

Alchemy 951

Chapter 951: Battle against Bu

Alex knew he could fight someone in Saint Foundation's 1st realm; he had done so before. However, for a 2nd realm cultivator? He had never tried it.

Still, he believed that with the various combinations of his own skills, he could beat his enemy.

The man started using a technique where rocks appeared in mid-air and started adhering to his body like armor.

Alex wasted no time and sent out a sword slash to test the man. The man casually flicked away the sword slash, but on the inside, he frowned at how unusually strong it was.

'Is that dao?' he wondered.

Alex then sent out a more decisive slash that was the best he could do at the moment with his entire Sword Aura on it.

The man frowned and sent an attack that landed on the Sword aura, but it couldn't be stopped at all. Alex's sword aura continued down its path, arriving next to the man and striking him in the chest. However, the Sword aura alone was too weak to break past his armor.

Alex needed stronger attacks, so he brought out a stronger attack.

20 different swords flew out of his storage ring at once and soon fell into a formation in the air and spun with Sword Aura emanating from each one of them.

Alex sent the swords flying toward the man who immediately employed a movement technique and dodged it. Alex frowned when he realized how fast the man was.

He was at least far faster than Alex himself was. Still, he used the swords to continue chasing the man who couldn't help but continue running away.

Alex worried that he was up to something with how much time he was trying to waste. Pearl was fine for now, but the young man behind him was the main target and this man was definitely going to try and kill him.

As Alex thought that, 2 beasts suddenly came out of the man in front of him. One was a flying green snake, and the other one was a big rhino that looked unstoppable.

Their cultivation base wasn't high, so Alex wasn't that worried. However, as he thought that, the two beasts suddenly flew towards the young man.

Alex sent down the 21 swords toward the man while he himself took out another sword, the strongest sword, and disappeared.

He appeared in front of the flying snake and swung down. The Dao came to his aid as the flying snake split into two with a single strike and fell to the ground.

The man had dodged Alex's attacks and was running away, but when he felt the connection break, he could help but cry out in anger.

"You bastard! You dare kill my beast. I will kill yours instead!" he said. The young man suddenly sped up even faster than before, flying in the direction of Pearl, while his rhino flew in the direction of the young man.

Alex's eyes darkened in anger. He swung his sword in front of him once and teleported over next to the man and swung his sword again.

The man was surprised at how easily Alex had arrived. But he wasn't so surprised that he was caught off guard.

Even as Alex's sword arrived at his throat with the dao of Cutting empowering it, his sword made a small 'clang' sound as it couldn't penetrate the man's skin at all.

Alex looked surprised when he saw that. Before he could even wonder what was happening, he could feel it already.

The world was aiding man in survival. Somehow, the man was using dao to make himself far more durable than he had any right to be.

The man flew backward with sweat dripping down his neck as he had nearly just died. Still, he had managed to kil— the man frowned.

"What are you doing?" he yelled at his Rhino who wasn't moving forward at all.

"I can't move forward," the rhino replied. "Something is blocking me."

The man sent his spiritual sense. "There's nothing there," he said.

There truly was nothing there. At least, nothing one could sense or see. From the front, it looked fine, but Alex had cut up a massive space around that location, splitting it into two different entities, through which one couldn't go to the other.

To the Rhino, it felt like an invisible wall. The space it was in didn't exist any further than where it was. If it wanted to go to the other side, it either had to move around the split space or have enough power to overpower Alex's space aura and intent.

Unfortunately for the rhino, he had no such power.

Green wolves appeared in front of Alex again, which he easily destroyed. Alex created a fire of incredible temperature next to the man, but he used water to protect himself while also using the dao to not take much damage.

Alex wondered what dao that was exactly. As far as he could tell, it was an Earth aura-related dao, but further than that Alex had no idea.

Alex created a massive explosion next to the man and he still survived with no physical damage.

"So you're impervious to any physical damage," Alex said.

"Physical, Qi, use whatever you want. You're not beating me," the man proclaimed loudly.

Alex sensed the Rhino switching targets and moving towards Pearl. He was about to teleport over, but the man flew towards Ma Tianxin, making Alex fall into an ultimatum where he had to choose between the two.

There wasn't even a question in Alex's mind.

He teleported next to the rhino and struck it as hard as he could and easily carved his sword through its body.

The rhino looked strong, but in reality, it wasn't that strong.

The moment Alex finished cutting up the Rhino, he teleported away from there, arriving closer to the young man. However, he was still far away.

The man had already caught the Ma Tianxin in a bind using vines and roots that had sprung up from the ground, making it impossible for him to escape. On top of that, he himself was flying at such incredible speed that Alex wondered if the man also had a Dao of Speed.

Alex teleported once more, arriving next to the young man just in time to protect him from wind blades that would have certainly killed Ma Tianxin.

"You bastard!" the man spoke in a somber voice that failed to hide the rage he felt in his heart. Not one, but two beasts. He had to sacrifice both of his beasts to get this chance and yet Alex had killed them both and saved the young man.

Alex was about to attack when suddenly he heard a lightning crackle high above him. In his moment of hesitation, the man ran backward, away from him.

Pearl was getting out from his encounter against the Inner demon and not long afterward the lightning show would start.

Alex turned his attention towards the fleeing man and teleported next to him and swung his blade again. The world came to his aid to harden his skin again to a point where he wasn't even cut by the dao of cutting.

Unless Alex understood the dao behind his imperviousness, it was unlikely he would be able to cut it at all.

The 21 swords flew back towards Alex and struck the man, but even they didn't deal any noticeable damage at all.

From what Alex could see, there was only one way to beat this man.

He put back his sword and created one by himself instead.

The man frowned when he saw the sword in Alex's hands. It was wrong to call it seeing as all he truly saw was nothing. He didn't even feel anything. However, his spiritual sense told him there was something there, and his lack of knowledge made him fear a bit.

Lightning crackled once more as it was getting closer and closer to when Pearl would start to fight against the heavens.

At the same time, Alex slashed his invisible sword for the first time in a long time.

The man empowered his body with his dao to block it, but the sword easily passed through his body, dealing mental damage while causing his body to grow lethargic.

The man frowned and backed off, and while his body wasn't producing much Qi, the world came to his aid and helped him.

However, Alex still teleported next to him and slashed him once again.

The man was starting to realize that it was his spirit getting attacked right now and started fearing as he had no answer to that. The best he could do was run away.

So, he continued running away even after he got hit while maintaining both his Dao at the same time. On top of that, he saw Pearl slowly open his eyes, and smiled.

"You killed my beast, so now I will kill yours. Let's see how you will stop me," the shouted and flew as quickly as he could.

Alex teleported next to him again and tried to cut him, but he hesitated and stopped before teleporting away immediately.

"Haha! What's wrong? Are you out of—" the man stopped when he felt the aura. He had never felt such a terrifying aura before.

His eyes searched for where the aura originated and saw that it was the lightning in the sky.

The heavens were getting angry that someone had dared interfered in somebody else's Lightning Tribulation, and as such, the man was about to face Heavenly Judgment.

Alex stood from the side and watched as the lightning fell from the heavens and struck the man, turning him into nothing but ashes that drifted along with the snow.

Chapter 952: 12 Bolts

Ma Tianxin saw the remains of what was previously senior Bu disperse into the storm that raged above. His face lost all color as dread filled his heart at what he had just seen.

"What... what just happened?" he asked fearfully.

"You are not allowed to interfere in the Lightning Tribulation of someone else. No matter if you're trying to aid or not," Alex said. "He who interferes faces Heaven's judgment."

"That... that bolt of lightning was from the heavens?" Ma Tianxin looked to the sky again. "Is your pet going to be fine?"

"Yes," Alex said without hesitation. He did not doubt that Pearl would overcome this. All he worried about was that he would be hurt a bit in the process.

'As long as the tribulation lightning isn't as strong as when they were for me, he should be fine,' Alex thought.

He and Ma Tianxin watched as Pearl stood on all four and flew upwards. As he did, the first of the nine lightning flew down from the heavens.

~CRACK~

The lightning bolt slammed into Pearl, but Pearl walked out of it unscathed. The power of this lightning bolt was barely stronger than an attack used by a True Realm emperor if they had Saint Qi.

Pearl's physical body alone was strong enough to protect himself entirely.

The second lightning bolt came down not long after, striking Pearl again. This time, the strength was a little stronger than what a True Emperor 2nd realm could use with Saint Qi.

Pearl brushed it off quite easily as well.

The third lightning bolt fell, striking Pearl.

Then fourth, and then the fifth.

