

Alchemy 661

Chapter 661: Dream

Alex saw some things come out of her storage bag, but before he could see what it was, a large spiritual wave crashed at him, forcing him to recall his spiritual sense to fight against it.

At the same time, a barrier of blue appeared around her, stopping Alex from seeing what she was doing.

Then, the barrier crumbled as many sharp icicles remained around her.

The girl grabbed one of the icicles and threw it at Alex with her full force while continuously driving down her wave of spiritual energy at him too.

Alex swung his sword and crushed the icicle coming at him.

Then, two more came. One right next to him and one quite far away. Alex easily dodged the one that was further away and broke the one that was next to him.

Even as the wave of spiritual energy crashed down on him, the girl didn't stop the barrage of icicles at him.

Alex blocked the ones he needed to, but most of them he simply dodged.

'Is this girl trying to tire me out?' he thought. She clearly wasn't planning to hurt him with the icicles, so Alex wondered if her plan was to make him use up as much Qi as he could before she completely dominated him with her own power.

'She doesn't know how much I have, and that will be her downfall,' Alex thought.

Just as he thought that the icicles around the girl ended, she showed a happy smile like a crazed maniac.

"Finally," she said as she stopped her spiritual attack and pulled back her spiritual sense.

Alex's own spiritual sense finally spread out freely with no obstruction. And when it did reach around him to see the neatly lined icicles, suspicion grew in his heart.

Then, the icicles melted, and of the nearly 30 icicles that were on the ground, out of 8 of them, black metallic rods appeared with a leather flag on top of it.

"Shit!" Alex cried out and tried to run, but it was too late.

A massive barrier of crimson light appeared all around him, blocking his escape. Worst of all, the formation rods were outside the barrier.

"I finally... got you," the girl said with a heavy strain on her voice. She hadn't done well attacking him with her spiritual sense with such persistence.

Alex attacked the barrier with any and every skill he had. Fist, Punch, slash, anything he could think of.

Alex even tried to use the Earth Devour technique to escape, but the barrier blocked it.

'Dammit!' he thought. His lack of experience when it can fighting a strong human opponent had become his downfall.

Then, he started feeling groggy. 'Disorienting formation?' he wondered, but that wasn't it. He could clearly see the woman outside eating a pill with no problem.

If he was being disoriented, then the direction or the angle of what he saw would become disoriented as well.

'Why is my head feeling so heavy?' he thought.

As if to answer him, the girl spoke. "It's a Spirit Restraining formation. Inside that formation, your spiritual sense will be restrained to a mere fraction of what you can truly use," she said.

Alex struck the formation as hard as he could. If his attack was strong enough, he could surely destroy the formation even from the inside.

If not destroyed, he could use up the spirit stones and cause that to have the formation fail.

So, he continued attacking.

Then, something happened that caused Alex to drop his sword. He looked in front of him and saw the girl use some sort of spiritual technique on him that was making him really groggy and sleepy.

Alex used his spiritual sense to fight back, but he was barely able to push it back. He didn't bother getting down to grab the sword and instead brought out the other, better sword to attack with it.

Then he continued sending out a barrage of attacks at the barrier.

The girl frowned. 'How strong is his mind? Why is the Spiritual Dream Sequence not starting already?' she thought and pushed further.

She even ate a Saint rank Mind Recovery pill to restore her lost spiritual sense in a matter of minutes as well as eat a Spiritual Enhancement pill to improve her mental strength for a few minutes.

She just needed a few minutes of him not fighting back before the formation fully suppressed his spiritual sense.

As the strength of her attack grew, Alex was unable to keep up his own attack and slowly, he succumbed to the dream she put him in.

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Alex opened his eyes in the midst of many people, all of whom were wearing black clothes.

'Where am I?' he thought for a second before he realized there was a casket at the center of the group.

They were outside, and this was a funeral.

Alex looked to his side and saw his Aunt Liz crying her eyes out while holding a little Hannah next to the very young-looking Uncle Rob.

Aunt Liz never seemed to age after hitting her prime, but why was Uncle Rob so young?

Alex heard some sniffing behind him and turned his head to see his mother's young face, filled with tears.

He then looked around, hoping to find his father, but he wasn't there at all.

"Where is grampa, mama?" Alex was surprised to hear his own voice come out of his mouth.

Helen only cried louder, unable to answer.

'Ah!' Alex thought. 'This must be grandfather's funeral. I was... 3 at the time, right?'

Alex's grandmother had died before he was even born, and about 10 years after that, his grandfather had died as well.

'What is this? Am I back in time?' he thought. 'No, this feels more like a dream.'

'What a vivid dream,' he thought.

"Thank you all for gathering here today," a man's voice boomed even without any speaker.

'Father!' Alex thought as he looked towards the front of the funeral to see his, young but still brawny, father speak while holding back his tears.

"My father," Alex's father started and went on a speech about how good a man his father was, and how he had on his own opened a farm at the end of nowhere, and did such an amazing job raising two fantastic children.

Liz could only cry louder as she heard the speech.

"This is a grim day for us, but we will not let it stop us," Alex's father said, his voice booming with every single word.

"As my father used to say, whether you are beaten or hurt, you let that pain go through you, change you, and then you stand up and keep moving forward."

"I know my father wouldn't want us to stop here and would want us to do better, keep moving forward, and make him proud."

"So, that is exactly what we will do. You hear that, father. I won't stop! I will keep moving forward and make you proud."

Alex looked in stun as he had never heard his father say something with so much intensity and conviction.

He wanted to see more, but even as he did, the people blurred like ink drops on water, and the scene in front of him changed.

Chapter 662: Keep Moving Forward

The inks in the water moved and twisted as they settled on another dream, another scene from his past that he had forgotten.

This time, Alex was inside a small room with shelves full of books and trophies to one side, and a large window on the other.

He was sitting on top of something and could see a desk in front of him. There were pens and markers in a glass, a bunch of files to the side, and a sign that said 'headmaster' next to a lamp.

Behind the desk was a man with round glasses and a thick beard. At the very least, this man was 40 years old.

"Thank you for coming on such short notice, Mr. And Mrs. Benton," the man spoke. "I... I don't know what to say, honestly."

"You can start by saying why there is a bandage wrapped around my son's head for now," Alex heard his father speak.

His father was currently holding him.

'So young,' Alex thought when he saw his father. He looked almost as young as in the last dream.

Next to him, Alex saw his mother. She too was so young and so beautiful. Alex almost couldn't believe how thin she was as well.

Then, he saw her face with fury clear in her eyes. She was angry.

Alex didn't remember seeing her angry. Sure, she would get annoyed sometimes and become serious when it was time for him to get a scolding. But never had he seen her with such rage.

'What happened to make her feel this angry?' he wondered.

"I'm so sorry that this has happened. These kids aren't used to seeing someone younger in the same grade as them. We... we didn't think that little Alex would get bullied by the older students. Please don't worry, we have punished them and let their parents know as well," the headmaster said.

That was when Alex put together where he was. 'This is the school?' Alex thought. Because of how far away the school was, Alex's father had taken him out of it to home-school him. So, he never really remembered his time at school.

'I was also... just 5 years old, wasn't I?' he thought.

"We told you," his father's calm voice spoke. "We insisted that you don't send Alex up a grade and instead keep him with his own peers. But you didn't listen, did you?"

"And now my son is hurt because of you. He is bleeding from the forehead."

Despite looking calm, his father had rage in his voice too.

"I'm so sorry about that. That was our mistake. I will suspend the other children if that's what you want," the headmaster said.

"I don't care about what you do to the other kids. I simply want you to immediately transfer him back to first grade again, so he can study like a normal child," Alex's father said.

"That's... that's a little hard. Alex is too good for his class. He understands everything about his subject. Trust me, it will be better for him to skip class."

"He's already starting to show how good he is at second grade's subject—"

"Stop it," Alex's father said. "If you won't transfer him to his appropriate class, then we will take Alex out of this school."

"And go where?" the headmaster asked. "This is the only school in the area. The nearest other one is 2 hours from here. You will have to waste 8 hours a day just to get your son to and from school."

