

Carefree 161

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Chapter 161: Spring Eye

"What are you doing, Zhang Feng, Li Gui? Get over here!"

Yu Feishui shouted.

While the Iron-tailed Black Eagle was engaging the other sailors, he ordered for his most loyal subordinates to 'save him'.

At the same time, while looking at the large bird, Yu Feishui was lost in thoughts.

He thought that he had already overestimated Fang Yuan, but never knew that even his pet would have the ability of a 4 Heavenly Gate martial artist!

Even though he had slight control over the chaos on his ship, the ships were still getting pulled in by the whirlpool, and everyone on the ships was in despair.

It seemed like the situation was fixed!

"Let's go!"

Fang Yuan laughed and leapt on the eagle's back.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle took off into the skies.

"Senior..."

Yu Feishui felt hopeless; he thought that Fang Yuan wanted to escape by himself.

But at that moment, he was utterly surprised.

In the sky, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle let out a long chirp and flew as quick like a black lightning, straight towards the centre of the whirlpool.

"Splash!"

The spiritual king fish was like a real dragon. Among the hundreds of fishes, it suddenly felt a sense of danger and looked up at the mysterious person above it.

"Pew! Pew!"

It swam to the surface of the water and shot a stream of white glow towards the eagle.

Behind it were ten over spiritual fish which shot out the water stream at the same time too, forming a web of water.

"Avoid it!"

Fang Yuan closed his eyes and tapped the eagle's head.

Manipulating his magical energy, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle seemed to have a premonition of what would happen and dodged the water stream from the spiritual king fish cleverly.

As for the water stream from the other spiritual fishes? At most the cost of a few feathers, nothing more.

"Beast!"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle arrived at the centre of the whirlpool, and a large voice was heard from its back.

"Whoosh!"

A shadow of a person appeared in mid-air, and as its right arm stretched out, a large palm appeared, pressing down on the water surface.

"Splash!"

The entire surface of the water was pressed down a few inches, and the whirlpool came to a halt.

In the tumbling waves, the large body of the spiritual king fish was revealed!

"This..."

On the metal hull flying ships, Yu Feishui and company were lost for words.

"Projecting his elemental energy, giving it a form outside his body, and suppressing the lake with one palm..."

Yu Feishui witnessed this scene, and excitement filled his eyes. "This is elemental force! Wu Zong!"

Although he had already long guessed Fang Yuan's identity, he could only confirm it now.

"Grandpa... Can this senior take down the spiritual king fish?"

At one side, Yu Xiaohong held her braids and looked at Fang Yuan's back with much anticipation.

"Even if he cannot take it down, he can at least chase it away!"

Yu Feishui's wrinkles disappeared for a moment as he grinned from ear to ear. He was extremely confident of this martial artist who was able to harness elemental force!

...

"Pew!"

In the waves, the spiritual king fish appeared once more and flicked its tail.

Three blue crystal pearl-shaped marbles flew in the direction of Fang Yuan, making a loud whirring noise.

As the side, many other spiritual fishes joined in, strengthening their attack.

"Mm? Retaliate? Not too bad!"

Fang Yuan transformed his palm into a claw and struck the water.

"Bang! Bang!"

The water marbles exploded in Fang Yuan's claw, making a sound of an explosion. It made him soaking wet, but other than that, it did not have any effect on him.

"Get... up!"

After one move, Fang Yuan shouted, and released fine elemental force from his index fingers into the lake, and he exclaimed once more.

"Splash!"

In the large splash, the gigantic body of the spiritual king fish was dragged out by Fang Yuan.

"Go!"

He rode the Iron-tailed Black Eagle and arrived at the metal ship. With the flick of his wrist, the gigantic spiritual king fish landed on the deck, flicking its tail around.

A few courageous sailors approached to capture it but were shot by its water stream, causing their body to split into two parts as they died a gruesome death.

"This spiritual king fish is good, I shall keep it as a pet!"

A strong gust of wind blew as the Iron-tailed Black Eagle landed on the deck.

Fang Yuan reeled in the fishing lines and set them out again.

"Splash!"

Not long later, 6 spiritual fishes were flung onto the deck. "This is a gift to you!"

"Ah... How can we accept it?"

Yu Feishui rubbed his hands together. One spiritual fish could accelerate the progress of two martial artists. "I don't deserve this credit!"

"I have my uses for you. Don't do anything to this spiritual fish and the baby fishes, I want them alive!"

Fang Yuan observed that the school of fishes had no more leader, and were swimming frantically in all directions. The whirlpool was also settling down.

"Senior, you want to... keep them as pets?"

Yu Feishui's eyes glittered, but then shook his head and forced a laugh. "It's impossible... So many years of the Drunken Moon Festival and many spiritual fishes were caught, but none of them could be bred. Furthermore, the water in this lake is different from water elsewhere. Even if it could be bred, the spirituality of the fish would be slowly lost..."

An important factor for the survivability of the spiritual fishes was the Drunken Moon Festival, and everyone knew that.

Furthermore, everyone could guess that the secret of the Drunken Moon Lake water laid in the Ecstasy Fog. Unfortunately, the fog was too strong, and anyone who entered it would not be able to come out alive.

