

Eternal Cultivation of Alchemy #Chapter 21: Yellow Rock - Read Eternal Cultivation of Alchemy Chapter 21: Yellow Rock

Chapter 21: Yellow Rock

Alex had a similar feeling to the one he had when finding the [Spirit Cleansing Lily]. However, this feeling was somehow completely different in both type and origin. magic

For starters, the feeling he had for the [Spirit Cleansing Lily] originated from somewhere in his mind. Something in his mind had slightly nudged him into thinking that was a good item.

However, this time, the feeling originated from his body. His entire body was reacting as a hungry lion that had just seen an injured deer. His body was ready to pounce on it.

He went towards the vendor to look at what the item really was. The vendor was an outer sect disciple and there were several items that she was selling.

Out of all of them, the one that Alex was interested in was a small, smooth but jagged piece of yellow rock.

"Hello sister, can you tell me what this yellow rock is?" he asked the vendor.

The girl looked at Alex and said, "I don't really know what it is. It was constantly warm so I thought it must've been something good, and chose to sell it. Why? You want it?" she looked at Alex expectantly.

"Yes, I do sister. How much do you want for this?" he asked.

"100 points. No bargaining," she said without hesitation.

'I don't have 100 points though' Alex was confused as to what to do.

Seeing his frowned face, the outer sect disciple got more confident in her attitude and said, "If you don't have the points, then go away. Let other people look at my stuff."

"I only have 88 points right now sister. Is there any way to lower the price?" he asked hoping she would drop it. He was already finding it hard to stand near the stone without grabbing it immediately and shoving it in his mouth.

"No can do. If you don't have 100 points, then go away." The girl closed her eyes after saying this and started meditating.

Alex thought for a bit and said, "While I don't have the full 100 points, would you accept some alchemy materials, sister?" he asked

The girl opened one eye and looked curiously as she said, "Depends". Alex immediately rejoiced and brought out 4 different alchemy materials he found in the forest.

There were normal materials that he had come across in the forest. The girl looked at the items and was surprised.

"You are going to give me those 4 materials, and 88 points?" she asked inquisitively.

"Yes, sister," Alex replied with zero hesitation.

"Okay, it's yours," she said as she handed him the yellow rock, and her nameplate. Alex took both of the items. The yellow rock was too irresistible, so he immediately kept it in his inventory.

That helped quite a bit. He no longer had the impulse to eat the stone at once. He looked at the other item in his hand, the girl's nameplate.

He had to transfer 88 points to her, but he didn't know how to. He decided to do the same thing Kong Yuan had done and put his and her nameplate together.

He focused on them a bit and got the option to transfer contribution points. He unhesitatingly passed 88 points into the girl's nameplate.

He then handed her nameplate back to her, along with the 4 alchemy material. He said his goodbye and went out of the sect market.

His second work in the sect valley was to learn how to become an alchemist's aid. But, he now had to wait until he found out what the yellow rock was.

He had just left his cottage half an hour ago, and now he was back in it. He sat on his bed and got comfortable. He then opened his inventory and brought out the yellow rock.

The yellow rock looked like a normal piece of rock. It was both smooth and jagged in shape. It was smaller than a spirit stone in size and wasn't translucent either.

The yellow in the rock was truly yellow, and not some cloudy yellow inside the rock similar to a spirit stone.

Once the rock was on his hand, the urge to eat it appeared once more. His mind was being the reasonable one and telling him not to do something stupid as eating a rock.

But his body's urge to eat the rock was too big for him to ignore. He decided to go with the body on this one, and reluctantly, ate it.

The moment the stone touched his tongue, it melted into a hot, scalding liquid that traveled down his throat. However, even though it was scalding hot, he didn't feel any pain.

Once the liquid reached his stomach, it started to distribute to every corner of his body.

Suddenly, his body started to hurt like hell. It felt like his entire body was submerged in a tub of boiling lava, that was also somehow injected into his veins.

This was the worst pain he had ever felt in both real life and the game. It took five minutes for the pain to slowly start to disappear.

As the pain subsided, all that remained in his body was power and vigor. He could sense that the amount of Qi his body could store had increased substantially, as well as that the yang qi was dozens if not more times stronger than normal Qi.

He could easily tell that he was twice as strong as he was before.

Chapter 22:Alchemy Hall

Alex made a fist with his hands and was shocked at how much strength he could feel in them. The pain he had just felt, the transformation of his normal Qi into Yang Qi, had also in some minor ways changed his physical body as well.

While he was still at Muscle Tempering 7th Realm, he could tell that he was ever so slightly stronger. He wanted to check what changes his new form of qi brought to his techniques.

But alas, there was no fire around to see if anything had changed.

Grrrrrr magic

His stomach cried out hunger. The inner transformation had left him feeling a little peckish.

"Now that I think about it, I'm surprised I have gone so long without feeling hungry or thirsty. Does being a cultivator make you no longer need a lot of sustenance?" he wondered.

He looked at the clock and realized it was only 4 PM. There were still 3 hours before dinner time. There was no homework, so he was free to do whatever he wanted today.

He decided to go eat something in the sect valley but stopped.

"Wait, doesn't food cost contribution points as well?" he quickly checked the rulebook and he could in fact not eat anything without contribution points.

Even the cheapest stuff cost about 2 contribution points. Also, he couldn't leave the sect without permission from an elder, so there was no way to go to the city to get something to eat.

'Sigh. I guess it's time to go work now.' He got out of his cottage. He walked back to the valley. This time, however, he needed to go to the Alchemy Hall.

He quickly checked the map and found it. He thought he would be jaded by now, seeing all the different massive halls, but, he was still surprised when he saw the Alchemy Hall. Perhaps more than everything else he had seen in the sect valley.