Each successive lightning bolt got stronger and stronger, slowly increasing in power each time it fell. Each of the lightning strikes seemed to be gathering damage, slowly improving itself until it reached the maximum damage Pearl could have handled had he not broken through.

The sixth lightning bolt fell, and then the seventh. Even the eighth struck Pearl, but he easily brushed them off.

Alex was surprised at how easy it was for Pearl. But then, he remembered his own and also remembered it was easy for him until the 9 lightning bolts struck him.

The real problem came afterward.

The ninth lightning bolt struck Pearl and this time even if his body was stronger than the bolt itself, he felt the pain. He understood that he couldn't rely on his body anymore.

So, he got ready to fight. The armor he wore could help him block quite a bit of the damage, but he was sure he couldn't rely on it any more than his own body. He needed to use his Qi as much as he could too.

Energy gathered in the sky as Alex looked up. Even he could tell what the first lightning was going to be about. He was surprised it was this one, but then Pearl only knew 3 Dao so there couldn't be anymore.

A lightning bolt with an aura filled with the Dao of Metal struck down from the heavens toward Pearl.

Pearl swung his paw upward, hitting the lightning bolt just as it landed. The two powers collided creating a massive explosion that produced shockwaves that even Alex and Ma Tianxin felt.

Alex took in a deep breath when he felt the power behind the lightning bolt just now. 'That was... Saint Condensation 1st realm?' he thought. 'No, it is weaker. So... a little below that.'

Pearl's cultivation base was 'a little below that' as well. So, he was struck with the force of his entire cultivation base.

Thankfully, Pearl had more than just his cultivation base. He had his armor, and he had his body.

He walked out, not fully unscathed, but well enough that he was ready to fight again. Alex smiled when he saw that, but then it immediately turned into a frown as the next attack prepared in heaven.

'Which dao is it now?' Alex wondered. It had to either be the Dao of Sharpness or the Dao of Teleportation. Alex wondered which one the heavens considered more valuable.

In his eyes, teleportation was obviously more valuable than sharpness. But then... maybe he was wrong?

Pearl knew what was going to happen this time around. He had seen it when Alex was fighting the bolts of lightning the last time around.

His body glowed golden as he used the White Tiger's Golden Body to reinforce himself. Then, he slammed his paw upwards again, sending a golden paw-shaped power directly into the sky, reinforced by the Dao of metal behind it.

The paw struck the lightning bolt and stopped it for a split second, reducing the damage as well in the process. However, it couldn't stop it all.

The lightning bolt teleported and fell right on top of Pearl and struck him. Pearl fell down from the sky, slamming onto the mountain down below, destroying a big part of the mountain.

"Oh no!" Ma Tianxin spoke up when he saw that, but Alex didn't say anything. He knew that level of damage would hardly injure Pearl, especially since he had his golden body.

Pearl walked out of the snow-filled rubble and flew into the sky. He didn't look as white as he usually did, his fur a little charred at places, but other than that he looked fine.

Alex smiled when he saw Pearl safe. He looked back into the sky and waited for the next lightning to—

"Hmm?" his eyes narrowed with a confused look. "That's... the teleportation aura?"

Alex tried to peer into the aura of the Dao of teleportation that had come down with the lightning, and while he did sense the Dao of Teleportation there, there was something else as well.

He tried to understand what it was, but he couldn't really tell anything different aside from the fact there was some minor difference.

'What is it?' he wondered, but with his limited understanding of everything, he was simply incapable of telling what was wrong with it.

As he was wondering that, he couldn't help but develop a foreboding feeling in his heart as he felt the final lightning prepared for its arrival.

Alex felt the aura of the dao and found it familiar to the one in the gorge. He recognized the dao of Sharpness, he only didn't understand it fully yet.

'Sharpness...' Alex worried. If the lightning bolt was truly sharp, then Pearl would be in trouble.

"Give it your all, Pearl!" Alex shouted back at him.

Pearl couldn't hear Alex's words at all. He was in a world of his own as he prepared his defense against the final lightning strike.

His body glowed yellow, and he powered his armor as best as possible. A barrier made up of pure golden light appeared in front of him, once again empowered as well as he could with his metal Dao.

And then, the lightning struck.

Alex saw each moment on its own with his demon eyes. From the moment the lightning dropped from the heavens to the moment it struck the barrier.

He saw each crack appear on the barrier and then he saw the barrier shatter into a million pieces. Pearl's paw struck the lightning as it fell and the two power clashed.

The surrounding mountains shuddered from the impact and the snow there started sliding down in an avalanche.

The mountain where Pearl stood was already rubble, to begin with. But with this attack, it completely collapsed.

Alex watched with unclosing eyes, waiting to see one thing. Waiting for that one moment.

The light disappeared and only the destroyed mountain peak remained, and they were unmoving.

"Come on, you can do this," Alex said softly.

Suddenly, the rubble moved, and from it appeared in a tiny Pearl. He was the size of a kitten at most.

He seemed hurt, but not so bad that he was in any sort of danger. Just a few days of rest would do it.

Alex sighed in relief and looked to the sky. The storms threatened to send down another bolt of lightning, but he knew that wasn't going to be the case.

Just as he thought, after a few sparkles of intimidation, the storm receded and dispersed as sunlight pierced through the sky.

The tribulation was done. Pearl had passed it. Now, all he needed to do was upgrade his Qi by just a sliver, and he will have entered the Saint realm officially.

Chapter 953: Blue Spring Sect

Alex waited for Pearl to be done with the final phase of his transition to the Saint realm. He watched from close, but still far as Pearl's Qi slowly improved past the thin boundary that kept him from being a Saint realm.

As soon as he did though, Alex saw the changes immediately.

The tiny Pearl slowly grew in size as his body also began healing from what little wound it had suffered.

The palm-sized Pearl was now the size of a normal cat. He grew a little more and became a little bigger. He increased even more and reached his normal size.

However, he didn't stop.

He grew even more, growing far beyond how big he used to be, and grew even further until he was as big as Lady Ren had been all those years ago.

The Saint realm Pearl was a massive beast that overshadowed anyone that stood beside him.

He was as big, if not bigger than the Jaguar and Puma too.

Alex quickly flew over and was surprised when he saw Pearl up close. He had to look up just to see Pearl who stood over 2 meters tall.

"Holy shit! You're so big now," Alex said as he gave him as big a hug as he could. "Congratulations, Pearl. You did it."

Pearl turned towards Alex and looked at him with a curious face.

"What's wrong?" Alex asked and checked Pearl all over. "You're fine. Why aren't you speaking?"

"I... can speak," Pearl spoke with a confused expression on his face.

"Of course, you can. What's so surprising about that?" Alex asked.

"I don't know," Pearl said. "It... feels weird, like I just learned to talk."

"Are you alright? Do you feel fine?" Alex asked Pearl. He couldn't understand why Pearl would say something like this.

"Give him some time, senior," Ma Tianxin spoke as he flew up to Alex. "He just entered the Saint realm so the heavens have graced him with the ability to speak the human tongue. Most beasts get confused when they just learn the language all of a sudden."

"Ah, right," Alex said. "Saint realm beasts learn to speak on their own. Nothing's wrong with you. You're just confused because you were taught how to speak while already being able to speak."

"So... should I speak or not now?" Pearl asked.

"You can speak. Since you're in the saint realm, it is fine now," Alex said. He had always asked Pearl to communicate using spiritual sense, but now that was no longer required.

"Haha, I can speak," Pearl said.

Alex giggled too. He brought Whisker out and showed him that Pearl had succeeded.

When the tiny little mouse saw the giant cat in front of him, he panicked so hard that he nearly fainted. It was only after he was told that that was Pearl did Whisker finally stop being scared.

Pearl even changed his size to become a small kitten to prove that it was him.

Alex looked at Pearl curiously at that time. He wasn't sure if his eyes were playing tricks on him, but... Pearl looked even younger than before.

"Alright, we need to leave now. Your commotion should have attracted people and you also need some rest," he said.

Pearl nodded and changed his size back to being big again. Alex put Whisker back into his beast space. Then, with Ma Tianxin, the 3 of them started flying north.

Ma Tianxin kept asking anything and everything he had been keeping to himself. He wanted to know why there were lightning bolts falling from the sky. He wanted to know how a beast could learn Dao and so many other things.

Alex explained what he could, leaving the rest for the young man to figure out by himself.

Alex and Pearl had already hidden their cultivation base, so they were just a simple cultivator to anyone sensing them.

After flying quite a bit far, they slowed down as the various saints would no longer come looking for them for the disturbance they had caused.

He didn't want Pearl to get the same attention he had received.