"I only wanted to try. Where do you live? I will leave here soon, and by then, I will look for you."

Fang Yuan glanced at Yu Feishui.

Even if he did not threaten Yu Feishui, he would still not dare to be dishonest after Fang Yuan showed off his skills.

Furthermore, a spiritual king fish was not much and was not as important as his own objective.

"Ah... I am the sect leader of Golden Dragon Sect. If you want to look for me, just go to the mountainous entrance of Golden Dragon Sect!"

Yu Feishui was rather depressed.

He had a name for himself, but as he revealed his identity, no one really cared, making him feel like he was a frog in the well.

'Breeding spiritual fish?'

Yu Feishui thought for a moment and continued. "If these spiritual fishes want to survive, legends have it that they cannot leave the Wine Spring. If you can locate the Wine Spring Source, you might be able to breed the spiritual king fish."

"Pa!"

At this moment, the spiritual king fish started to act up again, flicking its tail and hitting a few well-built sailors. As it scrambled, it arrived at the edge of the deck.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Unfortunately for it, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle was already waiting there. It held it tightly to the deck with its claw.

This spiritual king fish was comparable to a dragon in the lake and not even the Iron-tailed Black Eagle could match it. However, out of the water, it could not use its strengths and was held down.

"Wine Spring Source... Rumours have it that this eye only works during the Drunken Moon Festival, and spread miles away, covering the entire lake with wine fragrance. I need to see it for myself..."

Fang Yuan glanced at Yu Feishui, then to the spiritual king fish. "Keep it properly, and prepare a room!"

...

In his dream, there were raindrops pelting on the lily pads. Like pearls, they rolled into the water.

A silver fish was hiding at the root of the lily flower, playing in the water.

Suddenly, an Ecstasy Fog appeared, covering the entire place, and bringing with it a unique fragrance.

The silver fish was clueless and followed the stream of the water. It did not know how far it had swum, but it arrived at an underwater cavern.

There was a dim light coming from it, and the fragrance of wine was unbearable. It could not resist the temptation and went straight for it.

As it swam deeper, it finally reached the end of the cavern and saw a Spring Eye...

...

"Phew..."

In the cabin, Fang Yuan opened his eyes and spit out a mouthful of breath.

In front of him, the spiritual king fish was held captive in a large tank. It was built entirely out of metal and was extremely strong. However, it was rather narrow and was quick difficult for the fish to manoeuvre freely inside.

Fang Yuan was already very satisfied. After all, this was on a ship, and he could not ask for too much.

"What a spiritual fish, with such complete memories..."

Fang Yuan was very satisfied with the result of this dream accessing.

"Indeed, this spiritual king fish had the assistance of the Wine Spring Source for it to become as such. That underwater cavern must be a natural spiritual land too, however... There is only one such Spring Eye, and it is within an Ecstasy Fog."

Fang Yuan was not surprised at the result, but instead, he had already predicted it.

Even Yu Feishui might know the secret of the Ecstasy Fog, but he was not capable enough to investigate further.

Many martial artists might have attempted to find the secret of the Drunken Moon Lake, but were all met with mishaps as they entered the Ecstasy Fog; they had no chance at all.

However, it was entirely different for Fang Yuan!

"The Ecstasy Fog is like a wall. Humans cannot enter, but animals can... In comparison with the surroundings of the Green Peak spiritual land, Master had also implemented the same defences, this is a dream master's tactic..."

He sighed a long sigh and his eyes glittered.

He was sure that the 'master' who escaped from Da Qian Empire, set up the defensive fog in the Drunken Moon Lake and started the Five Ghosts Sect was a dream master too!

As a dream master himself, Fang Yuan was much more interested and attracted by the Eye.

"In the legend, is the Wine Spring Source formed naturally or did someone put it there?"

With suspicion, Fang Yuan opened the cabin door and walked to the deck.

"Senior is done with meditation?"

He could see that Yu Xiaohong waited for quite a while, as she brought a bowl of fish soup over. "Please enjoy some soup."

"Mmm."

Fang Yuan noticed that the soup was a pure white, with an intense fragrance. Its taste was also extremely fresh and smiled. "Is this your cooking?"

Yu Xiaohong blushed. "That's right, don't mind my amateur cooking skills."

"Not at all! This is comparable to that from Descent Moon Court!"

There were no added condiments to this bowl of fish soup. Instead, it had the essence of the fresh fish and was completely natural.

Yu Feishui witnessed this scene and was extremely pleased. "If senior is satisfied, why not stay for a few more days. The Golden Dragon Sect will serve you well..."

"That's alright, We all have our stuff to attend to, so why delay?"

Fang Yuan shook his head. "After a few days, I will visit your sect. Goodbye!"

Without further ado, he leapt on the Iron-tailed Black Eagle and soared into the sky.

"Grandpa..."

Yu Xiaohong looked at the eagle as it slowly became a black dot, and remained silent. Suddenly, she asked. "Could it be that senior doesn't like me?"

"Eh..."

Yu Feishui looked at her granddaughter. Other than admiration, he could see a hint of selfishness in her eyes and did not know what to do.