The Alchemy hall wasn't just a simple building. It was located at the very corner of the sect valley and seemed to be carved into the sect leader's mountain.

It was a simple one-story building, but he couldn't tell how far into the mountain the hall went. He looked at the entrance of the hall and saw a bunch of light green robe-wearing disciples standing side by side.

Once in a while, an inner sect disciple would come, and pick one of the outer sect disciples and take them inside.

'Were the outer sect disciples standing here to be chosen as aid?' he wondered.

He walked up to a small station outside the hall where an elder was staying.

"Good afternoon elder. I wish to work as an Alchemist's aid. Can you tell me what I have to do?" he asked politely.

"Hmm...." The elder looked towards Alex and asked, "Is this your first time here?"

Alex was surprised. 'How did he know?' there shouldn't have been any clue yet the elder found out at once.

"Yes, elder. This is my first time." He said honestly.

"How good are you at recognizing ingredients?" the elder asked him.

Alex was surprised. That wasn't what he had expected the elder to ask him at all.

"I would say it's very good," Alex said, not knowing if that felt like he was bragging or just being honest.

The elder's eyes perked up at the answer. He reached into his storage bag and brought out 3 items.

One was a small, yellow fruit. The other was a strangely purple leaf. And the last one was a brown bark from a tree.

"What are these?" the elder simply asked him to name them.

Alex focused a little on the ingredients and their names popped upon them.

"They are Cat Eyed Berry, Purple Bane, and Forest Scale." He answered confidently.

"Correct," the elder put back the items and said, "Go stand among your fellow disciples. If an inner sect disciple needs you, they will call for you."

"Thank you, elder," Alex left and stood in an open spot next to a female disciple.

He looked next to him and saw the female disciple fidgeting about, almost to the point that it looked like she was shaking.

"Are you okay, sister?" he asked.

The girl turned towards him. She was not the best-looking female he had seen, but she didn't look that bad. She had long black hair, and a small face with big eyes. And in those eyes were a small amount of fear.

"I'm fine," she took a deep breath and stopped fidgeting. "It's just that I haven't earned enough contribution points for the week, and if I don't earn 5 more points in the next 10 hours, I will be punished. I am just nervous that no one will pick me."

"Ah, I'm sure someone will pick you, sister." He said as he comforted her. They made some small talk before an inner sect disciple chose her as his aid, and went it.

Her eyes had gotten truly bright when she was chosen. He thought he would have to wait out here alone for now, when suddenly someone talked ahead of him.

"Eh, junior brother. Aren't you the same junior brother who completed my mission?" A voice came from in front of Alex.

Alex turned around to find a big, buff man in front of him. He looked at the person's face and thought he had seen it before.

"Ah, it's you Brother Kong. It's good to see you here. I almost didn't recognize you since I only saw you in the darkness of evening."

Yes, the man in front of him right now was Kong Yuhan, the inner sect disciple. The same person to whom he had sold his Dwarf Berry last night.

Chapter 23: The Task of an Aid

"What was your name again junior brother? Yu Ming?" Kong Yuhan asked.

Alex was surprised. He didn't remember ever telling him his name. He replied with a shocked expression, "That's right, brother Kong."

Kong Yuhan saw his shocked expression, and asked, "why do you look, shocked junior brother? Did you think I wouldn't recognize you just because I only saw you once? You brought me a very important ingredient. You are a benefactor to me, and this Kong always remembers his benefactors."

"Ah, no brother Kong. I was just surprised you somehow figured out my name. Even though I didn't remember you asking for my name." He replied honestly.

"Hmm. You didn't? Then I must've read it in your nameplate. Anyway, that doesn't matter right now. Are you working as an aid right now, junior brother Yu?" he asked.

'Oh! The nameplate. Of course.' Alex felt stupid for not realizing that.

"Yes. I am waiting for someone to pick me as an aid."

"Do you want to come with me?" Kong Yuhan asked.

Alex's eyes brightened. 'Finally' he thought.

"Yes, brother Kong. I would love to."

Kong Yuhan walked into the hall and brought Alex along with him. The inside of the Alchemy Hall was not what he had been expecting.

The inside of the hall looked like catacombs. It had a relatively narrow path that went straight for a dozen or more meters before splitting into 3 paths. Each of the paths had multiple rooms on each side of the path. The doors themselves were made of stone, similar to the walls.

Lanterns hung on the wall to light up the pathway. At the very entrance of the hall, there was a big white rock embedded into the walls. There were many small boxes that either lit up with red lights or green lights.

Alex looked at the carvings and immediately realized that this was the internal map of the Alchemy hall. Similar to all the other stones, and boards he had seen around the sect, this was also constantly changing forms, going from red to green, or green to red.

Kong Yuhan looked at the map once and saw a clump of green lights in an area. "Come on junior brother Yu. Let's go find ourselves an open room."

Kong Yuhan knew the path very well, so he simply walked straight through the maze-like the hallway and reached an open room. He walked into the room and waited for Alex to enter.

Alex walked in and was surprised to see the room. The room was bigger than his cottage and had a giant hole in the middle. A steady fire was burning inside the hole, and on top of it was a black cauldron, ready to be used.

Kong Yuhan took out his nameplate and placed it in a carving on the wall next to the open door. Suddenly, a massive block of stone came down from the open door and blocked it entirely.

He took the cauldron on top of the fire, and set it aside at a corner. He then took out his own cauldron and put it on top of the fire. His cauldron seemed to be made of a dirt-like brown color, but more polished than the black cauldron. It was without a doubt better than the other cauldron.

He waited for the cauldron to heat up and took out his storage bag. He then handed to storage bag to Alex.