Not only was a beast breaking through with a lightning tribulation too big for the saints to ignore, but if they noticed his other specialness by happenstance, Alex also wasn't sure what they would do.

For now, he would hide Pearl as much as possible.

'Fortunately, he didn't grow to look like a tiger,' Alex thought. 'Maybe that will only happen after he's evolved.'

Alex took Pearl into his beast space and let him rest. At the same time, he brought out a ship where they sat and slowly cruised through the snow regions of the State of Shuang.

The state of Shuang looked no different than any other state, aside from Re. Due to the mountain ranges, and constant snowfall, it was all white with a few signs of color here and there.

There were volcanic mountains in places that gave heat to the villages below and it got progressively more common the further north they went.

This was one way the common people survived in this place.

After flying for just a couple more hours, Ma Tianxin pointed his index finger in front of him. "There, can you see it?" he asked.

Alex nodded. Even if there was a fog hiding it, the line of people and the increasing number of settlements around the area was enough to tell him that the Blue Spring sect was in front of them.

Alex saw a similar walled-up city-like sect as he had with all the other ones that previously belonged to the Snow Immortal sect.

As they got closer, a few people flew up to stop them, at which point Alex let Ma Tianxin do the rest.

He took back the ship and stayed behind Ma Tianxin as he took Alex down to the sect gates.

"You will need to record your Qi right here, senior," Ma Tianxin said at the gate.

Alex nodded and did as told and let the people record his arrival. He gave his name as well and was finally let enter.

He saw a group of people lining up to enter, and when they saw him enter so easily, they felt quite frustrated.

But what could they really do? Ma Tianxin was most likely the next Sect master after all.

Alex looked around the sect and saw most of the disciples walking around with beasts in their care. It was quite surprising for him to see so many beasts intermingling with the humans since he had never been to a Beast taming sect before.

'Is it always like this?' he wondered. He looked through the beasts, trying to see if there were any names he didn't know.

To his surprise, there were quite a few of them. He wondered why these beasts weren't recorded in the Western continent, but when he saw what was common in between them, he understood immediately.

These were beasts that could only be found in the cold regions. Since the cold regions in the Western continent were mostly non-existent for until about a thousand years ago, it was easy to understand why there were no such beasts in the Western continent.

Ma Tianxin saw him slow down and called back to him. "Come on, senior. We're right there."

Chapter 954: Ren Xiuyin

The central area of the Blue Spring sect was divided into multiple sections. Towards the southern end, where Alex and Ma Tianxin were entering from, there were houses there for the Core disciples.

The land was rather large, so there was more than enough place for all 4000 to 5000 of the disciples to stay in.

Other than the disciples, there was a rather tall tower at the center where the elders were most likely to stay.

Then, the rest of the land was either open ground for the disciples to train in or some sort of beast ground where untamed beasts were kept for disciples to tame.

These included beasts that were taken from the Demonic forest, beasts that were born here, or beasts that improved their cultivation faster than their masters and thus broke their bonds of their own accord.

There were also beasts that were there because their master had died, but they were far too few and in between to be considered in the populous.

Ma Tianxin explained the area and showed him around the place as they got closer to the tower at the center.

Alex saw various disciples curiously look at him as his white mask and black robes made him stand out in the place.

The elders were also looking at him from time to time and at some point, he saw one of the 4 elders that had tried to kill Ma Tianxin.

The moment he saw them, the man lost all color on his face and turned around to run away.

"Should I stop him?" Alex asked.

"No," Ma Tianxin's eyes turned cold when he saw them. "You have done enough, senior. Leave the rest for our sect to handle."

Alex nodded and stayed his hand. They finally arrived at the central tower and Ma Tianxin pulled out his talisman to call his master.

"Huh?" he suddenly made a frowning face. "I can't reach master. I don't think he's in the sect right now."

"Oh, so... what do we do?" Alex asked.

"Wait for a second, let me call someone else," he said and pulled out another talisman paper.

Alex waited for a few seconds before a spiritual sense passed over him and a person flew out from the tower not long after, a woman.

She wore a purple robe that was designed a little differently than normal as her sleeves were thin enough that they were half-transparent.

Her face looked mature while still holding a youth that only came with having a high cultivation base. She was after all in Saint Condensation 8th realm, 5 realms higher than Ma Tianxin himself.

"Brother Ma, you're finally back? I was worried about you," she spoke enthusiastically after seeing him.

"Sister Xiuyin, where is Master?" Ma Tianxin asked.

Ren Xiuyin immediately crossed her arms and started pouting. "You come back after nearly 8 months and the first thing you do is call me to ask for my father?" she asked.

"Ah! No, no, I'm asking for master because it's important," Ma Tianxin said.

"Hmph! What could be so important that you would rather call out to your future father-in-law than your own fiancée?" the girl asked.

"The elders I went to the Ancient Battlefield with tried to kill me," the young man said.

"What?" the girl lost all expression on her face and her hands fell next to her. In the next second, worry filled her face and she immediately used her spiritual sense on him. "Are-you okay? Are you hurt? Who was it? Who tried to kill you?"

She was starting to get angry.

"I'm okay. I was hurt, but I'm healed now. They attacked me so I would break off our engagement. That's why I'm asking for master, sister," Ma Tianxin said. "If not for senior here, I would've probably lost my life already."

The girl finally turned towards Alex. "I'm sorry I didn't greet you earlier. Thank you for saving my fiance," the girl said.

"It's alright. I just happened to be at the right place at the right time," Alex said to her.

The girl looked at him carefully and cocked her head as she asked, "How did you save my fiance though? You're only... "

A thought suddenly struck her and she asked, "Is your name by any chance... Yu Ming?"

Alex was a little surprised, but not so much. He smiled back at her, and said, "I'm surprised sister Xiuyin has heard of me."

"It's not that surprising," the girl said. "My father speaks rather highly of you. He keeps saying that if it weren't for brother Ma, he would've done all he could to have me married to you."

"Uhh... I'm flattered, thank you," Alex said.

"Well, anyway, Father is not here so you'll have to wait around a bit," the girl said with a sigh.

"Yeah, I noticed that. Where exactly did master go?" Ma Tianxin asked.

"I don't know," the girl said. "The elders sensed some sort of commotion and flew south without telling any of us what had happened. It's been over 3 hours now, so they should be returning soon."

"Some sort of commotion?" Ma Tianxin's eyes narrowed as he slowly looked toward Alex.

"Ahem," Alex coughed a bit. "I'm sure we can wait around for senior to return."

"Yes, please come," the girl said and took him inside the tower as Ma Tianxin followed behind.

Along the way, Alex saw the girl worry about Ma Tianxin who kept insisting that he was fine. He smiled when he saw the two and wondered if he could find someone like him someday.

Although, he had no intentions of doing that just yet. There were too many other things for him to worry about.

The girl took Alex to a room where they talked for a while. She was truly curious if all the feats that she had heard of Alex performing were in fact true.

Alex was about to say yes when he heard a few of the feats that he had never heard of.

"No, I have never defeated anyone with just my legs. I don't really use legs much in fights actually," he said while chuckling. He wondered what other rumors had spread about him.

"And what about the rumor that you learned 8 different dao in a single month? That's false too right?" she asked.

Alex smiled. "I'm afraid there is no lie in that statement. Although the dao I learned were similar to each other, so it was easier altogether," he said.

"Woah, so you really did it?" the girl was surprised. "I swear I thought my father was exaggerating."

Alex smiled and was about to say something when a wave of spiritual sense passed through the entire sect, including him.

"Oh, Father is back," the girl said. "I wonder why he's making such a show of it."

Alex stood up and walked outside along with the two of them.

A small group of people landed outside the tower, along with a massive beast that was twice as big as Pearl's current body.

It was a blue slug with a few green stripes that flew behind the sect master and the rest. It didn't have any eyes but the two antennas on its head were each about a meter long.

Alex sensed something coming from the slug, a slight pulse, and wondered what it was.

The sect master quickly flew down to the ground and looked at Alex with a surprised look on his face. "Young Ming, you came to my sect?" he asked.

"Greetings, senior Xinyu. I hope you won't mind me coming to your sect without any notice," Alex said.

"No, of course not. You're welcome any time," he said. He held a curious look on his face as his eyes switched between Alex and his disciple before a thought came to his head.

"Young Ming did you... no, did your beast break through already?" he asked.

"Ah, I thought I hid it well, but I should have known better than to hide from seniors," Alex said. "Yes, my beast did break through, and I left because I didn't want any hassle."

"I can understand, and I'm quite surprised how well you hid it too. Even our Sacred beast here couldn't find you," the sect master said.