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Chapter 162: The Square

"As the Ecstasy Fog covers the lake, humans cannot enter, but the silver fishes can freely swim through it. This is obviously a dream master's Ecstasy Fog!"

As Old Yu and his granddaughter were deep in their thoughts, Fang Yuan sat on the Iron-tailed Black Eagle's back, full of anticipation.

With the treasure map, water map and the spiritual king fish's memories, there was no way he could not find it.

As the Iron-tailed Black Eagle flapped its wings, a large Ecstasy Fog appeared in front of Fang Yuan.

This was the Ecstasy Fog which the 'master' had placed once a year during the Drunken Moon Festival.

It was totally calm like a wall, which was rather weird for a fog.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle did not care one bit and dived straight into the fog.

“Sleep! Sleep!”

As he entered the Ecstasy Fog, Fang Yuan’s consciousness began to waver. His eyelids became heavy, like a thousand tons of additional weight.

“It is indeed a dream master’s Ecstasy Fog!”

This scene only reaffirmed his guess that the ancestor of the Five Ghosts Sect was a dream master who escaped from the Da Qian empire!

“Meditative Ceremony!”

Fang Yuan cleared his thoughts and recited Master Wenxin’s Meditative Ceremony scripture. In his mind palace, dream elemental energy flowed throughout his entire body and momentarily took on a strange shape. This caused his consciousness to become extremely clear.

“A fog of such strength, I’m afraid that even Wu Zongs will not be able to awaken...”

Fang Yuan became serious. “If not for my Meditative Tea Ceremony, or my cultivation as a dream master, I might be trapped as well!”

At this point, he was fearless.

Following the strong winds, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle broke through the fog wall, and an island full of greenery appeared in front of him.

“This spiritual king fish’s memories point to this place too!”

Fang Yuan squinted his eyes and arrived on the island. He jumped down from the eagle and leapt straight into the water.

“Splash!”

There was the sound of water splashing and there were bubbles all around him.

The world underneath the lake was weird. There was a weird glow, but Fang Yuan ignored it and followed the spiritual king fish’s memories as he searched for the cavern.

Not long later, a pitch-black cavern appeared in his vision.

“This is where the Wine Spring Source is... The spiritual king fish was only lucky to have stumbled upon this to become what it is now!”

As a Wu Zong, he had unthinkable abilities.

Fang Yuan could cleverly use his elemental force to take a quick breath at the bottom of the lake.

He took out a Bright Moon Pearl, which illuminated the water beneath the surface. As there was nothing much, he continued swimming deeper.

The wine fragrance surrounding him became stronger and stronger. As he entered the cavern, the feeling of being intoxicated became increasingly stronger.

“With the spiritual king fish here, other animals would be chased away. After all, why would it let any other animal become like it?”

Fang Yuan entered the cavern and arrived at the bottommost part of it.

There was seaweed all over the rock walls, and the wine fragrance was getting stronger.

If a normal person were to enter this place, he would be intoxicated to death!

“There is indeed a Wine Spring Source!”

Fang Yuan turned his head and looked at a hole in the wall.

The immense wine fragrance originated from the hole, bringing with it a hint of spiritual energy.

“No wonder the spiritual king fish can grow to such a state!”

Fang Yuan was not shocked at all; instead, he was pleased. “Come... out!”

As he spoke, his elemental force was released like a web and it entered the hole.

“Rumble! Rumble!”

Large amounts of wine flowed out from the Spring Eye, as though it was free of charge.

Fang Yuan’s expression remained, as he strengthened his elemental force.

From the spring, a burst of spiritual energy shot out. It was intense and was comparable to that at the Green Peak spiritual land.

At this moment, a grey stone rolled out of the hole. On the surface, it seemed to be covered in moss and algae, but it was still indeed the source of the spiritual energy.

This stone resembled the shape of a wine pot. It was round in the middle, and the spout was thin and long. There was an unending flow of wine coming from the spout.

“Wine Spring Source?”

As Fang Yuan observed, he was dumbfounded and had no other suspicions.

He stretched his right arm and picked up the stone wine pot. His expression changed. “This is really a wine pot... spiritual treasure?”

Rumour had it that among the spiritual knights, there was an equipment forging branch that could create unimaginable spiritual equipment.

However, as compared to normal equipment forging masters, the talismans and magical equipment that spiritual knights made after experimenting on their own were dispensable and trash.

“Bottomless wine pot? What a good spiritual treasure!”

Fang Yuan exclaimed and exerted a force from his hand. The rock shattered into pieces and fell to the ground, revealing the actual form of the spiritual pot.

The pot was neither made of gold nor jade. It had a black exterior, and there was a fine line at the mouth, with a pot cover next to it. When the pot was opened and tipped to one side, spiritual wine began to flow out of it.

“Good treasure, what a good treasure!”

Fang Yuan placed the cover on the mouth of the pot, and the wine stopped flowing out. The wine fragrance slowly dissipated.

“It seems like this wine pot was not deliberately placed here, but an abandoned spiritual treasure. Who would’ve thought that it could have such power...”

Fang Yuan’s eyes grew, and his fear for that dream master grew as well.

Just by possessing this spiritual treasure, this mysterious ‘master’ might not be any less affluent than Master Wenxin.