Alex was confused now. What was he to do with the storage bag? He looked inside and saw a bunch of alchemy ingredients, including the dwarf berry. He decided to ask.

"Brother Kong, what do I do with this?"

"Huh, why are you asking? You should know this as an aid already." Kong Yuhan was surprised at the question as well,

"This is my first time working as an aid brother. I only joined the sect yesterday." Alex said as he laughed wryly.

Kong Yuhan frowned. "This is bad, brother. You should have let me know it was your first time. If you mess something up, I will be in big trouble." magic

Alex got a little worried as well. 'I should have tried to find out what an aid does before coming here as well.'

"What does an aid do brother Kong?" he asked.

Kong sighed, "The job itself is very simple, junior brother. You just have to give me the ingredients when I ask you to. The problem is that Alchemy requires near-perfect timing. So if you were to hinder my process by not being able to find an ingredient in time, I will fail in making the pill."

"And this pill is very important to me. I only have one set of ingredients, so if I mess up here, I won't be able to break through to the Meridian Tempering realm. I'm just worried that you won't be able to recognize what ingredient I ask, and be slow at delivering it."

Alex's eyes perked up when he heard this. "If it's just recognizing ingredients, then I am confident in being able to do that, brother Kong."

"Very well then junior brother, I shall trust you. The room already took my points, so there is no going back. Familiarize yourself with the pill ingredients and recipe in the bag," Kong Yuhan said as he closed his eyes and started meditating.

Alex looked inside the storage bag and found out there were 13 different items inside. 12 of them were the ingredients, while the last one was a talisman.

Alex took out the talisman and started to read it.

"Oh wow." He was surprised. He didn't expect to learn the recipe the moment he read it.

'This must be because of the feature of [Alchemy God's Knowledge] that says I can learn all recipes instantly.' He thought

Chapter 24: The Alchemy Process

He realized that the information on the talisman was already on his head and that he didn't require the talisman itself anymore. So he kept it back in the bag and looked at the other 12 ingredients.

Once he thought about the recipe, he somehow knew which ingredients he had to put in, at what time, at what temperature. The recipe had even mentioned how to move the ingredients inside the pot while performing alchemy.

"This is quite thorough," he thought.

After a few minutes, the cauldron started to make sounds, signifying that it was ready for alchemy.

Kong Yuhan opened his eyes and took a deep breath.

"Are you ready junior brother, I will start asking for the ingredients one after another?" He said.

"Yes," Alex replied with a single word.

"Very well then. Horn root grass." He said.

Alex knew [Horn Root Grass] was the first ingredient and was ready for it. Without missing a beat, he took out the Horn Root Grass and handed it to Kong Yuhan.

Kong Yuhan took the ingredient and put it inside the cauldron. Alex wanted to see how he would now follow the recipe and move the ingredient all around the cauldron for 2 minutes.

Kong Yuhan simply moved his right hand in a circular motion without using anything to move the horn root grass.

'He is using his Qi to move the ingredient? That doesn't look like a technique. Does that mean one can normally use Qi to move stuff?' Alex needed to test this as soon as he could.

But now was not the time. After nearly 2 minutes had passed, Alex took out the next ingredient, ready to hand it to Kong Yuhan.

Kong Yuhan called out the name and took the ingredient. He then put the ingredient into the cauldron. This brought a reaction out of Alex.

'NO!!' he internally shouted. 'There were still 2 more seconds left before the 2 minutes were over. He put it in too early.' But he didn't voice his opinion out loud as that might disturb Kong Yuhan out of his concentration.

He then gave him the next ingredient, which looked like a wilted leaf. Kong Yuhan increased the temperature of the fire and put in the wilted leaf.

'The fire is 10 degrees lower than what it should be.' Alex once again found a flaw in Kong Yuhan's process.

Similar things kept on happening with Kong Yuhan's process. Either he put in the ingredients too early, or put them in too late. Sometimes the fire wasn't at the right temperature, other times it changed too slowly.

He took out the last remaining item from the bag, the dwarf berry. Kong Yuhan was full of sweat, still concentrating on the alchemy and ready to put in the final ingredient.

He held out his hand and asked for the berry. He waited for the right moment and put in the berry.

'He timed it quite right this time.' Alex thought. He then looked as Kong Yuhan finally mixed his last ingredients in the cauldron.

All the ingredients had already lost their forms and turned into a bunch of powder by now. The dwarf berry was no different either and soon turned into powder.

Now came the final phase of the alchemy process, making the pill.

Kong Yuhan used a pill-forming technique and slowly brought the powders together to form a clump. He put Qi into the clump to slowly compress them into a ball.

After a few minutes, he had successfully formed a ball out of the clump, and thus successfully, formed a pill.

Kong Yuhan flicked his finger, and a small yellow pill flew out of it, into his hand. A magnificent burst of medicinal scents followed the pill.

Kong Yuhan looked at the pill with wide eyes. He was beyond happy to have succeeded.

Alex was also surprised to see the pill. He had expected Kong Yuhan to fail, given how many mistakes he had made during the alchemy process.

He focused his eyes on the small yellow pill. Suddenly a name popped up on the pill.

[Spirit Enhancing Pill]

He couldn't see its other information as he was not in contact with the pill. He wanted to ask Kong Yuhan to let him touch the pill but decided not to. magic

He walked forward towards Kong Yuhan.

"Congratulations, brother Kong. You succeeded in making the pill."

"Oh thank you, junior brother. I was quite skeptical about letting you be an aid, but you really helped me a lot." Kong Yuhan said with a big smile on his face.

"With this pill, I can finally break through to the Meridian Tempering realm. That would help me a lot on my path to becoming a better alchemist. Maybe it will even help me become a core disciple" Kong Yuhan started laughing a little.

