However, he stopped himself from putting the core in his mouth like he was popping a pill.

There were two dangers to that at the moment. The first was a minor one. That was just him not wanting to show Shen Jing, who was probably watching him right now that he could do that.

Second and most importantly, it was guaranteed that he would have to go into his spiritual sea to fight the remnant of that snake that was in the core.

If at that time something attacked him, he would die without knowing for sure. So, he decided to not risk such an important decision.

Since it was nighttime, many nocturnal beasts were out, so Alex hit as well as he could while following Shen Jing's order. Given how eccentric he was, Alex didn't doubt he would beat him if he did anything wrong.

Just going invisible was already pushing it in Alex's eyes.

With a similar state of mind, Alex cultivated non-stop for the entire night and quickly replenished his Qi.

Just as he was done, a voice drifted into his ears.

'Don't forget about the sun,' it said. Shen Jing had come to remind him of the thing Alex had to do every 2 or 3 days.

Alex got out of the tree and flew up to an open location. Once he made sure there was nothing out there, he strained his meridian to push all the Qi he could to bring out a small sun in front of him.

Once it was out, he cut the connection to his Qi, and after a few seconds, it disappeared.

"Argh!" he thought at the slight prickling pain he was feeling all over his meridians. 10% of his Qi was gone once again, with only 90% remaining.

He would have to survive with that.

Alex went back to the tree and did something he should have done a long time ago, but he gave up very easily each time around. That was to use his Qi and spiritual sense to erase the markings of the previous owner of the storage ring on his hand.

Alex jumped back into the crown of the tree with the Fivefold Pear and sat down to use his spiritual sense on the ring.

He started off with the Qi. As he poured the Qi onto the ring, the same thing happened that would always happen. The ring did not accept any Qi as if it weren't meant to.

However, Alex had gotten too many confirmations for that to be wrong. So, he tried again. He failed once again.

He tried again, but he failed then too. And again. And again. He kept trying for as long as he could. While he understood that he couldn't break whatever barrier he was facing by simply punching at it, again and again, he hoped that it would weaken it a little.

Once he felt tired of doing that, he started using his spiritual sense. Alex felt a force repelling his spiritual sense as if the ring didn't belong to it.

Usually, he would give up at this stage, but now, he fought. At a time when his spiritual energy was the most important resource to him, he fought back.

He had to. Without the storage ring, he would miss out on a lot of different things that he wouldn't want to.

The number of resources on these mountains was too great for him to skip out on them, and have his heart bleed.

So, he tried. Once again, and again. He tried and tried until... something slammed onto him from the left.

Alex felt a pain travel up his shoulder as he immediately sent out his spiritual sense around him. A cat-like creature with the fur of black stood on top of the tree crown, staring directly at him.

"Dammit! I lost focus on my surrounding," he thought. He had put all of his spiritual sense towards breaking into the ring and he had forgotten about the dangers surrounding him.

The cat-like creature jumped towards him. Alex was still on the ground and was about to swing the sword in his hands when he sensed another of the same beast coming from behind him.

'Dammit! How many Night Lynx are there in this place?' he thought. He twisted from his location, dodging the first Lynx, and used his sword to block the 2nd Lynx's attack.

From his senses, he could tell that they were both in the True Master 3rd realm and True Master 5th realm, respectively.

Alex could easily win against them. He just needed to land his attack on the two Lynxes.

The first one came for him again, and Alex ducked while at the same time swinging his sword above him.

The sword was about to cut the Lynx, but then the Lynx suddenly turned into a black liquid and managed to slip away.

"What?!" Alex thought. They had some defensive skills that seemed to make them hard to kill.

'I should have read some books that were more thorough on each of the beast's abilities,' he thought. Although each beast usually learned something different, so it might not have been as useful as he hoped it to be.

Alex teleported suddenly, appearing behind the 2nd Lynx and cutting it too. But once again, it turned into some sort of ink-black liquid and reformed a bit further away.

'Can I not kill them?' Alex thought, but he could see the Lynx be a little tired despite not fighting for very long.

'The skill must take a toll on their body then,' he thought and went on the offensive again.

Since both the beasts were in the True Master realm, long-range attacks, despite being a combination of Qi and Sword Intent, would not work on them.

Suddenly, one of the Lynxes roared loudly, making Alex a bit dizzy. Just then, the 2nd one dashed towards him and slammed its claw on his chest.

Alex was thrown back and slammed onto a tree, from which two monkeys jumped down to attack him.