Furthermore, his traces were mysterious and he was likely to be immortal.

If he wanted to forcefully take it, he could not know what would happen to him.

“Splash!”

In the fog, a splash appeared on the surface of the lake. Fang Yuan’s silhouette appeared, and with one leap, he arrived at the shore of the island.

He circulated his elemental energy as the water on him started to evaporate.

In the smoke, his clothes began to dry up, as he started to feel comfortable.

Fang Yuan opened the pot cover and drank a mouthful of spiritual wine.

“Whoosh!”

A fiery stream of wine entered through his throat and swirled in his stomach. All his acupoints were relaxed and the pleasure could not be described with words.

“There is more that the wine can do!”

There was no need for any explanation. Its concentration was more than 10 times the normal water.

It only took a mouth for Fang Yuan to enter a trance. As his elemental force shook, he was awoken.

“Good wine, this is good stuff!”

As he praised the wine, he looked at the island.

The island was not a big one, but it was filled with greenery. He could feel a lot of energy signatures from the vegetation, which meant that there were not normal plants.

If not for the lack of spiritual energy, Fang Yuan would have guessed that this was another piece of spiritual land.

“The treasure map and the spiritual king fish’s memories all point to this place!”

Fang Yuan sighed and walked into the dense vegetation with no regrets.

“Ssss!”

The forest was creepy as there were weird noises coming from everywhere.

Fang Yuan walked through the forest and suddenly, he saw a large green snake coiled up on the ground. It was breathing in the fog, as though it had the wisdom of a human!

“Get lost!”

This snake was comparable to a [Martial Artist (12th Gate)], but Fang Yuan squinted his eyes and exerted his energy from his body.

“Sssss!”

The green snake wanted to retaliate and adopted a defensive stance. However, as it detected a large amount of energy from its adversary, it retreated, turned around and fled, as though if it was one step slower it would have been killed by the force behind it.

“Mmm, you’re quite smart!”

Fang Yuan did not hide anymore, as his energy level shot up!

Why was his cultivation level so high now?

He was not just a martial artist in the Elemental Gathering Realm, but a dream master as well!

By adding up both of these, it was not as simple as adding their cultivations.

In a moment, a fearsome energy field spread across the entire island. As the large spiritual beasts detected the energy spreading throughout the entire island, they could only scramble and look for a hiding spot.

Those weaker ones could only kneel down and surrender to the strong energy.

“Haha... I am the master!”

As he laughed, he trotted through the island.

With his threat, the other beasts would not dare to do anything to him.

“This island...”

After close observation, Fang Yuan had a shocking discovery. “I’m afraid that someone had already done something to separate this place from the real world. Only during the Drunken Moon Festival would this place appear and be accessible. On other days, even if the whole world was searched thoroughly, this place could never be found!”

As he thought about it, the mysterious dream master became increasingly scary.

Fang Yuan bit his lips and arrived in the middle of the island.

There were obvious signs of human interference here. The mountainous ridges suddenly disappeared, as though someone had chopped it off.

On top of where the original mountain ridges should have been, there was a gigantic square laid out in white jade. It had an unimaginable width and there were many carved statues around. Every stroke of the statue was unbelievably real.

Among all these carvings were people, birds, and animals. Their eyeballs were made out of black precious gems, which made them look extremely real, as though they could come alive the next moment.

“Mmm?”

Arriving here, Fang Yuan felt that something in his robes felt extremely hot.

As he took it out, he realised that it was the treasure map of the Five Ghosts Sect!

As this point in time, the treasure map was smoking, and the red marking became a brilliant red with a mild glow.

“No risks, no rewards. Furthermore, it is just a piece of inheritance... Since he had already made up his mind to pass it to the future generations, he must have hoped that someone would inherit it, and therefore it should not be too dangerous!”

Fang Yuan calmed himself down and followed the instructions on the treasure map as he arrived in the middle of the square.

There were 49 statues carved in white jade, and on every one of them, there was some sort of energy holding them down. It was mysterious and seemed like a certain formation.

Fang Yuan based on the instructions on the treasure map, triggered the mechanism and went to the middle of the square.

“If there is a real treasure, it would be here!”

He opened up his treasure map and stared at the shining marks on it, speechless.

“Wuwu!”

Outside, the many statue carvings started to make a synchronised noise.

The treasure map in his hands burnt up, in what seemed to be a response to the noise.

Suddenly, a glow appeared in the middle of the square, straight into Fang Yuan’s forehead.

He froze at his spot as his eyes were filled with colours, as he entered a weird dream.

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Chapter 163: Two Worlds

Chapter 163: Two Worlds

It was early autumn, the morning breeze was chilly.

Many youths were gathered on the training ground. They wore simple clothing and were well built. Their faces were flushed and they had a fiery look in their eyes.

In front of them, an eagle-eyed tall instructor was in the midst of lecturing.

“The Yang Family was able to have a position in the Da Qian due to our martial arts and spiritual techniques. Those from the Yang Family would need to undergo tests and train their martial arts skills since they were eight... all of you were less gifted and veered from the paths of cultivation. However, you all can still hone your martial arts! As long as you have broken through the 12 Golden Locks and rise to become a Wu Zong, there is still hope!”