"We don't have to take him to any school. We will home-school him. My wife used to work as a teacher in the city, so she knows how to do it well," Alex's father said and stood up.

When he did, he hulked over the Headmaster, giving him a small fright. "Let's go, dear," he said and walked out.

The entire time there, Alex's mother said nothing at all for she feared all the curses she would throw at the headmaster for letting a bunch of older students bully her 5-year-old son.

When they returned back to his father's old truck, his mother finally took him and caressed his head.

"Does it hurt, Al?" she asked softly.

"N-no," Alex once again heard his voice come out even though he didn't speak.

Alex chuckled a little as he heard the pain in his own voice. 'Why was I trying to hide my pain? Did I want to look strong like father?' he thought.

Suddenly, his father slightly pressed on his wound. "Ouch!" Alex cried out and tear filled his eyes.

"See? It hurts," he said with a slight chuckle.

"What are you doing?" his mom cried out, but his father ignored her and looked at him.

"Listen son, you don't have to act like it doesn't hurt. You can cry if you want. All you need to do is not let the pain take you down."

"As my father used to say, whether you are beaten or hurt, you let that pain go through you, change you, and then you stand up and keep moving forward," his father said.

"Keep... moving forward?" the little Alex asked.

"Yes," his father said.

"What are you telling to a 5-year-old kid?" his mother said.

"Uh... right. My bad," his father said and started the truck. "You want to get some snacks on the way, son?"

"Yes," the little Alex shouted in happiness and the small truck moved.

Even as it did, Alex was left behind as he saw the family of 3 move on without him. And soon... they disappeared once more like ink on water.

When the ink resettled once more, Alex found himself standing in the midst of a lot of people. He was maybe a couple of centimeters smaller than what he was at the moment.

'Oh, I grew,' he thought. When he looked around, he recognized the place.

'It's the train station,' he thought. If he was here then...

'This must have been the day I left for university,' he thought.

"You've got everything in your suitcase right?" his father asked.

"Yes, father," Alex said.

"And the location of the dorm? Can you go there by yourself?" he asked.

"I can, father," Alex said.

"Sigh, we sheltered you for far too long because of... never mind. Now that you are an adult, you should be able to handle yourself," his father said.

"For what?" Alex looked confused.

"Oh, here's the train. Quick, get it," his father said and Alex went in.

"Have a safe journey, son. Remember what I told you okay, no going to clubs and stuff," his father said.

"I know, father," Alex said.

"Good," his father said. "And remember, don't let anything in the city weigh you down. It will be new, unique, and probably a scary experience."

"No matter what happens, keep moving forward," his father said.

"Yes, father," Alex said.

"Goodbye son," his father said and the train left.

That was the last day Alex had seen his father. That was the last day he had been in this place. For that was the day he would enter the game and be teleported to the Western Continent.

As the train vanished like ink in water, a single thought swirled around Alex's mind.

Keep Moving Forward.

The ink changed to something else, and Alex found himself on top of a mountain in the middle of the night.

He knelt on the ground and had his master's dying body in his hand.

Alex's face got serious. This was a pain that he never wanted to experience again.

He had already been through this once. He didn't need to go through it twice.

The pain had changed him already, and he didn't let this pain weigh him down. He had already moved forward.

"No!" he said with a stern expression and the dream vanished.

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Alex opened his eyes on the outside and saw the crimson barrier still surrounding him.

"What? How are you not suppressed already?" the woman outside the barrier shouted at him.

"You..." Alex said with a heavy, but stern expression. He tightened the grip around the sword in his hand, and continued, "You cannot stop me."

"What?" the girl said.

"You cannot stop me," Alex said and dashed ahead to slash. he remembered the words his grandfather used to say, which then became his father's.

Now, it would be his.

"You can beat me, you can hurt me," Alex said as he swung back at the barrier with all he had. He hadn't noticed that he was holding the sword in which he couldn't pour in his Qi at all.

"All that will do is make the pain change me," he shouted and slashed back harder. The barrier shuddered and even the girl was surprised as to what was happening.

This was already a weak barrier because its important function was mental suppression, but physical suppression.

So, when the barrier shook, her heart shook along with it.

'No, he can't break it,' she thought.

"One the pain goes through," Alex shouted as he slashed. "I will stand up."

His strikes got exceedingly violent.

"And I will move forward," he said as he slashed the barrier and stopped. He looked ahead of him in awe as if noticing something for the first time.

"I... will move forward," he said absentmindedly as the pained expression in his eyes changed to one of happiness.

"Yes," he said as he prepared his sword with a white outline appearing on top of it.

"That is me," he said. "I am the one who moves forward no matter what."

The white outline on his sword started to grow and soon, it fully covered the entire sword.

Then, he struck the barrier.

Chapter 663: Just a Little Forward

The white light covered the entire sword as specks of light also flickered out of it like embers from a fireplace.

After 2 entire years of wanting to do it. After getting on the edge of it and being stuck, Alex had finally managed to complete it.

His own Sword Qi.

Even as he sent out a slash with his full force behind the attack, he knew for a fact that this would be the last time he saw the barrier.

When the Sword slash filled with Sword Qi struck the crimson barrier, the barrier shuddered and threatened to break.

The girl felt scared when she saw that, but a split second later her heart calmed down when she saw the barrier didn't break.

However, she then noticed the white slash that still hadn't disappeared.

Alex understood it himself. Unless his Sword Qi was destroyed, it was now a Sword Qi that kept moving forward and didn't stop at all.

So, even when it didn't break the barrier, it kept pushing on it with all of its force.

Then, a second later, there was finally a crack in the barrier.

Then, another second later, the barrier shattered into a million pieces that drifted into the wind like crimson powder that soon disappeared.

Then, the remaining power in the slash moved forward to hit one of the formation flags, and finally, the formation disappeared.

Finally, Alex felt his mind clear up like never before. The sleepiness and the grogginess disappeared just like the suppression on it.

Then he looked at the woman with pure hatred in his eyes.

"You are dead," he said and dashed forward towards her.

The girl used both Spiritual as well as physical attacks but not a single one of them stopped Alex's advancements.

While she was a step higher than him in what she could bring out from her attacks, her attacks never really were about doing physical damage.

They were always about doing mental damage.

She had ways to even beat someone who used artifacts to block mental attacks. All she would have to do was keep them busy until she was able to rip out their artifacts.

However, against someone who had none, she was helpless.

All she could do was fight back and hope she won against him.

However, it very soon became apparent just how stupid her idea was. If it was Alex from before, she could have somehow held him back, or even win against him.

However, now that he had found the inspiration for his sword Qi, she was useless.

Even if he had just learned Sword Qi, he was already sending out attacks that were in the True King realm.

Her defense couldn't stop her from more than a few True King realm attacks.

So, very soon, she found herself on the verge of death.

However, she wasn't worried about death. None of them were. All she was worried about was not being able to beat Alex and steal what made him so great.

She was worried that the treasure she tried so hard to find would be lost to her if she couldn't beat him anymore.

So, she kept fighting back, hoping he would slip, hoping he would make some mistake.

But Alex did none of those. Each one of his attacks was made to kill. If not for the girl's defensive armor, she would've died by now.

However, she couldn't hold on for long. Even an armor as strong could only block as long as it had Qi in it.

Naturally, an armor would siphon Qi from her slowly to continue working. But if she drained it too fast, she wouldn't be able to keep up with the replenishment for the armor.

Once it stopped working, she would have a hard time putting in Qi to make it work again.

And that time was coming closer and closer.

The violent slashes landed all over her body, each with the power to cleave her in half like she were a butter to his hot knife. But the armor kept on protecting her.

Until... it didn't.

Alex heard a crack in the armor, and suddenly, it stopped working. Now, all it could do was work as normal metal armor.

That did as good as being naked in front of his sword.

The girl's eyes went wide as she realized what was about to happen. She was going to lose to a kid. Not only did she lose to Fu Tao, but now she was going to lose to a kid that had barely entered into the True Lord realm.

Rage filled her eyes even as the white sword came next to her, and then...

BANG~

A barrier appeared around her to protect her from the deadly attack.