"Oh, then how did you know it was my beast?" Alex asked.

"While you may have hidden your tracks, my disciple couldn't. So I came here to ask him and noticed you. Once I put 2 and 2 together, it was easy to guess what might have caused the commotion today."

Alex nodded when he heard that and looked towards the beast in the sky. "So senior is the Sacred beast I have heard so much about," he said and bowed towards the slug. The aura of a Saint Soul beast alone would've been enough for Alex to guess that but hearing it being confirmed was still nice.

The slug said nothing and only nodded, its antenna tentacles drooping a little.

"So, what are you doing here, young Ming? And from what I see, you've gotten acquainted with my disciple and daughter too," he said.

"I met your disciple in the Ancient Battlefield and have been acquainted ever since," Alex said. "I do have a reason for coming here, but I don't think it is the right time for me to go over it. There is something more pressing you should hear from your disciple."

"Hmm... what is it?" the sect master turned to his disciple, who immediately started explaining the situation.

Alex could see the sect master's eyes change from confusion to denial to fury as he immediately sent out people to search for the elders who broke the sect's rules.

His anger wouldn't calm down until they were punished to the extreme.

Chapter 955: Guest

"So, young Ming, did you come here to escort my disciple back?" the sect master asked.

The commotion had been dealt with and the 4 elders were punished. It also came forward that the senior Bu who had died to Heaven's Judgment was in fact the mastermind behind everything.

After that, the sect master had taken Alex to a lounging area where they sat in the setting sun and talked.

"No, sect master. I'm afraid I'm not that selfless," Alex said. "After I learned from my beast that he was going to break through, I decided to go looking for some beast cores for him to consume."

"My thought was to get them from the Demonic forest, but I'm not sure how good that idea even is," Alex said. The more he learned about the demonic forest from Ma Tianxin, the more he learned how hard it might actually be for him to secure any beast cores.

The demonic forest was apparently full of beasts with cultivation bases that rivaled the entirety of a single State.

There were beasts ranging from the Self-tempering realm all the way up to the Saint Soul realm. There was also some rumor of there being a beast with a cultivation base higher than that too, but no one had seen such a beast in thousands of years.

"The demonic forest... it's not really a place you can just enter whenever you want," the sect master said. "It is fine if you just want to stay in the outskirts, but the deeper you go the more dangerous it gets."

"The beasts there have lived a life full of wounds and pain, so they will attack whoever they can if they're threatened. Despite being in the Saint realm, they still truly act like beasts with little intelligence," the sect master said.

"How do you guys deal with them?" Alex asked.

"Well, it's easier for us. We're just too strong to worry much and we still stay around the outer perimeters. However, even the outer perimeter might turn out to be dangerous for someone like you," he said. "And we really can't afford to lose you."

Alex's eyes narrowed. Once again someone was saying that he was important. But why?

He tried asking the sect master but got no answer.

"What exactly is it that you want? Just the cores right?" the sect master asked.

"Yes," Alex said. "Although, I do want to fight with a few beasts to train."

The sect master nodded as he thought of something. "How about this? Our sect has quite a few beast cores and we will give them to you. Instead, you just don't go over to the Demonic forest at all. Is that okay?" he asked.

Alex was surprised. "Are you sure, sect master? I require a lot of cores," he said.

"Of course," the sect master said. "You will not find your match in the outskirts of the forest and will have to enter the outer perimeter. At that point, however, the beasts will attack you all together for sure."

"I'm sure you're strong, but even I know you can't possibly defeat the beasts there by yourself. At that point, it won't be much of training," the sect master said.

"Be as it may, I still want to go try, sect master," Alex said, stubbornly. He had so many dao and yet he hadn't trained any of them in actual battle. So, in actual combat, he was having problems using the Dao properly.

Just like with the Senior Bu, who had a dao of his own, Alex was unable to do anything. If not for the spiritual sword, he wouldn't know what exactly he could do against him.

There were so many other such scenarios that he needed to be ready for.

Aside from that, however, he needed some ingredients for his alchemy. Since he was going to start making Saint-ranked pills soon enough.

"I don't know, young man. It is still too risky," he said. "What if you get in a situation with so many beasts attacking you at once? We can't afford that."

Alex frowned behind his mask. 'Why can't you afford it?' he thought. It was starting to annoy him way too much at this point. Still, he calmed himself enough to speak again.

"Worry not, sect master. I do have some escape methods. As long as the beasts that will try to attack aren't in Saint core realm, I should be able to escape easily," he said.

The sect master kept insisting on Alex to not leave, but Alex was equally stubborn, telling him that he was going to leave, one way or another. The sect master grumbled to himself a bit before saying, "Fine! I'll accompany you a few times and see if you can handle yourself or not. If you can't handle it, I'm bringing you back without question, okay?"

Alex finally sighed in relief. "Thank you, sect master. I know I'm being stubborn, but thank you for going along with my stubbornness," he said.

"Go rest for now. I won't have a free day for a while, you can prepare until then," the sect master said. He then called over his daughter and disciple.

"Tianxin, Xiuyin, go show him a guest room."

"Yes, father."

"Understood, master."

Alex nodded and left the place along with the other two. On their way to the guest room, Alex thought of something that had been bothering him in the back of his mind.

"By the way, Sister Xiuyin. Your surname is Ren, while your father is Huang. What is that all about?" Alex asked.

"Father's surname is Ren too," the girl said. "But he and my grandfather used to have a not-so-good relationship, so he used his mother's surname as an act of defiance. While they mended their relationship already, father's surname stuck and now he goes by this name."

"Ah, that makes sense," Alex nodded.

After walking for a little longer, Alex came across a house close to the core disciple's area.

"This is where you'll be staying. Please let us know if you require anything. Here's a talisman that you can use to directly contact either one of us," the girl said.

Alex looked at the talisman and thanked the girl. Then he went inside the house and looked around for a bit before entering one of the rooms with a Saint Qi gathering formation and sitting down.

Without wasting any more time, he called out Pearl, who appeared in his giant form. "Shrink and start cultivating. You'll need to stabilize your new cultivation base," Alex told him.

"Okay," Pearl said and shrunk down to the size of a kitten before starting to cultivate. Alex felt the cuts in his body start to appear once again after a long time.

'He's reached a level where my physical body is the same as his cultivation,' Alex thought. So, the cuts on his body were starting to become more visible as well.

Alex took the time to cultivate as well, calling out Whisker so he could train too.

He cultivated his body and eyes as long as possible while putting on his mask on the 3rd stage. After a while, he stopped all three and focused on his real cultivation.

It was going to take a long time for him to break through again, but he didn't mind. As a saint realm, he did have a lot of time to spare anyway.

Pearl's cultivation base slowly stabilized at the 1st realm of Saint Condensation realm, reaching the same stage as Alex did.

There had been some ups and downs along the way, but they had finally caught up to each other in cultivation base as well.

Whisker was still slow, coming to only around True Disciple 3rd realm. Even though Alex cultivated the Undying God's physique whenever he could, it was still not enough for Whisker.

After a while, Alex stopped cultivating and started thinking of what he needed to do next.

He did plan on fighting in the forest in the north, but that was not all he wanted to do. He wanted to make some pills as well now.

While he wasn't going to start making pills in such a location, he did have other things he could do.

After the layer of information in his mind had surfaced regarding the various different ingredients and their uses, Alex had been keen on learning about them.

Finally, he had the free time he wanted, and so, he was going to start going through the information in his mind so that he could prepare for the day he returned to making pills again.

Alex closed his eyes and started thinking of various things. Suddenly, the overwhelming amount of information in his mind surfaced all at once, overwhelming him in the process.

Alex pushed back the information and took a deep breath before letting the information come out one after another.

There was simply too much information, so he started with the ones that mattered, the Saint-ranked ingredients.

The information not only included the name of the ingredients and their elements, but it also included information about its powder's color, smell, and what exactly it could be used for.

With this amount of information, Alex was sure that he could even start making new pills while knowing precisely what they would do.

There was one problem with this information however that he hadn't realized before. Since the Alchemy God's knowledge only helped him recognize plants, while he knew the names of animal-based ingredients, he had no idea what the beast looked like.

"I can work with that," Alex thought and started focusing on his learning. After all, with the amount of information in his head, it was going to take a very long time for him to learn it all.

Chapter 956: Improvement for the Improvement

To start off his learning process, Alex decided to start with pills that he would consider to have significant importance to anyone.

Those pills being healing pills. Under a normal scenario, he no longer required any healing pills, but it wouldn't be a bad idea to know how to make one just in case someone he is close to gets injured.