"What are the requirements for being a Core disciple? If you don't mind me asking." Alex pried a little.

"Oh. Similar to how you have to make 10 different mortal grade pills for becoming an inner sect disciple, you have to make 20 different 20% harmony mortal grade pills for becoming a core disciple." Kong Yuhan said.

"Oh. That seems quite hard. Making 20 different near-earth-grade pills must be quite a task." Alex said.

"They sure are. However, if you manage to make a single Earth Grade pill, the sect will immediately make you a core disciple. That's how Wan Li became a core disciple too." He said.

'Wan Li, that was the name of the First place holder in the rankings, wasn't it?' Alex thought.

" Oh, then what is the harmony level of your current pill brother?" Alex asked.

"Ah, let me see." He focused on the pill for a bit and said, " well, it definitely isn't an earth grade. It's still a mortal-grade pill for sure. Let me check the exact numbers though."

He then reached into his storage bag and brought out a glass beaker with a metal plate on the bottom.

Chapter 25:Formations

Alex looked at the weird-looking glass beaker and wondered what it was. The glass beaker was small, wide at the bottom, and narrow at the top. It had a circular metal place at its base.

The metal plate was on the outside of the breaker and looked magical with intricate designs. The glass itself had a single black line going across it vertically. There were small dots, along the side of the black line.

Kong Yuhan took his pill and dropped it into the beaker. He then focused as he poured his Qi into the metal part of the beaker. The beaker started to slowly fog up.

At the base of the glass beaker, the mist slowly appeared. The mist appeared on the outer edge of the metal, and it started to mist the glass itself.

Slowly, the mist rose up and started appearing more and more on the glass beaker .it had started at the bottom, and was moving upwards.

After a few seconds, it stopped moving and showed no other signs. Kong Yuhan looked closely at the black dot, next to the black line where the mist had stopped forming.

"Aww... it stopped at 19%. I was so close to 20%." Kong Yuhan sighed. Alex was puzzled. He asked, "What do you mean 19%, brother Kong?"

"Look," Kong Yuhan said as he passed along the beaker to Alex. Now that Alex had it in his hand, he could see that the black dots were not in fact dots, but numbers. They were just too tiny to tell apart from where he was previously. magic

"Is this the pill's harmony level?" he asked.

"Yes," Kong Yuhan said and started to pack his cauldron.

"How can a glass tell you what a pill's harmony level is, brother kong?" he asked.

"What are you talking about, Junior brother? Of course, it doesn't. It's the metal base that shows it." Kong Yuhan answered as if it was common sense.

"The metal?" Alex was even more confused.

"Well, more precisely the formation on the metal." Kong Yuhan clarified a little.

"A Formation?" Alex was shocked. He had never seen a formation before and only heard of it. "Wow, this is my first time seeing a formation," Alex said as he looked at the metal at the bottom of the beaker.

Kong Yuhan took the beaker back, and put the pill inside into a ceramic pill bottle, quickly closing the bottle with a stopper.

Alex was confused now. " I ... I have?" he questioned the statement.

Kong Yuhan took his nameplate out of the wall and looked at the stone door disappear above the door. " Of course, you have. How else do you think this door works?" he laughed a little.

"That is a formation too?" Alex was surprised.

Kong Yuhan then pointed at the lantern in the hallway and asked, "Have you ever looked at what's inside a lantern, junior brother?"

Alex had just done that the day before, so he answered, "Yes. I took off the outer cover yesterday night. Inside was a floating ball of fire, and a metal... Don't tell me that metal plate is a formation too?" he eyes were wide with shock.

'How could I have missed it?' he thought. But, then he thought of something.

" But, wait. The lanterns don't require someone to infuse Qi into it as you did to that glass beaker." He asked.

"The 'Pill Tester'? Well, that's because the formation on it doesn't have an energy source to run, so you have to give it Qi to work. The lanterns are different. They aren't individual formation, but rather a part of a larger formation." Kong Yuhan explained.

" A larger formation?" Alex questioned.

"Junior brother, did you know there is a massive formation laid down on the sect ground. It encompasses all 6 mountains and a little more." Kong Yuhan asked.

"Such a large formation? I did not know that brother." He answered.

"Well, I don't know its actual name, but it's unofficially called the 'Sect Running' formation. It taps into the spirit vein below the sect, and uses its energy to run the sect." He explained.

Alex thought of something, and said, "So the lanterns are part of that 'Sect Running' formation?" he asked.

Kong Yuhan laughed a little and answered. "Not just the lanterns junior brother. The nameplates, the sect medallion, the doors in the alchemy room, the fire burning inside, the map at the entrance, the mission board, the puppets, the ranking rock. Everything is part of the 'Sect Running' formation."

Alex was truly dumbfounded right now. He couldn't even in his wildest dreams think of something like that. 'So everything I thought was magical, was in fact just part of the 'Sect Running' formation.' He thought.

Kong Yuhan explained a little more, " How else do you think the rankings constantly change. How else do you think the mission board knows what missions you have taken. How else do you think the elders can call out disciples on their nameplates. Everything inside the sect that runs by itself, is a formation."

"So, it's better if you don't go around saying you have never seen a formation before. People will just call you ignorant."

Alex couldn't keep his thoughts straight until he got out of the Alchemy Hall. "Give me your nameplate, Junior brother." Kong Yuhan said. Alex absentmindedly handed him his nameplate.

Kong Yuhan transferred 5 contribution points. "I will see you later junior brother." He said and walked away.

Alex was still having a hard time grasping the sheer scope of the formation in the sect. So many things used formations.