The girl was already getting wrapped in the silver-white light as she was being teleported away.

Alex felt the rebound and his sword came back to him. Once it stopped, he gripped it harder and slashed it back at her neck. Or, where he thought it would be in the light that already covered her.

His eyes were fueled with rage now. This girl had just come here and tried to kill him, and now she was leaving just like that?

Alex had already let 3 different people that tried to kill him get away all because they were being protected.

'No!' he thought. 'Not this time.'

However, even as his sword arrived next to her next, he could tell that there was some distance between him, and the girl was already being teleported away.

She had begun moving and would soon be out of here.

'No! A little more,' he thought to himself. 'Just a bit forward.'

"Move forward!" he shouted at his own sword and his own self.

Then, as if responding to his cries, his sword increased its length a bit.

No, that was wrong. The sword's length was the same as before.

Alex had moved forward a bit.

No, that was wrong as well. Alex was right where he stood from the beginning.

Then had the girl moved closer to him?

Alex didn't understand, and for now, he didn't care. His wish had been heard and the girl's neck was on his blade.

SLASH~

The white light disappeared, and the girl vanished.

Alex gathered himself as he looked at the empty space in front of him. Then, he looked at the sword in his hand.

There was not a speck of blood on it. There never was.

He didn't need the blood to tell him that he had been successful in cutting her head off. He was confident he had.

Only... he didn't understand how.

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The Saint realm experts were on the outside, calmly meditating in the open space.

There were still 3 more days to go until the realm closed, so they weren't in any hurry.

Just then, two silver lights flashed not far away from them and immediately spiritual sense moved to see who it was.

"Two lights at the same time, what a coincidence," someone said.

"Those kids must have fought each other and managed to land a strong hit on each other," another saint realm expert said

"Or maybe it really is just a coincidence," another elder said.

They expected one of their disciples to come out of the silvery-white light, so all of them looked with interest.

Then, the two lights disappeared at once.

On one side fell a headless corpse of a woman wearing crimson robes. On the other side fell the head of the corpse of the woman who one of the elders recognized.

"Xiran!" the crimson-robed elder shouted and went up to her. However, he was too late. The girl was dead.

"Who killed our disciple!" the old man shouted with rage and the island shuddered.

Shen Jing's eyes opened at the commotion as even he was surprised.

'How was a corpse teleported after the person was killed?' he wondered. His first thought was someone used a teleportation talisman to send the body and head separately, but that didn't make sense.

The girl herself should have had a protective talisman on her.

He checked her wound and suddenly something caught his eyes. Those cuts...

'How?' his eyes went wide in horror. 'How is someone able to do this?'

He couldn't imagine how there could even exist a True realm cultivator in this continent, nay, in this entire world that could possibly do such a thing.

If that person was to grow and learn more... even Shen Jing started to fear a little for the future of these lands.

Chapter 664: Another Door

Alex stared at his sword. With a thought, an outline formed on top of it full of white light.

This was his Sword Intent.

Then, with another thought, the outline increased to the point that it covered the whole blade and all of it glowed white this time.

This was his Sword Qi.

But then... what about when sparks flew out of the white light that surrounded a person? Alex had seen it with Du Yuhan. When he used Sword Qi, sparks would flow around him before converging on the sword to form the sword Qi.

'Am I doing it wrong? Or is my path of the sword just that different?' Alex wondered.

Du Yuhan had told him that his path had been one where he cut everything in his path. So... maybe it was different?

Alex decided to stop thinking about it now and simply rejoiced at the fact that he managed to get past the bottleneck and established his own Sword Qi.

He sat at the foot of the tree with Pearl protecting him as he cultivated to gather up his Qi once more.

By the time he was done, night had already fallen. Alex could leave, but he didn't.

Memories of the day flooded his mind and tear welled up in his eyes. His mother and father... he hadn't seen either of them in over 3 years.

Only after remembering them, seeing them care for him did he realize just how much he had missed them both.

'She did at least one thing nice before she died,' he thought and stood up.

Just like his father said, Alex wouldn't let even this pain stop him. He had to keep moving forward.

So, he stood up from the place and left. The rest of the remaining 3 days felt empty to him.

He couldn't think of what there was in this place to do. He went to the 6th mountain, but it was the same old.

He went around the forest, but aside from finding some ingredients and treasures with a lot of Qi, there was nothing more to find.

Some rogue cultivators as well as normal ones tried to rob him, but they were usually too weak for him even without his elemental Qi, or his sword Qi.

As such, the 8th day passed along as well with nothing of value happening in the land around him.

Alex had returned to the 5th mountain on this day, but there were too many people looking for some treasures, so he could sneakily open a few doors and steal what he could find.

So, he had to leave that place too.

On the 9th day, while roaming around the place, Alex returned back to the 3rd mountain that still had a host of people that looked ready to attack the cultivators belonging to sects and clans that were blocking the route.

Alex shook his head when he saw that and ignored it to go around the mountain. He walked up the side of the mountain, trekking in between the trees as he saw everything around him.

At the top of the mountain, there was another plateau. Alex half-expected a house to be there, but there was nothing there really.

All he could see were tall grasses and short trees.

"Hmm... weird," he thought for a second as he looked at the trees and something looked misplaced there.

He turned around and looked at the other areas and immediately realized what it was. "Right, the trees are too young," he thought.

The grasses and trees filled the area, but they were young.

'Why is it young?' he wondered and sent out his spiritual sense.

At first, nothing seemed abnormal. The Qi was fine and the trees were healthy.

However, it was then that he noticed something.

'My spiritual sense won't go underground?' he thought in surprise. He tried to force it into the mountain, but he simply couldn't.

'Is there a barrier around this mountain?' he wondered and stumped his legs beneath him very hard.

Suddenly, the surroundings vibrated as a blue barrier that appeared around them pushed the entire soil and plants above it.

Alex then took out his sword and slashed using his Sword Qi. He didn't know exactly how strong his attack was at the moment, but he knew it was in the True King realm.

He would go check the damage on the next mountain after this.

When the white slash landed on the ground, the blue barrier appeared once again to block the attack, but his sword Qi wouldn't budge.

The Qi diminished by the second and until the very end, they kept attacking the barrier.

In the process, they destroyed quite an area around them as soil and plants both were ripped away from the area, revealing the true thing that lay underneath.

A giant cluster of complex runes.

Alex recognized part of the runes in the cluster as the ones he could find in any door.

'So this is a door?' Alex thought. 'Where does it lead to?'

He kept away his sword and placed his hands on the runes before pouring in his own Qi.

When the Qi flowed into the gate, Alex got his spiritual sense ready to peer into the place and see what it held.

After all, it wasn't like the gate would just op—

Suddenly, a familiar feeling took over Alex, and before he could say anything, he was teleported away.

When he reappeared, Alex found himself inside a relatively bright room that had runes that burned with bright light.

"Where the hell am I? Why did I teleport?" he immediately started freaking out. He really hadn't expected the door to suddenly teleport him.

None of the other doors had done anything like that. Why did this one do such a thing?

When he sent his spiritual sense out, he found that he couldn't bring it out at all. It was as if spiritual sense was suppressed in this room.

"What the hell?" he thought. He started looking around and soon found a complex rune of the same type outside

'Sigh, there's a way to leave,' he thought.

He relaxed a little after learning that he could leave it whenever the hell he wanted to. But he still couldn't help but wonder where the hell he was.

Alex was standing in the midst of a relatively grand hall. The walls seemed to be made up of something that looked like limestone but was harder.

The floor was made up of the same material and had bright red carpets on top of it.

He walked around the room, looking through it everything and that was when he noticed a door at the corner of the room.

'Oh, what's that?' he thought and walked towards it.

This time, the door looked incredibly simple. There were no runes on it at all. "It's a simple door?" Alex couldn't help but be surprised.

He tried to push on the door, but it seemed to have been lodged somewhere, and didn't want to be pushed.

It was either that or the door itself was very heavy. "Screw it, I will cut it," he thought and brought out his sword.

White light covered the sharp sword in his hands and he directly struck the door. When the strike landed, Alex's eyes went wide.