“Of course, being a Wu Zong is not easy. If you are successful, you can minimally become a clan elder and improve the standing of your clan. You will not have anything to worry about!”

The Yang Family was a large clan with strict rules.

The family members were treated very differently depending on their status.

The youths’ eyes shone and they stood up straight when they heard that such a path was open for them.

The instructor looked at this scene but secretly sighed to himself. ‘I should at least give them some hope!’

It was extremely difficult to undergo cultivation. In his eyes, only a few of the youths standing in front of him would reach the 4 Heavenly Gates. As for being the clan’s deacon, it was already impossible for them.

‘How are they able to break through the Gates without the resources?’

The instructor was also a member of the Yang Family. After many years, his mind had become clear.

No matter how gifted or talented one is, without the proper guidance and the resources, one would still achieve nothing. He did not understand this when he was young and had slogged away half his life without being able to break through the 9th Gate. When he was finally accepted into the family of the eldest son, he received a ‘Limit Breaker Pill’ which enabled him to concentrate his Yin energy and become the instructor of the family clan. Every month, he would have spiritual food. His days were finally becoming better.

‘My hardship today is nothing. The quality food I received can be used to give to my beloved son so that he would have a strong foundation and would not have to walk down the same path as me...’

‘Speaking of which, even the life of a member of the eldest son’s family might not necessarily be smooth-sailing!’

The instructor looked towards the side of the training ground where a thin and weak youth was standing. The youth looked envious.

The instructor sighed before raising his voice, “I will be teaching you the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique today. This technique possesses a strong foundation and dense inner power. When one breaks through the Pain Gate, it will strengthen his inner power beyond ordinary levels. After breaking

through to Wu Zong, he would be able to harness Giant Spiritual Strength. It is a first grade technique in Da Qian! This opportunity is hard to come by! All of you should cherish it!"

"Understood!"

The youths shouted. Even their voices were full of vigour.

Outside the training ground, the youth witnessed the scene and clenched his fists.

His name was Yang Fan. He was also a member of the eldest son's branch of Yang Family. It was a shame that he was a b*astard child.

For the Yang Family clan, the first wife and the concubines were treated very differently. The children of the first wife were adored and nurtured to take over the family career and lead a luxurious life.

As for the children of the concubines, they had to see if their father was fond of them. If the maternal side of the family was strong and influential, they would be unfortunate as their lives would be made difficult by their maternal side of the family and at the same time, received no love from the father.

It was unfortunate but Yang Fan had experienced such ill-treatment.

His father was not fond of him and his mother's side of the family made things difficult for him. Even his servant dared to bully him.

When he was 8 and had to take the aptitude test, he was given the wrong timing and missed the test. This caused his father to become enraged. From then on, he was not able to train his martial arts and could only study.

In the Da Qian Empire, those who do well in their studies can become officials. For a commoner, it was not a bad pathway. However, in the Yang Family, without the ability to protect himself, how could he fend off the outsiders?

"I must become outstanding!"

Yang Fan clenched his fists. 'If there is no one to teach me spiritual techniques, I will train my martial arts! Every clan has their own rules. I am also a member of the Yang Family and it makes no sense for me not to learn the moves. The only problem would be that I would not have the resources and the food!'

Practising martial arts consumed a lot of energy. As such, the disciples of the clan would receive a generous portion of money to buy meat and tonic to nourish their bodies.

In addition, those who ranked the top few would be rewarded with spiritual rice every month.

If they were spiritual disciples, alchemy disciples or dream disciples, they would be treated better and would be provided with spiritual food every day.

It was a pity that he hardly see meat on the table. Spiritual food and wine for nourishment were out of the question.

"The Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique focus on the foundation. Consume more food every day to strengthen the body and the blood! After you all go home today, eat more meat. Spiritual meat is even better! Of course, eating the spiritual pill is a must..."

On the training ground, the instructor's words flowed without stopping.

At this moment, even the youths on the training ground could only laugh bitterly.

They would be able to consume spiritual rice and meat every day for a while if their families become more prudent. But consuming a spiritual pill every day?

Only a member of the eldest son's family would be able to have that thought.

The instructor sighed as he looked on.

Even if one was a genius, it would be because he had a lot of resources.

The second young master of the eldest branch of the family Yang Hu was born gifted. When he was just 100 days old, he was given a 'Tiger Meridian Giant Spiritual Pill' which gave him a strong foundation. There was no question that his inner power was unbelievable as a Martial Artist (8th Gate). He had once defeated 10 martial artists of the Yin and Yang Gates, and after that took on a martial artist (11th gate) without signs of fatigue. He was known as the number 1 martial artist of the younger generation of the Yang Family.

However, he was not truly number 1 in ranking as there were still cultivators!

The eldest young master of the eldest branch of the family and the third missy were extremely gifted. They had already broken through the spiritual disciple realm when they were 15 to 16 years old. This was especially so for the young master who was rumoured to attack a spiritual knight and was on the verge of reaching the status of a spiritual knight!

'The eldest branch of the family produced many talents. As compared to them, the fourth young master is very common...no, insignificant....since I have chosen to be with them, I should be loyal, this Yang Fan...'