'I guess the things around here aren't exactly 'magical' huh.'

Grrrrr.

He finally came back to focus. He looked at the nameplate in his hand and checked it. 5 points had indeed been added to it. He sighed a little and thought,

'Either way, it's time to get some food.'

magic

Chapter 26: Qi Manipulation

Alex easily found a restaurant in the sect valley using his map. Dozens of disciples were going in and out of the restaurant. Almost all of them from the outer sect.

'Do you require less food, the higher your cultivation?' he wondered.

He walked in and found a board on top with words on it. He wondered if that was a formation as well, but no. It was just a normal board someone had written in.

He looked at the cheapest dish in the whole restaurant. A meat stew with some vegetables in it. Most of the outer sect disciples were ordering it, so he ordered it too.

While it was the cheapest dish, the restaurant was very generous about the food and gave a lot. The stew was delicious, and he ate a stomach full.

He slowly ate it, taking in all the different flavors, and it took him fifteen minutes to finish the dish. After finishing it, he paid the 2 contribution points and got out of the restaurant.

Sun had already gone down, and darkness was approaching. This only meant, the light of the lantern shined brighter than ever. Alex walked along the festival-like road, thinking what to do next.

He looked at the time and realized it was nearly 7 pm. It was about time to log out. He decided he would practice some more fire controlling after he returned, so he went back to his cottage and logged out.

There was still a few minutes before the other guys logged out, so he decided to call his parents. He talked for a while, told him about his first day in college, talked about the friends he made, etc.

His roommates were out of the game by the time he had hung up the phone. They went to the cafeteria together and talked about a few different things.

He had wanted to ask something for a while, so he did. "Hey guys, why does time slow down sometimes when you are fighting or training?" he asked.

"I think that's called the 'Focus Mode'. Since every player has different strengths or cultivation, it's difficult to speed up the things in the game so that

it matches the players. So, instead of speeding up the game as a whole, they just speed up the thought process of a player who has higher cultivation."

"In the end, the player with higher cultivation does stuff faster than the player with the lower one, and it achieves the same result. Since they don't want the higher cultivation players to constantly suffer from everything around them slowing down, the developers just turned it into a mode that activates sometimes"

Eric gave a full and proper explanation that satisfied Alex very much. After they ate their dinner, they went back to their room. Alex was more than happy to get back into the game.

He opened his eyes in his room, with a lantern-lit bright, hanging from the ceiling. He almost went to grab the lantern when he thought, "Wait. I should probably try moving all kinds of stuff with Qi, instead of wasting it all on flame mastery."

He looked around his room to see if there was anything there. His barren room had nothing. So he walked outside and brought back a few small pebbles.

He put down the tiny stones in front of him and took a deep breath. He instinctively activated focus mode. Everything around him slowed down once more. He could feel the heat from the lantern on his skin and see the stones brighter than he would in the daytime.

If he were to attribute what he saw to colors, then he saw about 7 different colors all over his entire body. But it only lasted for a single second and disappeared the moment he found his Qi.

Unlike yesterday, his Qi was different now. There was a sense of vigor and heat to them. Since he wasn't following any technique, there wasn't any specified path for the Qi this time.

So, he just brought it all to his palms and let his qi bleed out of them. As if they were an extension of his own hand, he was still in control of his Qi even after they left his body.

He slowly pushed them forward until they reached the stones. He let the shapeless Qi envelope one of the stones as if he were catching them in his own palm. The Qi followed his command and fully covered the stone.

'Up' he thought. The Qi slowly started moving upwards, while at the same time picking the stone up as well. He watched as the stone hovered in midair.

'I did it he thought. He was still concentrating on the stone, keeping it in the air. Next, he split his attention. While still keeping the stone midair, he tried to bring out more Qi from his body.

He did it very slowly. The Qi had collected on his palm and were starting to bleed out of it. He watched as the formless Qi once again escaped out of his hands.

"Okay. Now all I have to do is put the Qi over the stone and -"

Clink

The stone in midair dropped. "Haaa- alright, once more." He did that a few more times and was easily hovering the tiny stone in mid-air, but when he had to multitask with it, he failed.

"Once more," but he didn't give up.

After a few more tries, he finally managed to hover 2 stones at once. That was when he thought of something.

"What if I think of both objects as a single one?" he brought out some more Qi, and instead of individually wrapping the stones, he wrapped them all at once.

The stones stuck to each other but were easily moved using Qi.

Chapter 27: Muscle Tempering 9th Realm

Alex practiced both methods of moving multiple objects with Qi.

The first one was where he would individually wrap the object with his Qi, and move them separately.

The second one was where he would wrap all the objects with his Qi at once, and move the objects with Qi.

He found pros and cons for both of these methods. The first one allowed him to move multiple items in multiple ways. He could move one item horizontally,

while spinning the other one, and at the same time revolving another item around his body.

The problem with this method was that, it took a lot of concentration.

The second one didn't require any concentration at all. As long as he wrapped the items with his Qi, they easily moved to his commands. But, he could no longer move them individually, and could only move them in one single way.

Alex decided he would learn both way of manipulating items with Qi. He went outside and brought larger stones and started to practice.

He practiced for about 2 hours or so before stopping.

By now, he could easily pick up 2 kilograms worth of items at once, and move them around on his command. When separated, he could pick up 3 different items, each about 500 grams, and move them all individually.

He was very quickly becoming proficient at the task. After 2 hours of doing this, his Qi went down to about half it's original amount.

He then stopped and brought down the lantern. It was time to learn Flame Mastery.

He took out the cover, and looked at the flame hidden within it. Moving the Qi according to the dictation of Flame Mastery Scripture was a muscle memory to Alex.