Saint-ranked healing pills were all capable of not just healing, but also regenerating lost body parts. Since they were so good, Alex started learning about the pill that he had downgraded for when he was a True realm cultivator.

The Saint Body Regeneration pill.

Alex started with the Blood Spirit Ginseng and closed his eyes to learn about it. Information that was stored in his mind slowly flowed into his brain, no longer a jumbled mess but an understandable piece of information.

He learned what sort of ingredient it was, what it looked like, and where it grew. Alex was surprised he knew how to extract it from its plant without damaging it.

He had been unconsciously doing that even when he wasn't a Saint realm cultivator, but it was only now that he realized just how he was able to do so.

Alex knew quite a lot about the Blood Spirit Ginseng, so it didn't take him a long time to learn a lot about it. Once he was done, he moved on to the next set of ingredients.

Alex had about 30 different Saint-ranked pill recipes, and of them, only 3 were healing pills. He had about 70% of the ingredients required for these pills, so it became easy to learn about them with the object in his hand.

It surprisingly took him half a day to learn about the 3 pills and every ingredient in them. There were maybe 30 or so ingredients in the 3 pills and yet he was so slow that each ingredient required him to spend at least 20 minutes to fully understand it.

He did try and understand every little aspect of the ingredient he was learning about, rather than just remember what he was learning. He wanted it to be such that he would know what ingredient to use in what situation, rather than try and go through his memories.

Also, he spent the majority of the time seeing if he could improve the recipes with just his mind. At first, he found it quite hard.

After all, he had never made these pills and thus had no idea how any ingredient would turn out under different circumstances. Without knowing the structure of the powder, it would be hard to improve the recipe since he wouldn't know the proper combination.

He had an idea in his head that he thought would work.

He thought of cutting up the piece of an ingredient into many different pieces and then refining them based on the various different conditions of temperature, the direction of movement, and speed of movement.

Previously, when he was just starting out with improving recipes, he couldn't do it at all. After all, cutting up a piece of ingredient messed up its size and the amount of heat it would absorb as well as many other variables that Alex couldn't even think of.

However, after learning the Dao of Heat and Heat Conduction, Alex wondered if he could tweak that part of the problem enough to compensate for the rest of the variables to remain stable.

He would have to try it out with True rank ingredients, but as far as he could think, he was certain he could figure it out.

"What else can I even do?" Alex wondered. "It's not like there are so many Saint-rank ingredients lying around."

Alex shook his head, realizing there was going to be quite a lot of trials and errors to go through to fix this idea he had come up with. After all, what else could he really do?

It was at that time that something struck his mind which completely threw him off the track.

"Wait... can I use that?" he thought with a shocked expression on his face.

When Alex entered the Saint realm, the Alchemy God's knowledge had given him the knowledge required to reverse engineer a pill's ingredients, and it had also given him the Supreme Elemental Accord.

However, it had given him one other piece of knowledge that Alex had skipped out on at the time because it was something that was going to lead him to learn about Structures and Combinations.

Since he already knew about it, he had decided not to spend his time on it. However, he was just starting to understand what a stupid move it was on his part.

After all, the knowledge he gained was apparently one that he could use to formulate all the different possible shapes of the ingredients using only 3 ingredients.

Using the speed of release of the energy provided by the recipe, Alex would first refine a single ingredient using the lowest heat possible and record the result.

Then he would use the highest heat possible and record the result. Then finally, he would record a result from somewhere in between the two.

Then, the 3 pieces of information would help him visualize the changes an ingredient went through as the heat changed. In this way, with just 3 ingredients, Alex could learn all the different structures of a single ingredient in a recipe, without having to necessarily spend dozens of said ingredients.

The only flaw in this technique was that he required at least 3 of the same ingredients to map out the results and thus change the recipe. If he needed to test out the original recipe, then he needed 4 different ingredients.

While that was dozens of times lower, Alex wasn't sure how he was going to possibly find 4 of the same Saint-ranked ingredients to figure out the structure of a refined ingredient. Not to mention, if he wanted to make a pill out of it, he would need one more ingredient.

That was incredibly annoying in Alex's mind.

As he thought of finding another method, an idea came to his mind. "Wait... what if I mix the two processes?" he thought.

Instead of refining 3 different ingredients, he could refine just a single one. The only difference was that he was going to cut up the ingredient into 3 pieces and refine those.

That way, instead of needing 4 sets of ingredients to figure out the perfect recipe, he would need only 2.

"That's going to take a lot of effort," he thought. "I still don't know if cutting ingredients into pieces makes it unusable as per the recipe. I will have to try that out."

"Also, the 3 ingredient technique to figuring out the structure is only usable for True rank ingredients. I will still have to see if they transition well for Saint rank ingredients too. That will require some heavy experimentation on my end," Alex thought.

Fortunately, there were quite a few Saint rank ingredients with him, some of which were likely to be not so important and many in number.

As long as Alex used those ingredients, he would be able to complete his experimentation.

"That should work," he thought.

After spending quite a bit of time thinking about the problem, Alex decided to spend the next few hours on cultivation.

Pearl was still cultivating and as such his body was still being cut up. Alex looked at Whisker who was sleeping without care and remembered that he needed to teach him how to make pills properly too.

It had been nearly 3 years since he last taught him anything. So, after he was done cultivating for the day, he started teaching Whisker more and more about Alchemy.

Since he was in the True realm now, he could start learning about True rank pills too, so Alex gave him some recipes to remember.

It would still take him a while before he had any chance of making pills, but just learning about it, for now, was enough.

After all, even Alex himself was only learning right now.

Once he had some free time, Alex continued on his path to learning about the different pills and their ingredients.

After the healing pills, he focused on poison and venom antidotes, and only after that did he learn the rest of the ingredients.

Within 10 days of starting, Alex completely learned about the ingredients for every Saint-ranked recipe he had on him.

Chapter 957: Blood Rhino

Alex spent some time outside his room when Ma Tianxin came to get him and show him around the sect.

They even went out of the sect to the nearby cities where Ma Tianxin had a few friends. Apparently, he used to be from these very cities before he was scouted out by the sect.

Alex remembered some of these friends from back then when they tried to attack him in the Endless Tunnel, especially the woman he had gone with at the time.

"That reminds me, what did you do with the ores you got back then?" Alex asked.

"I made a defensive mail out of it," Ma Tianxin said. "Our 10-year engagement anniversary was coming up, so I gave it to sister Xiuyin as a gift."

"Oh, not bad," Alex said. "What about yourself? You didn't make anything?"

"Ah, no," Ma Tianxin said. "Master already gives me so much. I don't need anything else."

"I see," Alex said. "That reminds me, why exactly did senior Huang take you as a disciple? Was it just because you were strong?"

"Uh, not really," Ma Tianxin said. "It was more so because of my ability to tame the beasts rather easily. Ours is a beast-taming sect, so that is what matters above all."

"So you're very good at taming beasts, huh? Why do you only have a single beast with you then?" Alex asked.

"Well, that's because I'm waiting to find a good beast to tame," Ma Tianxin said.

"A good beast? You haven't found any yet?" Alex asked.

"No," he said. "At least not one that I'm satisfied with. But I will hopefully get one soon."

"Oh, why is that?" Alex asked curiously.

"Well, the elders will leave for the Demonic Forest in around a week or so to go get as many beasts as they can. That should be the time you will get to go too, I believe," Ma Tianxin said.

"A week, huh? That's not a long time, I guess," Alex said.

The two of them returned back to the sect sometime later and Alex went back to his room.

He sat on the bed, thinking of starting to learn some other random ingredients when he remembered something.

"Nearly forgot about that," he thought as he brought out something.

A small, yellow pill-like object appeared on Alex's hand, one that let out a sweet scent that immediately made Pearl's eyes widen and he excitedly looked at Alex, hoping it was for him.

Unfortunately for Pearl, the beast core was not for him. It wasn't for Alex either. He could probably eat it, but he had a better thought in mind for its usage.

Alex looked at the beast core in his hand. This was the one that belonged to the rhino he killed a few days back.

He had taken the entire corpse of the beasts before he left the location, and only now was he checking it out.

The Saint Condensation 7th realm aura still emanated from the beast core, but Alex ignored that part of the core. Instead, he tried to feel the spiritual energy in it, the impression of the soul that still remained in the core.

He could swear he could hear the rhino growling from within it.

"I'm sorry that you died a tamed beast," Alex said. "But you'll have to be one once again."

Alex took out a cauldron and placed the beast core in it before taking about his sharpest sword.