The instructor glanced at Yang Fan and saw that he had not left. He gave a sigh. He purposely raised his voice and explained the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique much more meticulously than before.

'Hmmm? He does not have good intention!?'

If he was an ordinary youth, he would think that the instructor was sincerely imparting the knowledge and would feel grateful.

However, Yang Fan did not know why, but he was more sensitive to the moods of people as compared to other people and could tell that the instructor was harbouring some ill-intent. It was as if Yang Fan could hear the voice in his heart.

'Practicing of martial arts require resources! If I rashly practice, I would only harm my body! Furthermore...while the clan does not prohibit people from practising, my father only allowed me to study. What if he realized that I was secretly training? I am afraid that I will receive another beating!'

Yang Fan turned and left the training ground after he thought about it.

"Hmmm? This is strange!"

The instructor lowered his voice and smirked as he saw Yang Fan left.

So what if there were consequences? He just wanted to show that he was loyal!

...

Yang Fan returned to his room. He looked at the bleak walls and laughed bitterly.

His other brothers had their own yards and servants to tend to them even though they were b*astard children as well. As for him, he even had to make his own curtains.

"At least my fifth and sixth brother knew who their mother was, but me..."

Yang Fan was silent.

While his two younger brothers were born to a servant, the servant was promoted and became a concubine of his father.

As for his own mother, she was...missing!

Truth be told, it was a very odd and disgraceful matter, especially for his father who was the eldest son of the family.

It was precisely because of this that he received no love from his relatives. If not for the ranking, no one would realise that the eldest branch of the family had a fourth young master.

The run downed room was cold as there was nothing to block the autumn breeze.

Yang Fan flipped open the book on the table and glanced at it before closing it and sighed, "6 years of studying. It would be great if I can take the exams and become an official after 3 years. Maybe I would be able to achieve some glory and help with the family affairs. I would marry a virtuous wife and just like that, half my life would pass...but I am not willing!"

He was angry and his eyes flashed. "Why is it that we are all part of the Yang family but are treated so differently? When I was young, I was even bullied by the servants and when I grow up, I would have to beg my brothers and mother[1]. What kind of joke is this?"

"I want to practice martial arts, I want to undergo cultivation. One day, I will overpower the Yang Family, question my father why I was treated like this and find out my mother's location!"

In the run-downed house, the youth clenched his fists with a determined look.

Bang!

At this moment, the door was pushed open and a lady walked in.

This lady was around 40 years old. She was elegant and wore a lot of jewellery. Next to her stood a large servant who was carrying a blue-eyed Golden Silk Cat. The material of the clothes she wore was much better than Yang Fan's.

"I have met Mother before!"

Yang Fan's heart dropped as he bowed.

This lady was his father's rightful wife, Lady Wang, who had given birth to 2 boys and 1 girl. Her position in the house was firm and she grasped the power to execute people.

"You unfilial son, what have you done today? Do dare to not listen to your father's teaching? Hmm?"

Lady Wang said with a murderous aura.

Yang Fan quivered. It was as if he saw the silhouette of the instructor and could only admit, "I was walking past the training ground where I stopped for a while out of curiosity. Please forgive me, mother!"

"Very well, you admit? Housekeeper, give him 10 whips as a warning to the others!"

After Lady Wang gave the order, she turned around to walk out of the door.

She could deal with this b*astard child with just a word.

Behind her, the sound of the leather whip rang, leaving a bloody wound on Yang Fan's back.

In the midst of fiery pain, his magical will started to return. 'This must be avenged...wait a minute, who am I? Why am I here?'

With this thought, he had a sudden realization. "I am not Yang Fan, I am Fang Yuan!"

[1]He is not referring to the person that give birth to him but his father's first wife.

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 164: Bastard

"Fourth Master, know your place!"

After the housekeeper and servants punished him, they walked away proudly.

Fang Yuan laid on the bed; his mind was messed up.

After a long while, his true 'self' finally awoken, and retained all of Yang Fan's memories.

"Sss..."

As he flipped around, his back was burning from the wounds, making him take in a deep breath as he almost blurted out vulgarities.

"Getting spanked just after being lucid, what luck..."

Fang Yuan shook his head and was rather appreciative. "If not for this spanking, I don't know when I would become lucid as well, so it may very well be good luck too..."

He scanned his surroundings and gathered his consciousness. "Is this the test left behind by the Five Ghosts Sect ancestor?"

"Dream Building!"

To a dream master, it was a basic skill to be able to change a dream world.

However, as Fang Yuan tried, he was left in shock. "What's wrong?"

As he realised, he took too long to awaken from this dream world.

"I cannot use my dream master abilities! Could it be because the dream master of this dream world has a higher cultivation level than me?"

Fang Yuan looked around. "Then what is the difference between this dream world and the real world?"

The happenings in this dream world were vastly different from the dream worlds Fang Yuan had.

The most important thing was that it felt extremely real!

"I am afraid that the laws of this world are the same as that of reality!"

He became serious, as he knew what this meant.

"To transform a dream world into reality, he must be at least in the Prominent Divine Stage! Did he leave this dream world here as a test?"

Fang Yuan started to think deeper.