Somehow, even with his strongest attack at the moment, the best he could do to the door was put a small cut on it that was merely half a centimeter deep.

Alex half expected to find the sword with chinks on it, but of course not. His sword was one of the best ever.

If only it accepted Qi, that would have been awesome.

Alex tried a few more times, but all he could do was make some cuts. He sighed and stopped.

At this rate, it would take him 5 days at least to break through the door. He didn't have that sort of time.

'What the hell is this place exactly?' he thought one last time before deciding to leave. If he couldn't open the only door that could lead him to possible treasures, then he didn't need to remain here.

He walked back to the front of the room and placed his palm on the runes before pouring Qi into it.

The runes glowed bright yellow, and then... nothing happened.

"What?" Alex was confused for a second. He poured in his Qi once again, but the same thing happened once again, which was nothing.

"Oh, you can't do this to me," Alex said and he poured in more Qi and even punched it a couple of times.

However, he still couldn't teleport at all.

"What the hell is going on? Am I stuck here now?" he asked with shock. He couldn't help but start blaming the Alex from 5 minutes ago for being so stupid.

But, when he thought back to the event that took place then, he had no reason at all to suspect that such a thing could've even happened.

Even if he was twice as cautious as he was now, he would still have done the same thing.

"There's no point in bothering then," he thought and let out Pearl.

Pearl came out with a meow and asked where they were.

"You can speak freely here," Alex said. "Also, we are stuck somewhere with no way to leave."

"We're stuck? What do we do now?" Pearl asked.

"Well, I think the best thing to do now, is to do nothing," Alex said. "There are only 2 more days left for this realm to be over. All we have to do now is sit tight and wait for the world to teleport us out."

Chapter 665: The 11th Day

Outside the Demon Realm.

The many Saints had stopped meditating and were now waiting for their disciples and juniors to come out of the place.

Any minute now, the demon realm would end.

Suddenly, a bright light flashed all around them, and one by one people started popping out of the place.

Fu Tao walked toward his senior and waited for more of his juniors to leave.

Liang Qiu started looking for her juniors herself.

More and more people starting to pop out. Some rejoiced, some became sad.

Some tried to attack others claiming that their stuff was stolen, while some were dejected at the fact that they were teleported just as they were about to reach for some treasure.

Most showed one emotion or another, but all in all, most were simply glad to be out.

Of course, not everyone got to come out. Some of the elders waited, but their juniors and disciples didn't come out at all.

"Where's sister Xiran?" Fu Tao asked the saint expert next to him.

"Dead, I'm afraid," the man said with a sigh. "Have you any idea what happened?"

"Dead?" Fu Tao gave a weird look. "I haven't seen her since we entered the House of the Undying 3 days ago."

The elder shook his head when he heard that, but then he stopped. "You did what?!" he asked in surprise.

A similar reaction was popping out all over the location as the elders found out about the event that took place in the House of the Undying.

Very quickly the disciples summed up what was going on and the elders couldn't help but get more shocked.

"You were successful in getting treasures then?" he asked.

"Yes, elder. There was quite a bit of treasure in there. Although most of them have lost their effectiveness due to time, I should still call myself lucky with how many I got," Fu Tao said.

"Good, Good," the elder said with a happy face. It was as if he had forgotten the momentary sadness of losing a disciple.

They all talked for a while, and finally, as disciples stopped popping out of the monument, they started leaving.

Most of the greater clans and sects left immediately once they understood that no one else was coming out.

They had been here way too many times to be expectant about something like that.

The lower grade sects and clans too left not long after seeing the greater clans and sects leave. If they were going, they had no reason to stay behind.

Some folks stayed behind, hoping their person wasn't dead and just stuck, but life wasn't all sunshine and happiness.

Not long after, they too began to leave as they understood that they had lost someone precious to themselves or their organization.

No one waited for the rogue cultivators without a backup. After all, they were rogue.

So, by the end of the day, as the sun started to set, there was only one person that still stayed on the island.

Shen Jing

He's always smiling face held a troubled look as he kept staring at the monument. He hoped and hoped and hoped, but no matter what, Alex didn't come out.

'Did he really die?' Shen Jing wondered. That thought only made him feel worse and worse by the second.

He walked up to the monument and placed his hands on it. When he poured his Qi into the monument, the secret realm inside of it started to get unstable.

He let go.

"It really did close up, huh?" he thought, and after a long while sighed.

"Master's final grace before he left... I destroyed it all," Shen Jing sighed.

"Not to mention, now she is going to be angry with me. Ahhhh! I should have kept him back and not let him enter the realm," Shen Jing cried out.

Shen Jing had thought that with Alex's 2 year-long survival training that he would be able to walk out of any danger without a problem.

However, now it all seemed like a lie to tell himself.

"Goddammit!" he shouted in anger.

His aura shook the island as waves crashed onto it with far greater strength.

After a while, Shen Jing finally accepted the fact that both Alex and Pearl had died in the secret realm, and left the island as the sole bearer of this tragic news.

* * * * *

The first day that Alex had been inside this special room, he had thought that he would simply wait around.

However, once Pearl got bored, they started throwing out attacks at the door in hope that it opened up in the next 2 days before the realm closed up.

'Is tomorrow the 10th day, or the beginning of it?' Alex thought. Soon, he realized that there was still another day to go before he would be sent out.

So, one more day, he continued sending out attacks at the door, hoping to get it open before the day was over.

Unfortunately, he couldn't do it in time.

As the day was ending, Alex stopped. There was no point in attacking the door. It was still only halfway done.

He would have to attack for some more days before he could get it to break open.

"Stop Pearl, there's no need now," Alex said.

"Why?" Pearl asked with a confused look.

"It's time to leave," Alex said. "You should get back for now."

Pearl nodded and jumped into his beast space. Then, all Alex had to do was wait.

As time slowly passed, he started wondering when he was going to get taken out.

When it reached the time for him to get out and he still didn't, the wonder in his heart turned to anxiety.

After that, every minute he wasn't taken out, the anxiety turned to fear.

"Oh no," he thought. "Am I stuck here? What's going on?"

He went to the runes at the front of the room and was still unable to activate it to teleport.

As more time passed, the 11th day of the realm arrived.

While he wondered if the realm had made a mistake and was going on for another day. but as more and more time passed, he started becoming more and more sure that the reason why he hadn't been teleported out was that he was in this goddamn room.

So he understood that he needed to leave this place immediately.

But how?

An answer came to him almost instantly.

"Through the door."

Alex brought out his sword and started attacking the door relentlessly. Not long after, Pearl joined in as well and continued attacking the door.

Minute after minute, slash after slash, Alex started chipping away at the door bit by bit.

With both Pearl and Alex hitting at it with the urgency they had, their power was only stronger than what they put out the last two days.

Each one of Alex's strikes was filled with the power of his Sword Qi. Each one of Pearl's attacks was the White Tiger's Golden Claw.

Slowly but surely, they managed to dig deeper and deeper into the stone door.

Once the door was on its last leg, Alex gave one last strike and the door suddenly broke into a hundred pieces.

Finally, Alex could see what was inside the room. When he did, he couldn't help but be shocked.

Chapter 666: Death

"Someone is cultivating?" Alex asked himself as he looked inside.

The room beyond the door was a small compact room that could not have been a way out of this place.

Still, Alex forgot about all of what had made him want to open up the door. For now, all he could do was be curious as to what the man was doing here.

'Is he in closed cultivation?' he wondered. 'How long has he been here?'

Covered in a black robe, the man stayed still with no sign of movement. His eyes were closed, and his body slumped.

He looked just like a normal man, maybe even a little handsome with his young look and his handsome face.

Except there was a single difference that made him not look like a normal man.

There were two, skin-colored spikes coming out of the man's forehead, which slanted the more it grew up.

Horns.

The horns were maybe 10 centimeters long at best, but that was enough for Alex to tell what the man was.

'A demon,' he thought and looked at the man in complete shock. 'How many years has this thing been here?'

"Pearl, get back in right now," Alex said, and without question, Pearl jumped back into the beast space.

Should he leave now? but how?