Alex held onto the sword's blade and let his blood drip down into the cauldron. He waited and he watched as his blood slowly fill up the cauldron.

"Oh," Alex thought with a surprised expression when he felt the blood in his body get recreated. It wasn't fast enough to replace what was lost, but it was still quite good.

"So the Undying Physique works for blood loss too huh?" he thought. That was certainly going to be very useful for him considering his ability to make use of Blood Aura.

However, it didn't take long for him to realize that while he was getting blood, the blood didn't have much blood aura in it. It needed to stay in his body for a while before gaining the aura.

Alex sighed and stopped. He couldn't dilute the blood aura in the cauldron, so he sealed it off for use some other day.

He used the time to cultivate, learn and teach.

3 days later, he had gathered enough blood with quality blood aura to fully fill the entire cauldron.

Once that was done, Alex was ready to begin.

He pulled out his Blood God's manual that came forth and opened up to the 4th page with Blood beast.

Alex read up on the technique again and slowly poured Qi into the blood. The blood stirred with his Qi, moving around for a while.

His Qi was there to agitate the blood for a while, getting it ready, before it was time for him to use the main part of the technique.

When he did, his Qi pierced into the blood, reaching directly for the beast's core at the end.

When the beast core obtained his Qi, it slowly floated in the blood while violently attacking the blood all around it.

The impression of the beast that still remained in the beast core was trying to fight against the blood, but the blood aura quickly drowned it out.

A stronger impression could've most likely been able to fight against his blood aura, but this one could not.

As such, the beast's core was devoured by the blood aura and slowly shaped itself in the impression it had devoured.

Alex saw the blood pour out of the cauldron, acting on its own as it started getting larger, gaining more blood from somewhere. The undulating blob of blood in the air slowly took shape.

First, Alex saw the four limbs of the beast appear from the blood, then a head, and then the rest finally becoming the body and tail. The legs grew hooves, the head grew ears, eyes, nose, and horn.

The body grew the armor and the tail grew its hair.

However, every single one of these features was fake. Not a single one of these features was anything but for show.

After all the features appeared, the rhino landed in the room, just as big as the original one, and just as domineering. No, the crimson color of the rhino and its battle-ready stance made it far more domineering.

Alex looked at it with awe in his eyes. Even Pearl was surprised and was wondering just what Alex had done.

Alex got close to the beast and touched it. "Oh," he was surprised. "It's not liquid."

Having been made up of blood, Alex had fully expected the beast to be a liquid beast that he could place his hands through. However, they were as solid as any other beast he had touched before.

"Sit," Alex said. The rhino obeyed his command and slowly sat down. "Stand," he gave another order and the beast stood up.

Alex bobbed his head up and down in a continuous nod as he looked at the rhino in front of him. "So... this is a blood beast," he said happily.

"Brother? What's this?" Pearl asked curiously. Even Whisker was curious and walked forward.

"This is a beast I made with my blood," he said. "It should help me in fights."

"You can give it orders?" Pearl asked.

"Yes," Alex said.

"Can I give it orders?" Pearl asked.

"Uhh... maybe?" Alex thought. "Give it an order."

"Turn around," Pearl said to the rhino, but it didn't respond at all.

"Obey his commands," Alex said to the Rhino.

"Turn around," Pearl said again. This time, to everyone's surprise, the rhino turned around.

Whisker came up to Alex's shoulders and excitedly said that he wanted to give commands too. Alex let him do it and the Rhino accepted his command as well.

The two beasts tried commanding the Rhino to do various things before Alex intervened.

"That's enough. I need to test out something so you guys should stay back," he said. Pearl and Whisker moved away from the location and Alex stood alone in the center of the room.

He scanned the entire beast with his spiritual sense and tried to figure out its cultivation base.

Prior to death, the Rhino was a Saint Condensation 7th realm beast. However, after death, it was reborn in Alex's blood, so it was only a guess as to how strong it could possibly be.

After finding it impossible to guess just what the beast's cultivation base was since it didn't actually have any, Alex gave up.

The beast most likely used Blood Aura instead of Qi, so its strength was totally dependent on Alex's own blood.

From what the information in the book said, the created blood beast would have the strength of the cultivation base they had prior to death, or the cultivation base equivalent that came with the owner's blood.

Alex's blood had evolved past what it used to be once he had entered the Saint realm, but he hadn't had the time to test it just yet. So, this would be the first time he was testing it properly.

"Come, attack me," he ordered the beast. The beast rushed towards him with incredible speed and strength that surprised Alex.

His demon eyes saw the speed and realized something was wrong. So he quickly changed his lax defense to a very strong one, putting up multiple sources of defense.

Still, when the blood beast slammed into him, Alex was sent back to the wall, his body broken in many different places.

"Arghh!" he cried out in pain.

To everyone's surprise, the blood beast was many times stronger than even Alex was.

Chapter 958: Weak

"Brother! Are you okay?" Pearl asked as he looked at Alex who lay sprawled on the ground, his hands twisted around, and bleeding from different parts of his body.

"Arghhh... I'm fine," Alex said. His body slowly healed. His wounds closed, and his wrongly bent arms retwisted themselves to their correct positions.

The broken bones took a bit longer to heal, but they got there too after a little while.

He stood back up and looked at the Blood Rhino with clear shock, surprise, and happiness on his face.

The Rhino was never this strong when it died, which meant that the power in it came from his blood. 'So my blood really had progressed quite a bit huh?' he thought.

He looked back at the wall where he was thrown and was glad that it wasn't destroyed. The saint formation used in this building was quite strong from what he could see.

He turned back towards the Rhino and smiled. "Come hit me again."

The Blood Rhino moved the moment it got the order. Alex watched the rhino approach him with an incredible speed, and something changed in him.

Blood poured out from every pore in his skin and quickly formed an armor on him. The rhino slammed into Alex, but this time around, he didn't budge even a little bit.

In fact, he didn't even feel any of the damage that was dealt to him, just a bit of pushback that he could handle.

"That's... weird," Alex thought. He had just made the rhino so his blood aura wasn't quite as well as it should be, and yet his armor had managed to block the rhino.

Either the blood armor skill was strong even when used with blood of lower quality, or the Blood beast wasn't as good as it should be.

Which was to say, his blood aura had lost strength when he used it to make the rhino.

Alex's immediate assumption was that the beast core had fought off his blood aura, which was why the resulting beast was weaker.

But, he still wanted to be sure, so he pulled out the book again and read the description regarding blood beasts. He had read it already, but he wanted to make sure.

"... strength depends on its cultivation base, or the owner's blood aura, whichever is higher. The probability of forging a blood beast goes down if the core is from a beast with a cultivation base stronger than the owner's blood aura."

"Keeps instinct, but no intelligence. Follows commands without exception. Needs around 20 liters of blood. Uhhh... Ah! there it is." Alex finally found what he was looking for.

"Efficiency of the created blood beast depends on the difference between the beast's cultivation base and the owner's aura. The greater the difference the lower the efficiency," Alex read.

"Damn, could've just written the resulting blood beast gets weaker if you use too weak or too strong beast cores. Would've been easier to remember," Alex thought and put the book aside.

He looked back at the rhino and thought to himself. "So... Saint Condensation 7th realm, enhanced by my blood aura reached somewhere in the middle of Saint Formation realm in terms of strength."

"Can that be considered a big enough gap?" Alex wondered. "It's big enough to result in lower strength from the beast I guess."

Alex still wasn't certain how weak it was, but he guessed it wasn't more than a realm or two at best.

"I guess I can ignore that for now," he thought. He moved away from that thought and started testing the Rhino.

He wanted to see if it genuinely had no intelligence, and just how much instinct it had retained.

It soon became clear that the book was correct and the beast didn't hold any intelligence at all. Unless Alex gave it orders, it would simply sit there doing nothing.

It would try to dodge attacks just based on instinct from when it was alive, but aside from that, it didn't do anything else.

He would need a different environment to test more, so he stopped the testing for the day.

The blood beast flew into the Blood God's Manual, and the book flew into his body, disappearing somewhere his senses could not follow.

After that, Alex sat down and began cultivating.

Alex had the Snake core in his storage too, the one he had killed alongside the Rhino. However, he knew he needed to improve his blood aura for a while before he could make another blood beast.

He spent the next 3 days deep in cultivation until someone came and knocked on his door.

Alex opened the door to find Ma Tianxin waiting for him.

"Senior, Master has asked for you," he said.

"Senior Huang wants to see me?" he asked. "Let us go on then."

Ma Tianxin took him back to the tower at the center of the sect, where he stood outside a door and let Alex enter.