Without even thinking about it, he started to move and manipulate the fire. With one thought, he changed the shape of the fire into a cube.

"So fast." He was surprised. He had changed the shape of the fire in less than a second, when it should have taken him about two. He changed the fire into other different easy geometric shapes.

It changed very quickly. He put in more Qi, and the size of the fire started to change as well. He quickly increased the fire to half a meter in diameter.

He looked at the massive flame in front of him. Then, a thought came to him, 'Can I split this fire into two?'

He slowly willed the fire to create a divide in its middle. The fire was surprisingly not resisting him at all. Within a few seconds, he managed to split the fire into two. magic

He let go of one of the half, and it returned to being the lantern flame. He now had another piece of fire floating in front of him to play with.

He tried to split that fire, once more and started to manipulate them separately. He was trying to use his Qi manipulation method to control the fire. It worked.

He let go of the fire, and it disappeared. A confused look had now appeared on Alex's face.

"Too easy. It's too easy. The fire wasn't this easy to manipulate yesterday. It was taking me about 2 seconds to change it's shape, but now I can do it in less than 1? What changed?" he started to wonder.

"Could it be? My new Qi?" he looked into himself to see the vigorous and hot yang qi. "Hmm... my qi seems to align well with fire. Is that why it suddenly got easier?" he thought he cracked the code.

He went back to practicing. It had taken him 3 hours of practicing to go from full Qi to no Qi yesterday. But somehow, it took him over 5 hours to go from half Qi to zero Qi today.

If he hadn't wasted so much of his Qi trying to futilely move around multiple objects, and instead just practiced Flame Mastery, he didn't doubt he could go on for the entire night.

Now that he was out of Qi, he decided to cultivate. He took a deep breath and closed his eyes. Before he knew it, he was subconsciously cultivating, while his consciousness had fallen asleep.

He woke up early in the morning at around half past 6. He opened his eyes and saw the mess of stones, and lantern in front of him.

He hung the lantern back up to the ceiling, and threw the bunch of stones outside. He opened his status once more. This time he wasn't surprised he had cultivated over night.

This was a normal phenomenon to him now.

[Player Name: Yu Ming

Cultivation: Muscle Tempering 7th Realm (40,000Qi : 100%) [Breakthrough]

Body: Sun God's Divine Yang Body

Talent: God

Spiritual Roots: 5 elements Yin-Yang roots

Cultivation Method: Starry Sky Qi Absorption Method

Qi: 87909

'So the leftover from yesterday helped, huh.' He thought. While his Qi had turned to Yang Qi, it still said Qi on the status page. He hit the [Breakthrough] button and broke through to the 8th realm.

He was about to close his status when he realized he could breakthrough once more. 'Oh' he was happily surprised. He clicked on the [Breakthrough] button once more.

The requirements from 7th to 8th realm was 40,000 Qi, and from 8th to 9th realm was 45,000 Qi. But, for some reason, the requirement for Muscle Tempering 9th Realm to Bone Tempering 1st realm was 100,000 Qi.

'Is that because they are two different major realms, and not minor separation in between the realms?' he wondered.

He had just gone through 2 different breakthroughs and was feeling amazing. He felt more strength in himself than before. The amount of Qi had increased as well.

If he wanted to, he could probably go a full 12 hours of Flame Mastery training and not lose all of his Qi.

He once again looked at the time, realized it was nearly 7 AM and hastily logged out.

Chapter 28: Daily Routine

It was 3 pm in the afternoon. Alex had just returned to his room from the cafeteria, after a full day of classes. After logging out of the game this morning, he hadn't gone back.

Instead, he spent his morning cleaning the room and washing his clothes. Now that he was back from the university, he couldn't wait to go back to it.

He logged into the game as soon as possible and opened his eyes inside his outer sect cottage. It was an afternoon in the game as well, and the light was shining through his windows.

He walked out of the room to the usual masses of green-robed disciples. He had only one task in his mind today, work as an aid for as long as he could.

He quickly reached outside the Alchemy hall and waited in line to be an aid. He talked to the few aids in the group while waiting.

He came to understand a few things about why the alchemist aids were even a thing. Normally, in an alchemy process, an alchemist had to take care of 3 different things.

The fire, the ingredients in the cauldron, and the ingredients outside the cauldron. They had to maintain the fire's temperature and mix the ingredients in the cauldron properly. These were very important.

So when they had to divert their attention from the alchemy itself to look into their bags and search for ingredients to put in next, it hampered their process, even leading to failure many times.

Inner sect disciples were similar. They couldn't multitask all those 3 things and hope to succeed in making the pill. So, the sect decided to have the Outer sect disciples help them with the third part of the alchemy, giving them ingredients.

This way, the outer sect disciples too could gain knowledge and inspiration in the process of alchemy from watching the inner sect disciples.

Of course, not all inner sect disciples needed aids, but most of them did.

Alex didn't have to wait long before a female disciple took him in as an aid. This was the second time he had gone into the catacombs like Alchemy Hall.

The female disciple quickly found an open room and got it. Alex followed closely behind her and entered.

Without speaking, she handed him a bag of ingredients with a talisman. Alex was hoping for another recipe, but alas his luck wasn't as good.

The talisman only listed the items required for the recipe and the order in which they would go into the cauldron. The female disciple decided to use the black cauldron already heating up in the room and started immediately.

One after another, the ingredient's names came out of the disciple's mouth. Alex gave her exactly the ingredient she asked for. Within half an hour, she completed the alchemy and successfully made a pill.

Alex didn't have the recipe this time, so he couldn't tell everything she did wrong, but his instinct told him she made a few mistakes at least.

The girl brought out a pill tester and put the newly formed pill in it.