Then, Alex gathered up his courage and spoke, "Ex-Excuse me?"

He waited for the demon to open his eyes, but the demon gave no response.

"Sir?" Alex called out to the man, but once again, he didn't respond.

In fact, he didn't move either. And he gave no aura... and he wasn't breathing either.

'Is this man really in closed cultivation?' Alex thought and slowly stepped in.

"Senior?" he called out even as he went in just in case, but there was no response.

Alex started to get more and more suspicious. This demon... was dead, wasn't it?

As he got closer, Alex saw something curious. On the man's neck was a circular medal of sort hanging from a thin piece of thread.

In his right hand was a storage bag, simply out in the open.

Alex waited for a bit and carefully looked at the man. Only after he was absolutely sure that he was looking at a corpse did he move his hand.

Slowly, he reached out to the storage bag and lifted it off of the demon's hand. Immediately afterward, he shot backward and got into a defensive position but the demon didn't stand to attack him.

"Phew!" Alex thought and looked at the medal next. The medal looked smooth with no carvings on it.

'Is it wood or metal?' he wondered when he saw the metal. The bronze color made it impossible to tell from where he stood.

Alex reached for the medal and grabbed it to turn it around. Just as he did, something happened.

A glorious aura of death and darkness suddenly erupted from the demon's body. It was so strong that Alex fell back suddenly while still holding the medal.

When he did so, the thread ripped, and the medal came undone from the demon's neck.

At the same time, the deathly aura around him abruptly grew more dangerous as it started putting pressure on Alex.

And then, a face emerged from the cloud of black Qi in the air.

The face of the demon.

Its skin was black like it was dipped in ink. As such, even its horn was pitch black.

The only thing of color on that face was the dazzling yellow eyes. Alex couldn't help but tell himself how beautiful those eyes were.

The face's mouth opened and a booming voice emerged.

"I... SENSE... NO... BLOOD... OF...MINE... IN...YOU" the voice said in slow, methodical words. The aura suppressed Alex, and all he could do was look at the giant face in horror.

"YOU... ARE... NOT... MY... KIN!" the face continued.

Then finally, it said, "ALL... INTRUDERS... WILL... DIE!"

The black face suddenly twisted until it looked like a crescent moon on a handle, and it dropped with tremendous force towards Alex.

All Alex could do was watch the scythe fall on top of him in horror. The only aura stronger than this that he had ever witnessed was the lightning from Heavenly Judgment.

And those were meant to kill immortals.

Alex watched his death approach with not a single drop of blood remaining on his face. His body could move, but he didn't do anything.

For he knew, there was not a single thing he could do to save himself.

The scythe fell on his neck, and...

~ROAR~

Suddenly, Alex heard a roar coming from within himself. A large golden light came out of him and struck the incoming scythe.

Like a candle in a raging storm, the scythe vanished into nothingness.

Alex stayed on the ground and clutched his neck where he had scythe had nearly struck. He had, at some point, already dropped the medal on the ground.

All he could do right now was thank god that he wasn't dead.

'No,' he thought as beads of sweat rolled down all over his body. 'I need to thank Shen Jing.'

Alex remembered the single defense the Shen Jing had placed on him before he entered. Fortunately, he hadn't come across anyone strong to have a need for it to be used.

If not for that, he would've died today for sure.

Alex took a few minutes to gather his wits and finally looked back at the corpse of the demon.

Now that all the aura had left it, it looked decrepit and rotten with barely any muscle remaining. In fact, it was simply a skeleton now.

Alex wiped some of the sweat in him and quickly ran out of the room, not before picking up the medal he had dropped.

Once he was out, and hopefully safe, he got as far away from the door as he could and sat down close to a corner to look at the items in his hands.

The first one, the medal, was a bronze-colored circular stone of some kind that was colored to look like it were wood or metal.

One side of it was flat and smooth, but the other side was full of intricate carvings that Alex recognized to be runes.

As for what runes exactly, he couldn't tell. One thing he was sure of was that this medal didn't have a teleportation rune on it.

"Sigh, was all that work for nothing?" he wondered and put the medal to the side before checking what was inside the bag.

There were a few things in the storage bag, and Alex brought them out one by one.

The first one Alex brought out was a bunch of spirit stones, maybe around 20.

It had been in the storage bag for so long, and yet it hadn't lost any of its glow. It was a little surprising to think that it would have Qi even after being with the demon since it was here.

'Is there even any left?' Alex wondered and tried to cultivate his Qi when suddenly, he had to let go of it.

"Argh!" he cried out in slight pain. The right arm became numb for a few seconds before returning back to normal.

'That energy, it was so strong,' he thought and picked back the stone. 'Is this... a Saint rank spirit stone?'

He couldn't help but be shocked at the realization.

Saint spirit stones. This was not something that was so readily available in today's world. After all, a Saint rank Spirit Vine had to die for Saint Spirit stones to form from it.

Alex looked at the 20 spirit stones in awe for a while and put them into his ring.

Next, he brought out a small jar of... something. Without his spiritual sense, Alex felt really blind.

He slowly opened the jar and an intense aroma of a mix of herbs and flowers wafted out of it.

Alex looked inside and saw a magenta-colored medicinal paste of some sort. 'What is this? Is this saint rank too?' he wondered.

He got close to it to see if he could recognize the ingredients used by the scent, but all he managed to do was make his nose and throat burn for a few seconds which forced him to cough and sneeze for a little while.

Only after he recovered did he put the medicinal jar into his ring and brought out the next item in the bag.

A Talisman.

Chapter 667: The Undying God

Alex opened the talisman and saw that it had some words written on it. Since it was written in the demon language, Alex could understand it quite easily.

[The Undying God is dying. How ironic. I can sense my spirit fading. Soon, my soul will move on to the cycle.]

[I have learned the Dao, but I believe I'm not strong enough to survive the advancement. As such, I leave behind my legacy.]

[If you know me, which I hope you do, you can find it all in this exact room. Please do not let the legacy of our ancestors created since the primordial times die with me.]

Below those words was a map with a location that located the exact position of the treasure that was left behind.

'The Undying God?' Alex thought solemnly. Undying... that was the name of the house at the peak of the 5th mountain.

Alex thought back to the diary he got from one of the better houses on that mountain.

It spoke of a lord that had gone into closed cultivation because he took damage to the spirit. This was the young lord of the demon, who according to the diary was once ambushed by 4 humans and still managed to survive because he was Undying.

'So, he was the Undying God, huh?' Alex thought as looked towards the door on the other side of the corner. The demon behind that was someone that was supposed to never die.

The Undying god never got to pass on his techniques, his legacy. The owner of that diary was quite happy when he learned it was going to happen, but it seemed that being in closed cultivation stopped the demon from doing so.

'His legacy... does it mean the thing that made him undying?' Alex wondered.

He thought of another piece of information he read in the diary. The young lord of the person whose diary he got had entered the Timeless Palace. Did that mean that he was currently in the Timeless Palace?

"Does that mean that time has stopped in this place? Is that why no matter how many days have passed, I still haven't gotten out?" Alex thought.

That made him a little happier. He wished his assessment of the situation was correct and continued thinking about the talisman's information as he looked at the map.

The map showed a location with 6 mountain peaks arranged in a weird order. On one of those peaks was the marking that located the legacy.

Alex's first thought said that the location was the secret realm he was in currently. However, upon closer inspection, he realized that the order of the mountain was a bit different.

The 1st mountain was closer to the 2nd than it was to the 3rd. The 4th mountain was very much larger than most of the others which weren't correct.

The 5th mountain was very close to the 6th, which didn't make sense to him.

'Is this a map to a different secret realm?' Alex wondered. That was the only thing that made sense. After all, it was unlikely that during such an important war, there was only a single hiding location for most of the demons.

'So it's not this place huh?' Alex thought. His enthusiasm immediately disappeared once he realized there was no treasure here.

"Sigh, let's just find if there's a way out of this place," Alex thought and pulled out another one of the talismans in the bag.

This one turned out to be a recipe for a healing salve that one could apply to the wound for instant heals.