Alex went in and saw Huang Xinyi sitting by a table. "Ah, young man. You're here," he said and called Alex to sit next to him.

Alex walked over and sat next to him. "Did you have something to say to me, senior?" he asked.

"Yes," the old man said. "You do know that a small group of us will be leaving for the Demonic forest tomorrow right?"

Alex nodded. "That is when you are going to take me along, no?" he asked.

Huang Xinyi gave an awkward smile. "I was hoping you would have changed your mind by now," he said.

"I'm afraid that will be very much impossible, sect master. Unless there is something of importance that requires my attention elsewhere, I will go to the Demonic forest," he said.

The old man sighed and brought out a small storage bag. "Here, it's what you asked," he said.

Alex took the storage bag and sent his spiritual sense into it. Instantly, Alex's eyes went wide from seeing the number of beast cores in there.

Ranging from the Saint Condensation realm, all the way to the mid realms of the Saint Foundation realm, there were nearly 3 dozen cores in there.

That was quite a lot more than he had been expecting to get here. "I hope this will help you change your mind," he said.

Alex looked at the cores with wide eyes, showing a clear look of surprise in them that would have been hard to prevent anyhow.

He counted the cores and realized that most of the beast cores belonged to beasts in the Saint Condensation realm.

While that was quite good when looking at it from the outside, if he wanted to make Blood beasts out of them, it would be a rather bad use of his blood.

He would get many results like the Rhino or worse, where his blood aura would go down in strength by a few realms.

Alex didn't want that.

"I'm afraid I will still have to insist on going to the demonic forest," Alex said. He wasn't going there for just the cores after all.

The cores were just a benefit. He was going there to train and see how he fared against the stronger beings in the real world.

"Are you sure? I will have to insist you do not go," the old man said.

"There's nothing you can say that will change my decision, sect master," Alex said.

"Fine! Be ready before the sun rises tomorrow. We need to arrive at the forest before sunrise when most beasts are inactive," the sect master said.

"I will do that," Alex said.

After that, he returned back to his room and took out the many cores to look at them.

"Should I use all of it to make blood beasts?" he wondered. He would at least use some to test out the difference in the strength of the blood beasts forged using various different cores.

Alex put the cores aside after deciding that and started gathering some blood. Any free time he had, he would now start gathering blood so that he could use it later on.

He cultivated for the rest of the day and overnight, and finally before in the dead of night, he walked out to find the elders getting ready to leave. Alex greeted the few seniors he knew and the rest he wasn't familiar with.

"Ah, you're here," the sect master said. "Let us leave then."

Chapter 959: The Demonic Forest

Before the sun had even risen, the group of 6 flew across the morning sky towards the north.

Alex looked at the 4 humans he flew with, and the slug that was also with them. "I thought senior was the sect's sacred beast. Shouldn't he be in the sect in case it needs protection?" he asked.

He sat on the flying ship of the Blue Spring sect, along with the others who were all either late into the Saint Core realm or were in the Saint Soul realm.

The slug looked at him, but it did not speak at all.

"My friend here isn't actually very strong in combat," the sect master said. "That is not the reason why he is the sect's Sacred Beast."

"Oh? What is it then?" Alex asked curiously.

"Seagem is a Blue Spring slug, the beast our sect is named after. He is a rare kind of beast that is naturally capable of following Qi and aura. He can see where it is concentrated, and where it is not."

"He can also eat on those aura and get rid of them," the sect master said. "After becoming a Saint ranked beast, he had gained the ability to hide himself and his surrounding from the Spiritual senses of others."

"Given how useful it is to go into the forest and take away from orphaned beasts or just some eggs, he is one of the main reasons why our sect even keeps prospering," the sect master said.

"Oh... that does sound quite important," Alex said. 'Can see and eat aura to not leave any of it behind? That is quite amazing,' he thought.

His concealment technique hid all aura he would otherwise leave, but that still left the aura that had already appeared before he used the techniques. So, if someone were good enough, they could use that aura to try and later find you.

It seemed the slug was one of those beasts that were capable of doing that.

"Do not use your spiritual sense. No matter what," the sect leader said.

Suddenly, Alex felt the aura around him disappear. It was disappearing more rapidly than it was appearing.

The slug, also called Seagem by the sect leader, was actively eating their aura to hide them all. It was also hiding them from any spiritual sense that might be lurking around in the morning.

Alex looked away from his ship and toward the north. Even without spiritual sense, he could see it clearly.

The Demonic Forest.

Alex already had knowledge of what it looked like, but still seeing the thing for real gave him quite a bit of amazement in his heart.

He saw the trees topped with white completely covering everything in the north. The trees started in the plains but quickly went onto a mountain range.

The mountain range was massive, so massive that it surrounded the entire Demonic Forest. Hundreds of kilometers wide, the mountain ranges surrounded and were part of the Demonic forest.

Some of those in the middle were active volcanoes, leading to the area around them remaining mostly snow free.

"The forest you see ahead on the plain is what we consider to be the outskirts of the forest," the sect master said to him.

"The first layer of mountains that surround the demonic forest is what we consider to be the outer range of forest. Everything beyond that is the Inner range."

Alex nodded as he heard it and asked, "You have not yet made a distinction between Inner and Core range? I'm sure there is a difference there, right?"

The sect master sighed. "I don't doubt there is," he said. "But we are not nearly strong enough, so we've never visited there. Since we've never visited there, we've never had to make the distinction," he said.

The ship passed over the dense forest, flying silently in the pre-dawn sky. Alex neither felt any spiritual sense passing through them nor did he feel any aura in the air.

He looked towards Seagem who was actively consuming everything to keep them hidden. As he watched, the beast's two antenna tentacles on its head suddenly vibrated.

"Oh, it looks like Seagem found something," the sect master said. He waited for a bit to get more information, and once he received it, the sect master diverted the ship at a slight angle to go towards a certain destination.

After they had passed the first layer of mountains and were in the inner range of the forest, the ship slowly descended, but it didn't make a landing.

"Let's move," the sect master said.

The other 3 elders nodded, and all 4 of them dropped off at once. The Slug flew as well, and Alex was the last one to follow.

The ship disappeared from the sky and the sect master turned to Alex. "Don't move too far away from Seagem. He wouldn't be able to keep you safe," he said.

Alex nodded and moved over right next to the Sacred beast. The slug let him be and focused on its own task of finding weak beasts that were all alone. On top of already having to focus on clearing their aura, and hiding them from a spiritual sense, it could be seen how much the beast was doing.

Alex heard the sounds of fighting in the distance and turned around to look, but he couldn't see anything.

"The beasts are fighting," the sect master told him. "It's normal in here. They always fight here, usually to the death."

"Oh," Alex said. "So strength is truly power here."

"Yes," the sect master said. "The people say that the cultivation world is the same, that it is where Strength reigns above all and has the law of the jungle. But that is not true," the sect master said.

"The only people that do say that are the ones that have never witnessed the true law of the jungle. There is no way in hell that a civilized world like the cultivation world could ever be considered to have a law of the jungle."

"But power still reigns supreme, right?" Alex asked. "You can do anything if you're strong enough."

"That..." the sect master's face twisted a little, and even one other elder that was with them got a little angry. They didn't show it on the outside, but Alex still saw it.

'Did I say something wrong?' he wondered.

The group remained silent for a while, and then they arrived next to a tree with a massive nest on it. There were 7 eggs in the nest, all of them with a red shells and green tendrils moving across the egg.

"No one's here, let's make it quick," the sect master said and the other 3 nodded. They all grabbed one of the 7 eggs, leaving behind 3 eggs only in the nest.

"That's a little sad," Alex said, looking at the nest. "The mother will come back to find only 3 beasts."

"Don't be," one of the elders said. "This is an egg of a Firevine Cuckoo. They are known to have the firstborns kick off the other eggs to guarantee that their mother takes care of them. Had we left the eggs, they would've all been destroyed anyway."

"Oh," Alex said. "Then why not take the rest of the eggs too?"

"The newborn child needs it. When it hatches, its first instinct is to throw its siblings off of the nest. If it doesn't find anything to throw, it will thrash around until it itself falls off the nest and dies," the sect master answered. "We don't want that."

"Ah, I see," Alex said.

The group moved away from the nest and onto another part of the forest where a cub was left alone.

Alex looked at the cub that reminded him of Pearl when he was young. This cub was a lion cub however and had brown fur on its body.

The sect master grabbed it and immediately tossed it inside the storage bag.

Alex blinked once and looked at what had just happened with a bit of confusion. "Wait... is that a beast pouch?" he asked.

"Hmm? Oh, yes. Is this your first time seeing this?" the sect master asked.