18%. This wasn't a bad harmony for a pill made by an inner sect disciple.

The girl put the pill in a ceramic bottle and kept it in her bag. There were still a lot of the same ingredients left in the bag Alex was holding. She had brought multiple sets of the same ingredients.

She started making the pill once more. Names after names came out of her mouth, and Alex accurately handed the ingredients to her.

Once again, she succeeded in making the pill. She tested it and it turned out to be 18% as well.

Alex looked at the bag in front of him. There was enough for one more. She performed alchemy once more. Everything went the same way this time too.

Once again, she successfully formed a pill. 'If she is so good at alchemy, then why did she use 3 different sets?' he wondered.

She brought out the pill from the cauldron and put it in the pill tester.

20%. The female disciple had managed to make a 20% harmony pill. For the first time since he saw her, she smiled.

She kept the pill in a ceramic bottle and looked at him. " Give me your nameplate." She said.

Alex handed it to her. After transferring the points, she handed it back to him and left the Alchemy hall.

He walked out of the Alchemy Hall, and once more waited outside to be an aid. Another person came later and took him.

He worked as an aid until 12 am. He worked as an aid about 12 times before 12 am. Some disciples gave him the whole recipe, some just gave him the ingredients list and order.

He learned a total of 4 new recipes. Every time he learned a recipe, he could immediately tell when someone made a mistake. It was as if the recipe was ingrained into him, and he knew everything about it.

After watching the alchemist perform alchemy so many times, he was starting to get the hang of it. There were even times when he could tell they made some mistakes without having a recipe for the pill.

He earned about 60 points in total. Some made multiple pills, some gave him a little extra.

After returning to his cottage at 12 am, he started practicing the qi manipulation, and Flame Mastery Scripture. He learned each method for 3 hours, and before he knew it it was 6 am.

He wrapped his Qi around the lantern and slowly hovered it up to hang it to the ceiling. He then used Qi once more to throw the rocks out of the room, one by one. Once, everything was gone and the room was clean, he logged out. magic

*****Author's Note*****

June 11, 2021 -- if you started the book after this date, then you don't have to read this note.

I changed the 5 true realms' names to True Disciple, True Master, True Lord, True King, and True Emperor. I have already gone back to change the names in the previous chapters.

These are only 'name' changes, and won't affect the chapters so far.

Chapter 29: The First Step

"So, how did you like the movie?" Hannah asked while walking out of the movie theater at around 5 pm.

"Uh, it wasn't bad. I really liked the twist at the end." Alex said walking out of the movie theater at the same time.

Yesterday was Friday, so he had played 'Eternal Cultivation' the entire day as he didn't have classes on Fridays through Sundays. When he woke up this morning, he had received a message from Hannah asking him to go to the movies with him.

He and Hannah reached a fast food place, where they got some food and sat down to eat.

"So, how are you liking the city?" she asked.

Alex looked a little embarrassed as he replied, "Well, I haven't visited the city at all. I spend my days playing games."

Hannah's attention immediately snapped towards what he had just said. "What game?" she asked.

"It's a VR game called Eternal Cultivation," he said.

"Oh, so you are playing the game too?" Hannah's surprised voice came from in front of him.

"Too? You play it as well sister?" he asked.

"Of course. Everyone plays it. How did you buy a helmet? Did you lie to your parents for money?" she frowned a little as she asked.

"Oh, no-no. One of my roommates had an extra helmet, so he gave me one to use for a while." He answered honestly.

"If that is true, then good. When did you start playing?"

"I think it's been a week now. I started playing the night I came to the dorm." He answered.

"Where are you in the game? What are you doing right now?" she asked.

"I'm learning alchemy right now, in Hong Wu sect." He answered.

"Oh, you are learning alchemy? If you make good pills, remember to send me a few." Hannah laughed as she said that.

Alex wasn't sure if she was joking or not but agreed nonetheless.

After half an hour, he was back in the dorm room. He wanted to go back to the game but decided otherwise. He rested a little until dinnertime, and only went back to the game after that.

He opened his eyes in his lantern-lit cottage. His last few days had been the same. He would work as an aid until 12 am at night. After that, he would come back to his cottage, and practice Qi manipulation and Flame Mastery. After he ran out of Qi, he would cultivate.

By now it was getting harder to cultivate more than 2 hours each night. After turning into Yang Qi, his Qi amount had increased by quite a bit and didn't require as much Qi to do the same task.

He stood up and walked out. After working as an aid for the last few days, he had got to learn about 10 or so pill recipes. Some increased your qi, some healed you, some helped make breakthroughs easier.

One pill was even as simple as making you smell good. Alex was shocked that people would spend their hard-earned contribution points on such menial pills.

By now, he had earned about 450 or so contribution points. So, he decided to finally make a pill for himself. It was nighttime, so the outer sect disciples were finally allowed to learn alchemy.

The pill he had decided upon was the [Qi Improvement Pill]. He had read the recipe from one of the inner sect disciples and found out that the ingredients were very easy to come by and didn't cost a lot.

He bought 7 sets of the ingredients, and it had cost him 420 points.

He reached the Alchemy Hall and looked at the outer sect disciples grouped up to work as an aid. For some reason, he felt he didn't need aid, and simply walked in.

He had about 20 points remaining, so he could only use the rooms for 4 hours at best. The remaining 10 points he had spent on ceramic bottles to keep the pill.

He walked into a room and closed the door. He was nervous. He walked up to the cauldron and sat down cross-legged beside it.

He opened his inventory and put the panel to the side. This was the reason he thought he didn't need aid. He could simply order the ingredients in the inventory and pull them out one by one as needed.

His concentration was now divided into 3 parts. While the inventory didn't need too much attention, the fire and the ingredients in the cauldron certainly did.