'Pills are way more useful than these,' Alex thought, but he didn't immediately discard it. Who knew when such things could come in handy.

So, Alex quickly memorized it and moved on to the other things. Most of the other talismans were also about medicinal paste.

Finally, Alex reached one that wasn't. This too had something written on it.

[After days of experimentation, I have finally come across the information that will help me turn this technique of mine into a bloodline.]

[I have found the perfect specimen for experimentation. If I am successful, we will soon be able to save heaps of our members from needlessly dying during scouting missions.]

[I was successful in turning my technique into a bloodline power, and have managed to infuse it into the beast. I have since bonded with the beast, but I've left its descendant back in my house.]

[I hope someone finds the egg.]

"The Egg?" Alex's eyes went wide. He immediately brought out the egg from his storage ring and looked at it with clear curiosity in his eyes.

'This egg holds the power of the Undying god?' Alex thought with a hint of surprise in his eyes. His smiles widened as well when he thought about the fact that he had obtained this beast.

Now, he only wondered what it was exactly.

'I will find that out after I leave this damn place,' he thought.

Alex sifted through a few more pastes and finally reached another talisman that wasn't about pastes.

[If you can read this, then I am already dead.]

[I will die any time now. Even after coming to the Timeless Palace in hope that someone out there can find a way to cure me, no one has come to help me.]

[I cannot tell how many years have passed outside. If it has been years for even me, then it must be eons for the ones outside.]

[I do not know what has happened to the war. We were losing, but I hope we didn't. Even if we did, I hope we weren't eradicated.]

[Since I am to die, I will wait here for someone that holds the demon blood to take this Medallion of authority from me.]

[As such, I have removed the authority required to enter this place. Take the medallion and leave. I hope that in being the one with the most authority over the secret realms of ours, you will do some good.]

[I failed in helping us survive, but I hope you will do our legacy proud.]

[With this, the 8th Undying God bids his farewell from this world. I hope to reach the place where valiant warriors of the demon races go to after they die glorious deaths.]

[Goodbye.]

Alex stopped reading the talisman. His eyes grew solemn after having read the final words of a man who knew he was dying.

His death was likely slow, and maybe even painful. However, he didn't seem afraid at all. In fact, he seemed to welcome death like a friend.

"Farewell, 8th Undying god," Alex said softly and bowed a little in the direction of the corpse.

He placed the talisman into his ring and took the medal back out.

"So this is a medallion that grants authority over parts of this secret realm huh? I wonder what one can do with this?" Alex wondered.

Alex tied together the threads of the medallion and put them on his neck.

The moment he did so, as if a suppression field was lifted off of him, Alex could feel his spiritual sense roam freely all around him.

Alex spread it all around to check every nook and crannies of the place. That was when he noticed something.

"What?" Alex exclaimed and moved his hand. A gust of wind followed his gesture with incredible force and it lifted the red carpet until it was clumped to the side.

Finally, Alex noticed something that was hidden beneath the carpet the entire time.

Runes.

Alex recognized part of the rune as part of another cluster of runes from something else. He had seen this part in the cultivation rooms in this very mountain.

Except they were less complex and different.

'Does this place increase time too same as the cultivation room?' Alex wondered. That would make sense given where he was.

But then, the name didn't make sense.

There was nowhere more time than the place he was at, so calling it the Timeless palace wouldn't make sense.

The only time it would make sense is if the time in this place was stopped... or slowed down.

Alex's eyes went wide and he quickly brought out the last talisman again. Then, he read one of the lines that he had simply read once without thinking much about it.

[I cannot tell how many years have passed outside. If it has been years for even me, then it must be eons for the ones outside.]

"Dammit!" Alex cursed. As it turned out, this place really was slowing down time compared to outside.

Then... if he had been here for 3 days, how many days had passed outside?

"I need to leave quickly," Alex said and went back towards the runes on the circular stone embedded in the wall.

Now that he held the medallion, he knew that he had the highest authority in this place.

With that, he poured his Qi into the runes, and as expected, familiar teleportation powers engulfed him. Before he knew it, he was back out into the mountain top.

However, the teleportation powers didn't leave him. In fact, they grew stronger as Alex felt something wrap around him from all sides.

He tried to push it back out of sheer instinct, and it even looked like he was successful for a couple of seconds.

However, that did not last long enough as the power got stronger by the second.

Very soon, the stronger teleportation power engulfed him and Alex disappeared.

When the power finally left him, Alex found himself on grassy soil with the smell of water and salt all around him.

Finally, he was out of the secret realm.

Chapter 668: SouthShore City

Alex looked at the familiar but empty island. Not a single soul could be found here at all.

"I'm finally out," he said with a sigh of relief. "Shen Jing didn't wait for me, huh? Well, I can't blame him if what I found out is true."

Now, he only needed to know how many days he'd been inside during the last 3 days he spent in the Timeless Palace.

'I have time,' Alex thought and stood up to walk over to the monument. He wanted to check if he could go inside or not.

He placed his palm on the surface of the monument and let his Qi flow in. A yellow light shined throughout the runes all over the monument and Alex felt it activate.

However, when it tried to teleport him over, he felt the space not wanting to budge, and as such he couldn't go in at all.

"Tsk!" he thought and stopped.

There was no point in trying. 'I guess I will have to wait for another 10... no, fewer years for it to open up. Then, I can go through all the houses on the 5th mountain, and probably that door on the 6th mountain as well' he thought.

Then, it was time to leave.

Alex concealed his aura fully and became invisible before flying through the sky. He even reined in his spiritual sense just in case there was something terrifying in the water.

From everything he had learned, the ocean was extremely terrifying and he did not want to find out how.

It took him a couple of minutes to cross the 10 or so kilometers distance that was between the island and the mainland.

Once he reached there, Alex continued until he saw some light.

Since he knew that he was far to the south, Alex needed to navigate his way towards the southwestern side of the central area of the empire, the place where the Radiant City was.

After flying for half an hour, Alex quickly found a city. It was starting to get dark, so the glowing lights were all over the place as hard to notice from the sky.

He flew down to the outer edge of the city, before entering on foot.

"Woah!" Alex thought with a bit of surprise when he saw that the city was quite developed.

He could sense the True realm aura from every person that walked through the street. With a bit of logic, he was sure that Saint Realm experts were hidden in the city for sure.

There was no way such a place wouldn't be a lawless zone otherwise.

Just as he thought that figures in colorful robes flew across the sky. 'Lightsworn? No wonder this place is so safe,' he thought. It also reminded him of his wish to become one soon.

He didn't really care about justice or stopping criminals. He wanted to do it for a completely selfish choice, which was to get his arm back.

'I still don't know if it will even work,' he thought. 'What should I do now?'

Suddenly, he remembered something. "The pill... I need the ingredients," he thought. Then, he remembered the Blood Spirit Ginseng that he had ignored for 2 and a half years, and then some time.

'It must've been gone by now,' Alex thought. Since the city was a big one, he was sure that an Alchemy Guild must be in this city.

After asking for directions, Alex quickly reached the center of the city where all the different guilds were located.

'Southshore City Branch of Alchemy Guild' it wrote on the front of the board.

Alex walked through the door. He saw the familiar layout of the Alchemy guild and found his way to the reception.

"Excuse me, is there a Blood Spirit Ginseng in the sale currently?" he asked.

The receptionist put on a welcoming face and looked up the information. After a few seconds, she gave him the bad news.

Alex took out two spirit stones and said, "Broaden the search to the entire empire."

The receptionist took the stones and checked. Still, she returned the same bad news.

"I'm afraid there isn't one available at the moment," she said.

"Can you tell me when the last one was sold? And to whom?" Alex asked.

"Due to our policy to protect customer's privacy, we are unable to tell you," she said.

"You can't even tell me the date?" Alex asked.

"Wait for a second," the girl checked once more and replied. "The last Blood Spirit Ginseng was sold about a year and a half ago."

Alex sighed. If only he had been in the city at that time.

"I have another question not related to any of this, which I hope you can answer me," Alex asked.

"What would you like to know, fellow Daoist?" she asked.

Daoist... he was one now, wasn't he?