This dream world was too real. If he were to remain trapped in here, the consequences would be dire.

If he wanted to leave this dream, how could he do it?

"To leave a dream world, there are two ways aside from dying; to follow the flow or to oppose the flow. This is not my dream world, so death is not an option! As for 'opposing the flow', it would be to forcefully take control of the whole dream world which will allow me to come and go as I please. However, my cultivation is not as strong as this dream master's, so this is not viable!"

"That leaves me with the option of 'going with the flow'! The main idea is to be open-minded and accomplish some wish of the dream's owner... From my analysis of the surroundings, it seems that it is probably something like gaining power and seeking revenge..."

After lying down flat for a while, and as the wounds on his back stabilised, Fang Yuan got to his feet, walked to the study table and opened a book at random. "Computing?"

From his retained memories, the Da Qian empire based itself on martial arts. Even if it were literature examinations, there would not be much discussion about it. On the other hand, they were more biased to practical skills, calculations, geography, livelihood, and these were a must-test.

The dream owner studied hard for the Imperial Examination, and now Fang Yuan felt that he was rather confident in passing and becoming a clerk.

This Imperial Examination was for the recruitment of clerks. There was no such thing as becoming an official straight away. Everything had to start small!

"This is the Da Qian Empire... Even their systems are much more advanced than Xia Country's....."

Thinking about Xia, Zhu and the other countries, or the clans, factions or sects that fight with each other, Fang Yuan rolled his eyes.

"This might be the real memory of that Five Ghosts Sect ancestor, which will help me a lot!"

Fang Yuan thought about other things.

He wanted to visit the Da Qian Empire. However, he had not taken over the unlucky Yang Fan's memories, and there were not many problems with the written language or the spoken language.

Furthermore, the information this young man was receiving was rather complete, which would allow him to have a more intuitive understanding of the Da Qian Empire.

"Also, this real dream world shall be a role model for me to follow!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered as he observed the arrangement of the surroundings.

In order for a dream master to attain the Prominent Divine Stage, they would first have to learn how to make things real.

To be able to influence objects with his mind, influence reality with his consciousness, and transfer objects from the dream world into the real world, the first step was for him to adjust his personal dream world to make it as though it was a real world, where the same laws were applicable.

This dream world was a benchmark he could follow.

"Even if there is no treasure, this is still worth it! Of course... it would be better without the other two weaknesses...."

He took in a deep breath.

It was extremely dangerous to explore the dream world.

The death in the dream would endanger the life of the real body! Secondly, being trapped and unable to escape the dream would let the real body die of hunger!

"The past few dream worlds were from my consciousness, therefore 10,000 years could pass by without much time lost. But now in this world, since it is very real, the rate of time flow is exactly same as in reality!"

Fang Yuan became serious. "In reality, my body is within the Ecstasy Fog, and I am still under the protection of the square, so I should be fine. However, if I am trapped here, my real body might die of hunger... In terms of time, I only have 1 month! 30 days!"

He had already broken through to the realm of elemental force and had unthinkable abilities.

As his body was filled with elemental force, he would unknowingly take in nutrients from the outside world. Within 30 days, he would not die of thirst or hunger.

"But this is my limit. I need to achieve the objective in 30 days, right? Most importantly is that I don't even know the objective, and have to find out by myself..."

Fang Yuan pointed a middle finger towards space. "Really... This is such a weird treasure?"

...

Although the whip seemed to be extremely painful from the outside, he did not sustain many internal injuries.

After all, Yang Fan did not make any grave mistakes for them to use as an excuse to beat him up.

In the run-down room, Fang Yuan flipped a book describing the Da Qian Empire. As he concentrated, he found a map from within, which was like a treasure to him.

After a long while, he placed the book down, rubbed his eyes and laughed. "This body... is too weak! He doesn't even have inner power! He is the most normal person!"

Without a doubt, this difficulty level was as though he was put through hell.

"To train in martial arts, I have my Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique, and the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique. However, I am lacking in time and even more lacking in resources! In fact, the lack of resources is a more pressing problem!"

Fang Yuan touched his chin. "The only way is to cultivate spells!"

It was not easy to learn!

If he wanted to learn martial arts, Yang Fan could observe at the martial arts centre, but to learn to be a spiritual knight, it was impossible!

But this was Fang Yuan, not Yang Fan!

He already had two paths of spiritual knights to choose from! Why would he need to secretly observe others?

"Furthermore, this is most suitable for me!"

The path of a spiritual knight was straightforward. There were only two gates. After breaking through to become a spiritual disciple, the next step would be a huge one!

Otherwise, if he tried to train in martial arts, could he break through 13 Gates to Wu Zong in just one month? Even Fang Yuan was not that crazy!

"Furthermore, to the Yang Family, although a Wu Zong might be impressive, that's it!"

Only until now did Fang Yuan realise the scale of the Da Qian Empire.

Just a Yang Family, nothing much to the Da Qian Empire and yet they could produce 8 Wu Zongs in their line of heritage, with three more spiritual knights. Who knew what else they would have.

Even so, there were only considered impressive in their county, but still did not have the ability to become tyrannical!

"Becoming Wu Zong would only mean that you had the right to speak in the Yang Family, but still could not help Yang Fan achieve what he wanted to!"