Alex swung his sword and the weak monkeys died without knowing what had killed them. With barely True Disciple cultivation, they should have known not to interfere at this point.

After all, beyond the Mind Tempering realm, all beasts gained a certain level of intelligence.

Alex ignored the monkey's corpses and put his focus back on the battle with the Lynx. While the monkey's corpse was enticing for its loot, he needed to fight the Lynx quickly before another beast heard their battle and came to fight him afterward.

The 2nd Lynx ran towards him and Alex ran towards it too. The first Lynx roared again, sending Alex's mind into chaos, but he quickly grabbed onto his little sanity following which his body healed him from the mental pain.

He then slashed onto the 2nd Lynx which once again turned into an ink-black liquid that moved a little further away to reform itself.

When it did, Alex was already on top of it. He slashed at the Lynx once more, and the tired Lynx's body automatically turned itself into ink-black liquid once again.

However, Alex followed it once again. The First Lynx tried to help, but Alex ignored it completely. For as long as he knew where the Lynx was, he didn't need to worry about it.

After 2 more turns of changing itself into the black liquid, the Lynx's body finally gave up and couldn't change any longer.

That was when Alex struck and chopped its body in half. Seeing this, the first Lynx tried to run away, but that was the beast that started it all, so Alex wasn't going to let it get away under any condition.

He teleported close to it and cut it a few times, by which its body gave away too, and Alex killed it.

Alex let go of the sword and turned his hand into a golden claw that dug into the corpse of the beast and pulled out the core.

Since he couldn't keep the other parts anyway, there was no need in being careful about how he took out the core.

He then moved to the other Lynx's body as well as the monkey's bodies and took their cores out too.

Then, he looked around at the dead bodies of the beasts and understood that if he stayed here, he would have to fight more beasts that came to eat these corpses.

So, he grabbed his sword and walked away.

Chapter 620: Escape

Alex walked down the mountain, finally after figuring out he was on top of one. That had been a difficult thing to figure out as it turned out, he had actually landed on a plateau.

He wasn't sure if going downhill was the best idea or not, since he didn't know if stronger beasts liked the peak or not.

However, he assumed they did, based on the fact that the density of Qi would always be higher on the peak than in the valley.

Which was why most sects' hierarchy was based around who got to live higher on a mountain.

Other than that, he thought it was a good assumption to think that the cauldron of his, if it had fallen down on the mountain, would have likely rolled downhill.

So, he wanted to wrap around the mountain range and see if he could find it at all.

As he walked down the mountain, in the span of about 30 minutes, he saw about 3 different beasts fight and kill another one, eating their cores.

'How the hell are there still so many beasts here?' he wondered. With day-to-day violence like that, most beasts should have died by now.

It was another hour and a half down the mountain later than he realized why that was.

There were too many beasts in the mountains. They liked to mate as much as they fought, giving birth to more beasts than was appropriate.

Them fighting themselves was simply their way of population control.

Finally, Alex managed to reach a patch of land that wasn't sloped at all. He hadn't walked down too quickly, but it had still been relatively fast, so he was surprised when he didn't get there sooner.

'Finally, the valley,' he thought. There were multiple beasts in his senses, some ignorant of him, some eyeing him as food.

Alex ignored all of them. 'Let's go find the cauldron,' he thought and started walking towards his left, hoping he was on the right path to wrap around the mountain.

Just then, a beast entered his vision, a lizard the size of a crocodile. Its body texture was rough with a dull brown color to it. However, when looking closely, one would see that it wasn't a brown color, but rather a group of many, many vibrant colors, mixing together to become muddy.

'Colorful... venomous?' Alex thought. That was something he had been taught in his home. If something out in the open was colorful, it was likely venomous and one should stay away from it.

Alex tried to go around it, but it looked like it was staring directly at him.

'True King realm, dammit I cannot fight it yet,' he thought and tried to back away, instead of going the other way around the mountain.

However, the beast started following him. 'Why the hell is it following me? I'm just a puny True Disciple 3rd realm,' Alex thought.

It would make sense for other True Disciple and True Master, even True lords to see him as an easy target and attack. But this was a True King beast. No way in hell would his 'monster core' ever be useful to it.

Just then, he noticed two True Lord beasts slowly make their way towards him as well. They seemed to want to eat him right now, but they didn't.

Alex wondered if there were actually more beasts in the valley than at the mountain top and started frowning at the fact that he might have guessed wrong.