"Do you know about the secret realm that everyone visits every 10 years?" he asked.

The girl nodded.

"Can you tell me when the next opening of it is?" he asked.

"Hmm, I believe the last one ended just under 3 years ago, so you will have to wait 7 years, fellow Daoist," she said.

Alex remained stunned. 3 years... really? 3 goddamn years? If he had been outside, he would have been 24 years by now.

Alex thanked the girl and went to sit at one of the chairs to the side.

'3 whole years huh? I lost 3 years just like that,' he thought. 'And in that time, I lost my chance to get back my arm as well.'

'Although, I do have some more opportunities now,' he thought. 'For one, I hope that Shen girl has gotten better with her water arts so that I can ask for her to heal my hand.'

'Secondly, the princess hopefully got learned enough with the healing crystal to get my arm back as well. Aside from that, I have nothing else to do,' he thought.

"Wait no," he thought. He abruptly stood forward and walked toward the receptionist.

"Would you happen to have an idea on how to help a beast come out of an egg?" he asked.

"Sorry?" the receptionist was surprised by the random question she was thrown at her.

Alex repeated the question, but the girl didn't know. "Hmm... then do you know if there is a library in this city that may have the information?" Alex asked.

"Yes," the receptionist said and gave him the direction.

Alex quickly walked out of the guild and turned left to go towards the library.

However, before he could do so, he heard a commotion coming on from close by.

Alex turned his head to look at a crowd trying to push itself through the small doors of a building.

Alex tilted his head up to read the words 'Southshore City Branch of Talisman guild'.

"Talisman?" he looked confused. "Why are they all trying to go inside a Talisman guild all of a sudden?"

A voice spoke loudly, but Alex couldn't hear it over the crowd at all. He did manage to hear a few words such as 'Today' and 'Winners.'

He couldn't help but wonder what that was all about.

The people started to disperse after the announcement and Alex went back into the Alchemy guild to see the receptionist again.

"There is a crowd in front of the Talisman guild, do you know why that is?" Alex asked.

"A crowd? Oh, the competition results must have come back," the girl said nonchalantly.

"Competition?" Alex asked curiously.

"Yes," the girl said. "Did you not hear that the Talisman competition was taking place this week?"

"Sorry, Talisman competition?" Alex asked.

The girl made a weird face and looked at him.

"Sister, can you simply assume that I'm a newborn child and explain to me everything?" he asked.

The girl gave an even weirder look.

"Are you one of those player people?" she asked.

"Sigh, yes. I am. It's a little embarrassing to say, but I went into deep cultivation not long ago and only came out recently. So I do not know what is going on at all," Alex said.

"I see," the girl said. "Since you are going to the library, look up information on Guild Competitions. That should give you more information than I can."

"I see, thank you," Alex said and was about to walk out when he remembered that he was a little low on spirit stones.

But there was nothing to worry about. After all, he remembered that before he went to his training, he had given a lot of pills to the Alchemy guild to sell.

However, Alex couldn't help but sigh. 'I just told her I was a player who is supposed to have lost his memory. I can't just go and tell her to bring out the money now,' he thought.

'Screw it. I will have to make do with what I already have' he thought and continued walking.

He made his way to the library that was not very far away. Once he entered, he immediately found the librarian and asked for two different sets of books.

One for hatching beasts out of eggs, and another for these so-called Guild Competitions.

Once he got the book and even paid for it, he had them unlocked and sat down somewhere to read it.

First, he opened the book about the beast eggs.

There were many things written in there, most of which Alex found boring to read. Still, he did and an hour later, he was done reading the book.

"I see," he thought. "So if I give my blood essence to the egg, it will start the hatching process huh?"

Chapter 669: Seeking

After learning the simple information as well as some more that explained the process, Alex moved on to the second book about the competitions.

After reading for a while, he understood that the 4 guilds came together to hold a competition every year for a specific production skill of cultivation.

According to the book, this was to promote the production skills to more people since they were an integral part of cultivation.

There were exactly 7 production professions that had competition take place. They were Artifacts, Painting, Talisman, Music, Formations, Spirit Foods, and finally Alchemy.

All in that order.

Each of these professions had a competition taken year after year, for a total of 7 years.

Then, there was a gap of 3 years to let something else take place that the book didn't tell him about, but Alex concluded that it must be some sort of competition as well.

So, if he were to look at it from a single profession's point of view, a competition took place every 10 years.

"I see, so today was that day for Talisman, huh? No wonder everyone was so excited there. I wonder who won," he thought and returned the book.

Then, he walked out of the library and soon left the city altogether.

He didn't go very far though and instead went to a small forest that was on the northern side of the city. There, Alex brought out Pearl to keep him safe while he worked on the egg.

He was on top of a tree when he brought the egg out. The egg with a patterned shell was making Alex quite a bit excited.

'Calm down. Don't get your hopes up,' Alex said to himself as he pressed his forehead.

A small sword Qi flashed through his fingers which cut his forehead and a drop of blood spilled out.

Alex grabbed the drop of blood and placed it on top of the egg. As soon as he did that, the egg devoured the blood like it had hungered for it all this time.

"How many times do I have to do that again? 5?" Alex remembered. Each beast required some amount of blood, but on average, it was 5.

Then, one would have to wait for months before the egg started hatching—

CRACK~!

"What?" Alex's eyes narrowed at the egg. There was a small crack on the surface. "How? I only gave a single drop."

The cracks start spreading and before Alex knew it, it was throughout the egg. Alex stopped breathing as he waited for the beast inside to come out of it.

What would it be? A bird? A reptile? Maybe even an Amphibian? Or maybe insects.

Alex had a lot of guesses, but nothing substantial as he had nothing to go by.

The shell opened on one part and a snout pushed through. Along with the snout, long and thin whiskers came out of it.

All sort of anxiety and excitement left Alex's face and only shock remained as he watched the entire beast push through.

The beast finally landed on all four and started squeaking.

"A mouse?" Alex asked him with shock and confusion. "How... did a mouse come out of the egg? What?"

Pearl jumped to the branch Alex was on and looked at the little mouse with a curious looked.

"Meow!" Pearl cried at the mouse, who turned around to see Pearl. Seeing the cat, the mouse immediately scurried along with Alex's hand and disappeared somewhere.

"What? Come back," Alex jolted out of confusion and searched for the mouse. He looked around himself, and the tree, and even the ground.

But the mouse was gone, impossible to find.

"Where did it go?" Alex thought for a second before he remembered something. A spiritual sense emerged from him and it quickly scanned his entire body.

As expected, there was a rat-shaped scar on his right shoulder plate. Alex put a little Qi into it and said, "come out."

White light emerged and the mouse appeared on his palm again.

It tried to scurry off, but Alex caught it. Finally, he brought it up to its face and said, "Don't worry, no one is going to hurt you."

As if understanding what Alex was trying to say, the mouse calmed down.

"Meow!" Pearl cried at the beast once again, saying something that Alex had completely missed.

"So weak!"

"Right, he doesn't have a cultivation base," Alex said with a weird look. "Shouldn't newly born beast have a cultivation base? Speaking of which, what beast even is this?"

Alex finally looked at the mouse carefully to try and judge the species.

Its fur was extremely short and its color was somewhere between white and silver. It had 8 extremely long whiskers that looked contracted at the moment.

Finally, its tail was very, very short.

'Hmm... those whiskers... could it be?' Alex thought to himself. The lack of cultivation base only increased his suspicions by that much.

Finally, unable to keep it to himself, he said it out loud.

"Is this... a Seeking Mouse?"

A Seeking Mouse held no combat capabilities and even couldn't cultivate at all. All it was useful for was scouting something that a cultivator himself didn't want to go to.

Its whiskers were extremely sensitive and picked up on every little Qi, aura, and scent in the atmosphere.

And, they also happened to be the only other ingredients from Blood Spirit Ginseng that Alex had to obtain.

"I got my own whiskers," he said happily, if not a little disappointedly.

He had expected some sort of powerful beast from the egg, but it turned out to be this mouse.

'I could've obtained those whiskers from somewhere else too. It's not like they are an extreme rarity,' Alex thought to himself.