He had to now drop the fire to 800 Celsius, put the second ingredient, move it around for 4 seconds, and then bring the fire up to 1500 Celsius.

He tried to do just that. He put his Qi into the fire to drop the temperature. But due to his constant Flame Mastery practice, he was too good at dropping temperatures and ended up reducing the temperature too fast.

He took out the second ingredient, and put that into the cauldron. But, for a split second while he was taking out the second ingredient, he forgot to move the first ingredient. magic

It was a very small mistake, but it was a mistake nonetheless. Similar things kept happening during the pill-making process. Either there would be a lapse in attention towards some ingredients, or he would change the fire too suddenly, or too slowly.

By the time he put in the final ingredient, he knew he had made too many mistakes. After the final ingredient turned into powder, he used his Qi to slowly form it into a spherical shape and condensed that into a pill.

After he finally succeeded in making it into a pill, he pulled it out of the cauldron. When he saw the pill, he sighed. It read,

[Qi Improvement Pill: 6%]

His first attempt at alchemy had ended in a failure.

Chapter 30: One Step Forward

magic

Alex ran his qi through the inside of the cauldron to wipe away any little impurities that had remained there. He had seen the other inner sect disciples do this trick to prepare for their next batch of ingredients.

He once again took a deep breath and put in the first ingredient. He used his Qi to move it around, slowly turning it into powder. He lowered the heat to 800 Celsius but made sure to not do it very fast.

While he did end up not getting the timing right, it was still much better than the first time. He took out the second ingredient and put it in, while constantly monitoring the first ingredient.

After a while, he turned the heat up to 1500 Celsius. He followed the recipe and did as it asked. However, keeping his attention on 3 different things, while at the same time constantly remembering what he had to do next was too hard for him.

He started to lose focus from time to time. Still, this turn went better than the last one. Finally, once all ingredients were inside the cauldron, and fully turned into powder, he started condensing them.

Slowly but surely, he turned them into a pill. He pulled the successfully formed pill out and held it in his hand.

[Qi Improvement Pill: 12%]

Improves cultivation speed by 12% for 12 hours]

Alex took a small rest. While alchemy wasn't physically taxing, it was mentally very draining. Doing 3 different things, all with small different things from time to time was too much for Alex.

Suddenly, Alex thought of something.

"Wait, what if I slow downtime? Wouldn't that reduce the load off my mind?" he thought that was a brilliant idea. He decided to try it.

He slowed downtime and started putting in the ingredients. As soon as he put in the first ingredient, he realized he made a mistake. Since he was now in focus mode, time was now slow. But, he could not tell how slow he had to move the ingredients since he didn't know how slow time was. He didn't have a clock to look at.

He now wished the clock at his vision's top right corner showing the seconds.

He had already put in the ingredients so, he decided to follow it through. Since he couldn't follow the timing as the recipe dictated, he decided to go off of his instincts.

He instinctively slowed down every process by what he assumed was the rate of time dilation. He followed the recipe and did what the recipe told him to, only at a slower rate.

The slowed down time helped with every other aspect of the pill-making process, however.

Finally, after a while, he managed to condense the ingredients into a pill. He took the pill out with nervousness, as he didn't know how it would turn out.

[Qi Improvement Pill: 10%]

He had succeeded. It was barely at the cusp of being accepted as a mortal-grade pill. He had managed to successfully create a pill, even though focus mode.

After a short rest, he started once more.

This time he managed to create a 12% harmony pill. He was getting better at creating pills with Focus mode activated.

After a short rest, he started on his 5th set of ingredients.

He followed the same technique all the way through until the end when suddenly something happened within him that startled him. As he was started to condense the powders into the pill, a bunch of Qi inside his body started to move.

Similar to when he activated Flame Mastery Scripture, they moved in a certain path through his meridian. This path was different from the one Flame Mastery Scripture activated.

Once the Qi moved through his entire body, it arrived at his hands and diffused from it. The arrival of the new Qi made him intuitively use it.

He slowly guided the Qi to enter the cauldron and split it into 2 portions. Both portions of the Qi started to condense the powder into 2 separate balls.

And as a result, they turned into 2 different pills. Alex was astonished at what had just happened. How did he know that he had to split the powder into two portions to form two pills?

Also the pathway the Qi took through his body was the first time they had been used. He only had 2 techniques as of now. Since this wasn't the pathway of [Flame Mastery Scripture]...

"Could it be the [Alchemy God's Knowledge]?" he wondered. He quickly opened his techniques to check the description and realized what had happened.

With Level 1 of [Alchemy God's Knowledge], he had a 50% chance to create an extra pill. That chance had just activated. Alex was both shocked and happy with learning that he could make 2 pills from a single set of ingredients.

He took out both of the newly formed pills and checked.

[Qi Improving Pill: 15%

Improves cultivation speed by 15% for 12 hours]

"Wow! That is the best pill I have made as of yet." He was shocked. He turned his attention to the other pill in his hand.

[Qi improving pill: 15%

Improves cultivation speed by 15% for 12 hours]

This was the same pill as the first one. "Will the harmony level always be the same between the two pills when the 50% chance is activated?" he wondered.

He soon got his answer. After resting a bit he started once more and got 2 pills. One was 12% in harmony, and the other was 14%. He didn't know why that was, but he was glad to know it was possible.

He started with the last pill and succeeded in making it. The last pill came out with 16% harmony. He was really happy to see that.

Seeing that all his ingredients were gone, he walked up to the door and took out his nameplate. 15 points were taken off of the nameplate, meaning he had been here for 3 hours, making pills.

Once he made sure all the pills were in the ceramic bottles, he walked out.