Then 3 more beasts came from his backside, 3 vulture beasts. Then, a pack of wolves with cultivation in the True Master realm.

Now that this many beasts had gathered, Alex couldn't help but wonder if there was something else going on here that he wasn't aware of.

It surely wasn't possible that all of these beasts had come to him just because of the aura of a True Disciple 3rd realm, right?

That was when a thought struck Alex. 'What if they aren't here for me?' he thought and looked in his robes.

The 5 monster cores lay there hidden inside. But while the cores were hidden, their aura certainly was not. And with 5 of them together at once, it must have looked like a buffet to the beasts.

Alex frowned. He cursed himself for not eating the cores, but they were too high level at the time, and he didn't want to risk fighting such strong beasts' mental image in his mind when his mind was all he had for now to survive.

And now, it had come back to bite him. 'I guess it was true when they said a treasure in a weak's hands is a crime,' he thought.

Now, the only way to escape this situation in his eyes was to get rid of the treasure.

He was willing to depart with it quite easily as the treasure weren't very valuable ones, to begin with.

Now, the only thing to understand was who exactly to give the treasure to.

The lizard was clearly the strongest, but if he did send all the cores towards it, the others would like a hound of him to get something for the trouble they went through.

So, Alex brought out the cores and put all four of them into one hand. Then, with not much force to it at all, he threw the cores about 20 meters into the air.

Immediately, the beasts saw what was happening and jumped forward towards the four monster cores in the air.

At the same time, Alex tried to wrap around the lizard and run away.

The lizard saw that and even saw through the fact that Alex had hidden away one of the cores in his robes.

It raised its head up in the air, ready to shoot out its tongue. Just then, Alex threw at it Heaven's Impact.

The lizard lost its consciousness and started falling down on him. At the same time, other beasts also started noticing him.

Using the lizard as a divide between them, Alex ran away from the group of beasts. However, just a bit further, he could see other beasts making their way toward him as well.

At the same time, he noticed the lizard behind him wake up from its unconsciousness.

'So fast? Does it have a defensive mental skill or what?' Alex thought. Now there was nowhere to run.

So, he was forced to do something he really didn't want to at all. That was to use the Earth Devour technique and run away.

As he employed the technique, the ground opened up beneath him. Just as Alex was falling through a crack. Something shot at him from behind.

He turned around in time to block with his sword, but something else sprayed afterward.

The lizard had shot out its tongue at Alex, and its saliva was now all over him.

Just as he fell inside the crack, pain flared all over him. Even as he moved through the ground, and he appeared somewhere else, he felt the pain burn right through him.

The venom of the lizard was getting to him. He could feel his body actively fighting it, but without his help, the body would take some time.

The pain lowered a bit when he reappeared, but suddenly he started drowning too. He had appeared in a body of water and it was washing away some of the acidic nature of the venom that was harming his skin.

Still, very quickly his body finished taking care of the venom that had gotten into him, while the outer one was washed away by water.

However, while the pain was gone, the danger was not. Even though he was in pain, Alex did not lose track of his surrounding.

And in this new surrounding, he felt many more beasts. The water had more beasts than the land. Snakes, fishes, crocodiles, and many other aquatic and amphibians beasts roamed the water.

Alex shot off in the direction he thought was up, towards the place where he could no longer feel the water.

As he shot up, he got closer and closer to the surface. However, just as he was about to go further up, he sensed something like a ceiling above him.

Still, there were no beasts there so he felt okay going there. Once he was out, he looked around with his senses and could see actual rocky ceilings above him, as if he were inside a cave.

'A cave above a pond?' Alex thought. He flew a little further and noticed the walls surrounding the pond and also the dry land he could go down on.

There were surprisingly no beasts here at all. 'What is this place?' he thought and roamed around.

When he reached a wall in the cave, he started walking around the cave while remaining close to the wall to see if he missed something.

When he made a full round of the cave, he frowned. There was no way out. His spiritual sense reached far and wide, but it still couldn't see the outside. Just a bunch of rock and dirt.

'I must be under a mountain,' he thought. 'I wonder how this pocket came to be formed then.'

The cave was about 200 or so meters wide in diameter, with more than half of it being taken over by the large pond in the center.

In total, there really was just about 40 or so meters of actual land to occupy for oneself.

Still, that was enough for Alex. 'I will rest here for a few days and train,' he thought. 'This can also be the place where I go into closed cultivation from now on.'