"I'm afraid so," Alex said. "I've only ever heard about it before."

A beast pouch was a storage bag made the same way a normal storage bag was made. However, instead of stuffing in space, it had a chunk of land and air in it, making it inhabitable.

It was but a temporary arrangement as with the little bit of land and air, it could never fully house a beast, not like a natural beast space formed via a bond could.

"Yes, It's called a Beast pouch, and is quite handy in these situations," the sect master said. "Come on, we have more places to visit."

The sun had now risen and the beasts were starting to wake up either from their sleep or from their overnight cultivation.

The 6 of them were still cloaked thanks to the slug's ability, but that would be less useful very soon.

So, the sect master went over to the riskier spots while they could and gathered all the beasts that were there.

Once the sun was completely in the sky and some of the beasts were even starting to challenge them thanks to their lack of aura, the sect master finally decided to drop the facade.

"Alright, split off and go look for whatever you can. Once you are done, return back to the sect. I will have to stay here and help this young man for a bit," the sect master said.

The 3 other elders nodded and split off to find the beasts on their own.

Chapter 960: Finding Beasts to Fight

The sect master refrained from visiting the innermost regions of the Demonic forest with Alex next to him.

He went where he could that he considered safe, and got the beasts for the sect from there. Thanks to Seagem, he knew exactly where to look for the beasts, and exactly where to avoid them.

During the 3 days they were there, Alex and the sect master got into no fight with any beasts. But he did witness a lot of other fights in the distance.

Even without spiritual senses, he could see the aerial battles far in the distance. His Demon Eyes gave him a far sight that rivaled spiritual sense itself.

Alex saw many aerial battles, which only made him wonder just how many ground battles there were. He could see the trees ruffle around from time to time, but in this snow-filled forest, one white was hard to discern from another.

"I think we're done here," the sect master said after he picked up the small tortoise that was wandering the forest all alone.

He places the tortoise in his storage bag and turned to Alex. "Let's go," he said. "Once I discern if you are able to fight here or not, we can go back."

Alex nodded and flew off with the sect master. The other 3 elders were given autonomy for the last 3 days, so they would have already returned without meeting any of them.

The demonic forest was so massive that Alex wouldn't doubt that he could miss a man if they flew away from afar.

They then flew outside the outer range, arriving at the outskirts again, and the sect master gave the slug some commands.

The slug worked to find a suitable opponent for Alex's first battle. Alex had yet to release his spiritual sense, so he didn't know who he was going to have to fight, but he was looking forward to it.

"There," the sect master pointed and Alex looked. He saw a lone wolf with grey fur walking through the snowy field.

Its cultivation base from what Alex could tell wasn't that high, but he would have to use his spiritual sense to find precisely how strong it was.

"That's your first opponent," the sect master said.

Alex nodded and slowly flew downwards, away from the other two. As soon as he flew away from the Slug's domain where no aura existed, Alex found out that the beast was actually a Saint Condensation 3rd realm beast.

He looked with a confused expression and turned to look at the sect master. "Uh... is this a mistake?" he asked.

"What do you mean?" the sect master asked. "Is this too strong?"

"No," Alex said. "It is too weak. Senior, you need to find another one."

"Certainly a Saint Condensation 3rd realm beast is not weak, right? You're only at Saint Condensation 1st realm," the sect master said. "Try fighting without your Dao and you'll see how hard it actually gets."

Alex didn't look away and asked, "Senior, did you forget that the sect's Elder Bu died in battle with me? We need a stronger opponent."

"Elder Bu's situation is different, isn't it? I heard he died to the lightning strike during your beast's tribulation," he said.

"He got struck by the lightning because he ran away from our fight because I was getting close to killing him," Alex said. "Let's just go find another beast."

"Umm... why don't you try fighting this so I can know your words are true," the sect master said. "As I said, I cannot put you in danger just because you say so."

Alex sighed. "Fine," he said and fell down to the ground.

The wolf had been staring at them the entire time, unable to discern anything as its spiritual sense never actually sensed the 3 in the air.

It was only after Alex left the slug's aura that it sensed the Saint Condensation 1st realm cultivation from him.

Seeing him come down now made the wolf angry. "This is my domain. You would be better off leaving," the beast said.

Alex was a little taken aback, but he seriously needed to start not being surprised by beast talking now. Since each beast knew the language of the world the moment they entered the Saint realms, whether they could make the sounds with their mouth or not, they could speak.

"Don't worry, I won't harm you. I'm just here to show him that I'm stronger than you," Alex said. "I'll leave soon."

"Stronger? What nonsense are you—"

Suddenly, Alex's cultivation base flared to its peak as the aura landed on the wolf. The wolf buckled on its own weight, its knees bent forward as it was crushed by the aura.

Alex slowly strode forward and crouched down to look at the wolf. "What type of wolf are you? I don't think I've ever heard of one with features like yours," he said.

The wolf tried to speak, but no words came out of its mouth. The aura that Alex poured out was simply too strong for him.

Alex reached out to the wolf who couldn't even flinch and rubbed its head a little bit. "Saint Condensation 3rd realm... you would've made such a good opponent for Pearl," he said softly.

Alas, Alex would never have Pearl fight out in the open lest he wanted the sect leader to recognize the abilities that came with having the bloodline of the White Tiger.

If they ever figured out that Pearl was the heir to the White Tigers in the Western continent, Alex wouldn't know what would happen to him and Pearl.

As such, even with such a good opponent, Alex had to leave the wolf be.

"You can go," he said as he took back his cultivation base and the wolf fled away.

Alex got back up and flew up to the sect master, who looked at him with pure awe on his face.

When Alex had used his cultivation base's aura to suppress the wolf, the sect master had also seen just how powerful the aura was.

With Seagem who was incredibly attuned with auras, he could tell that despite being a Saint Condensation 1st realm cultivator, Alex's aura made him almost, if not as strong as a Saint Foundation 1st realm cultivator.

"Let's... let's find you a Saint Condensation 9th realm beast to fight. If you can beat that, then we can try finding stronger beasts," he said.

Alex sighed in relief. Finally, the sect master was coming to his senses and letting him fight as he wanted.

Saint Condensation 9th realm was still weak, but he would have to start somewhere anyway. So, the three of them went slightly deeper into the forest to find Alex's first proper opponent.

A giant Hailhorn Snake with blue scales and two icy horns lay at the bottom of a tree trunk. It stayed in the snow as if it was basking in the sunlight in spring.

When it sensed Alex arrive, it uncoiled itself and looked towards them.

"What are you humans doing here? Do you know whose land this is?" the snake asked.

"We don't care," Alex said. "I'm just here to beat you."

"A newbie Saint thinks he can beat me. You are asking for death, aren't you? You must be thinking that the human behind you will save you. Unfortunately for you, if my poison enters your veins, nobody can save you," the serpent said.

Alex sighed and punched the snake from afar without alerting it. The snake reacted almost instantly and moved away from the location, and the punch fell on the tree, instantly toppling it.

"Die!" the snake shouted and moved its tail. Suddenly, a blue illusion of the snake's tail appeared behind it, one that was at least 20 meters high and it slammed down on Alex.

Alex didn't move as the attack landed on him.

The snow around the attack blew up high in the air, making it impossible to see what was happening inside.

However, with their spiritual sense, everyone knew exactly what had happened.

The snake looked at Alex with confusion. 'A treasure? Those armors the humans wear?' it thought.

Alex walked towards the Snake, dusting off the snow from his black robes, and got closer.

The snake realized something was wrong, but it didn't understand what. Whatever it was, however, as long as it could use its poison, it would win.

As such, when Alex got close to it, the snake lunged at him.

Alex saw it clearly. He saw the snake's muscles constrict right before it was going to attack. He saw its body straighten as it flew at him with incredible speed.

He saw the snake's mouth open wide as its fangs showed up, aiming for his vitals.

He saw his own hands move quickly, reacting to the snake's attack as it was happening.

Alex hadn't even prepared for the attack and somehow he was reacting to it. It all looked so slow in his eyes.

His hands grasped the snake by its neck while its venom sprayed behind him. The snake tried to move around, and get itself free, but Alex's grip was just too strong.

Then, before the snake could do anything else, Alex used his dao. Right from his hands where he grabbed the snake, a thin line appeared on the snake's neck that a moment later started bleeding.

The snake's head fell to the floor as it was perfectly cut along its neck using Alex's dao.

Before the snake bled any further, Alex grabbed its body and stuffed it into his storage bag.

Then he turned around towards the sect master and asked, "Can we go onto stronger foes please?"