Finally, he sighed to himself and decided to check what good it could do to him.

"Can you go and check north? I want to see if it is safe or not," Alex said to the mouse.

The mouse raised its head, made some squeaking noise, and then ran away from his body.

"Pearl, go keep his safe," Alex said.

"Okay," Pearl said and lightly flew away.

As Pearl left, Alex got an unusual feeling come to him. It was... coolness?

Then he got information about the living things around his location, followed by their strength.

It took him a second to realize he wasn't sensing the area from his location, but rather the mouse.

Heat, Pressure, Humidity, Qi density, Qi type, number of living things, their aura, the composition of the surrounding, and finally a view of what it looked like.

All of that information was being sent back to Alex in vivid messages as if he were standing there.

As the mouse kept moving, he saw more and more. Until he sensed something in the bushes further along.

The mouse tried to move to the side, but the snake from the bush started slithering towards him.

The mouse tried to move away but it was too slow.

Just then, the aura in the atmosphere grew as a strong beast came out of nowhere and killed the snake in a single strike.

"Pearl!" Alex said in surprise.

"Get back," he gave a mental message to both of his beasts who immediately returned back.

The mouse returned first, followed by the cat. Alex could feel the mouse's fear when seeing Pearl as if it had met its mortal foe.

"Sigh, you're not too bad," Alex said. 'If only you could cultivate.'

Alex wanted to check the Undying part of the beast too, but that would involve hurting the poor thing.

He wasn't so cruel as to torture something that had just been born. "I'll do so later," he thought to himself and sent the mouse back.

Then, he sent Pearl back as well before flying away from that location towards a different city that he knew was to the north.

He had a single goal in mind now. He would join the Lightsworns and give enough contribution until the princess was forced to meet him.

Alex flew almost all night and arrived at Brightstar city near the morning.

He was still close to 3 thousand kilometers away from the Radiant city, so he needed to take some sort of transportation here so he could be on his way there.

So, as soon as he arrived, he went to find some caravan group or such.

Chapter 670: Teleportation

Alex found a caravan that was ready to leave. He found the owner, a short man with an amicable face, and asked if he could go with them.

He even let him know that he was strong and could help him defend if it was required.

When the man heard Alex's cultivation realm, he gave a weird look.

"Sir, I don't think you want to come with us right? Surely we aren't worth your time," the owner said.

"What do you mean? You won't take me?" Alex looked at the caravan owner with a suspicious look.

"Um sir, it's not that I won't take you, but rather are you sure you want to come with us? It's a little suspicious you would even want to, you know," the caravan owner said.

Alex was a little confused. Why was the caravan owner so adamant about not letting him go with them if he did realize that he was strong.

Was he afraid that he would rob them?

"What's so suspicious about me wanting to go with you guys?" Alex asked.

"Um, why would you want to take the slow ride with us that will take half a month to reach our destination, when you can get there just like that?" he asked.

Alex's eyes narrowed. "What do you mean? You know that no matter how strong of a cultivator I am, it will still take me some time, right?" he asked.

"Oh, I'm not talking about you going by yourself. I'm talking about you using the teleportation formation in the city. As a cultivator, you should be able to afford it right?" the owner asked. "Of course, if you are lacking spirit stones then I will surely accept you into the caravan."

Alex stopped in his tracks. "Teleportation formations?" he looked confused. "Are you telling me that I can directly teleport to somewhere else from this place?" Alex asked.

"Yes, of course. Brightstar had a formation made not too long ago. Sir must not have known this," the owner said.

'Tsk, my lack of knowledge about this empire is showing. Once I reach my destination, I will have to shut myself to a library and learn as much as I can,' he thought.

'I would've likely figured it out very soon if I hadn't been literally taken away from the very second city I ever visited,' he thought to himself.

"Thank's for letting me know," Alex said and went back to the city.

The sun was still on the verge of rising, and from what the people said, the teleportation formation apparently only started at around 9 in the morning.

Until then, Alex decided to learn more about the teleportation formations.

According to the book he found, the formations were placed in almost every major city in the Luminance empire.

Then, every day the formation would work once every hour to teleport about 50 people to a destination at once.

There could not be more people in the formation, and if you were too slow to join, you would have to wait until the next day.

That scared Alex a bit. He needed to go register right now then.

So, he found the location of the formation and was let know that there were more than enough openings for him to choose from.

Alex found out that he couldn't directly go to the Radiant city as it was too far away, and instead he had to go through multiple cities to reach the capital.

Alex looked at the shortest route and took it.

This would've caused him problems under normal circumstances, but since people were all leaving the capital, rather than going towards it now that the Talisman competition had ended, he had easier times.

Alex looked at the shortest route, as written on the wall for him.

From Brightstar city, he would have to go to Springmist city at 10 in the morning. From there, he would have the opportunity to take another teleportation formation to Lightborn city around noon.

Finally, around 3 in the afternoon, he would be able to go to the Radiant city.

That was the route he would take for now. If by any chance, either one of the pathways was already full, he would have to either wait for an entire day or take the other longer routes.

Alex nodded once he learned it and paid the man exactly 46 True spirit stones. He couldn't have expected that it would cost such an amount to travel about a thousand kilometers, but it was well worth it considering how instant it was.

Once it was time to leave, Alex was finally let inside the building along with 40 or so other people.

He found two teleportation platforms and from research knew that one of those was meant for sending people away, while the other one was meant for receiving people.

Having the same formation be used for both tasks would have been extra taxing to it, and would even cause problems during transportation if either of the teleports was already in use.

So, they had decided to create two.

Once everyone was ready, both teleportation formations glowed at once. Alex saw the people appear in the other formation before he was teleported away.

When he reappeared, he was standing on the receiving circle while the sending circle was empty.

He walked out of the formation and immediately went to purchase his spot for the next teleportation at noon.

Since he had the time, Alex left the place and went around the city for the next 2 hours.

He walked around the city and was starting to see more and more Lightsworns. He could only wonder how many there were in the capital.

'Right, what do I need to do to join their ranks again?' he wondered and went to the library to learn a bit about the Lightsworns.

From what he found out, he had to take some tests to be eligible to become one. Some of which included being in the True realm at a young age.

"I can do tests," he thought. All he had to hope for was that his lack of arm wasn't taken as a detriment to his ability as a cultivator.

Once the sun hit its zenith, Alex returned back to the building with the formation. It was time to leave the Springmist city and go to the Lightborn city.

Lightborn city was about the same distance away from Springmist city as Brightstar, so it once again cost him about the same price as well.

'50 True Spirit stones,' Alex thought to himself. With 50 people using the formation at once, they must earn about 2500 True spirit stones every hour under normal circumstances.

The formation started glowing bright and after a few seconds, he disappeared. When he reappeared, he was in a similar building, but a different one.

He looked to the side to see the people on the other teleportation formation disappear.

'I have 3 hours now,' Alex thought and went out.

The Lightborn city was close to the capital and was quite crowded due to it being one of the bigger cities in the empire.

According to his small research, aside from some small clans and sects, the Broken Ravine sect had its roots just outside of this city.

On the other hand, the Jin family, one of the 7 great families had their ancestral grounds in this city.

Alex remembered Jin Tengfei and his Sword Qi. He was so strong with it, and now Alex had it as well.

'I wonder if my sword Qi is just as strong as his,' Alex thought. Around the city, he heard instances of people talking about how great the Talisman competition had been. Alex heard the name Tian Ye as someone who won the competition.

Alex couldn't help but remember the fatty from the secret realm.

He roamed the city for a bit longer before returning to the building with the formations.

Finally, he was going to go to Radiant city.

Alex stood on the formation and waited for it to activate. Once the people filled it, it started to shine

Soon, Alex felt the aura of teleportation grab him and in the next moment, along with everyone else, he vanished.

When he appeared out of the formation, he once again turned to look at the other formation circle that was full of people ready to leave.

Just then, he caught sight of a lady a split second before the teleportation took her away. However, that sight alone was enough to send waves of shock and surprise through him.

After all, the lady that had just left looked exactly like...

"Mother?"