Fang Yuan was rather confident that Yang Fan was likely to be the mysterious ancestor of the Five Ghosts Sect.

And he had entered his real memories!

"I cannot learn the Blood Demon's Technique. Let's go back to the old path of a dream master!"

It only took him awhile for him to be decided on his path.

After all, he was most familiar with the path of a dream master, and it placed emphasis on the 'mind'. This path was as mysterious as it could be, and if he had enough experience, it would be rather simple to break through.

"Since Yang Fan became a Prominent Divine Stage dream master in the future, he must have the potential to become a dream master, otherwise how could he become successful just by secretly learning martial arts? The probability of training the wrong way and harming himself would be much greater!"

"Of course, the most important thing right now is to move out of this place!"

Fang Yuan bit his lip.

This Yang Family was a big jail in itself!

With such a large number of strong martial artists, the constant surveillance from his mother, and the many loyal servants!

In this lawful society, they could use many underhand means to deal with him, and he might not even be able to retaliate, otherwise, he would be labelled as an 'unfilial son', making the death sentence applicable!

"I have considered this before deciding not to learn martial arts. The cultivation of a dream master is the one hardest to detect. I'm just afraid that there might be a high-level cultivator within the family that can detect my cultivation... Therefore, it is a must to shift out, and the best excuse would be the examinations... It's coming half a month later?"

As a bastard child, he was pressured everywhere in the household and had no say.

The only solution was to use the name of the Imperial Court to get out of the place, but other than that, he had to depend on himself.

"Fourth Master!"

Suddenly the doors were opened and a servant entered carrying a tray of food. With much disrespect, she said. "Mother has instructed for you to be confined here and reflect about your wrongdoings. Supper is here!"

She took out two dishes of vegetables and a bowl of unshelled rice.

"Reflect about my wrongdoings?"

Fang Yuan frowned, then smiled. "I know, I will reflect on my behaviour. Please assure my mother!"

The servant was shocked.

Based on her impression, this young kid would likely throw a tantrum, and by then she would have her means to deal with him. Never would she have thought that he would accept fate and not be worked up.

“That’s good!”

The servant felt that the Fourth Master suddenly became very mysterious. Left speechless, she carried the tray and walked out.

Fang Yuan rubbed his tummy and started digging in.

Although it was in a dream, his body could still experience hunger, fatigue, get injured, bleed or even die!

What was the difference between this dream world and reality then?

Although the rice was hard and the vegetables were tasteless, Fang Yuan was satisfied and cleared the entire bowl.

“I’m lucky that there’s vegetable this time round. Next time, they might give me leftovers...”

He chuckled, made a mental note and looked at his mother’s room across. “Not letting me ace the examinations by confining me? Such hatred!”

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 165: Yang Hu

Back in the cottage.

Fang Yuan lay down and seemed to be taking a nap.

In fact, threads of energetic magical energy were gathering between his eyebrows and he was absorbing more energy from the surrounding. The magical energy was just like a dragon hiding in the deep canyon, ready to soar into the sky.

“Even though inner force can be removed and is temporary, the heart is always there! As long as I have the will, it will be forever!”

Fang Yuan got up and felt refreshed.

He already had the mindset of a dream master, and therefore it was not hard for him to overcome this huge step once more.

After all, the condition of his body was extraordinary. Yang Fan was an empath since young. He could know what others were thinking as his magical energy was extraordinary, to the point where it was scary!

Or maybe, since the rest knew about his abilities, they started to take notice of him and treat him badly out of fear.

“As long as I can absorb the elemental energy from the heavens and earth into my body and open up the area in between my eyebrows, mind palace, and sea of consciousness to gather elemental force, I will be able to break through to become a dream disciple.....but I’m not in a rush. Even though a dream disciple is an expert in concealment, there could be experts by Lady Wang’s side..... I should take one step at a time.”

He slowly trained his sea of consciousness and his mind was very clear. He even relived his past experiences and gained many more insights. Unknowingly, he had already reached the state of peace as stated in the Meditative Tea Ceremony by Master Wenxin.

Achieving peace in the soul would mean that he would be resolute in all difficulties.

This was his current state.

He already had the mindset of a dream master and was just a single thought away to achieving it.

“This is what a dream master can do.....After all, when a dream master accesses a dream, it is a gamble. No one can guarantee what will happen next, hence it is best to only follow their heart!”

With this information, his mind flickered. He directed the flow of elemental energy from heaven and earth towards his back, accelerating the healing of his injuries.

“The imperial examinations is the pressing issue now. Looks like Lady Wang wants to lock me up forever. No, not me! Yang Fan!How much hatred does she have with him?”

Even though the imperial examinations didn’t matter to Fang Yuan, that was the only excuse he could use to get out of here.

However, from the way it looked, Lady Wang wanted to lock him up forever. She wanted him to leave a normal life which he would not have any chance to become famous!

It had been 7 days since he was first locked up.

He had absorbed the elemental energy from heaven and earth and his injuries were almost healed.

“I have achieved the requirements of a dream master. The next step for me will be to form my dream elemental force and not the dream miniature elemental force!”

Fang Yuan touched his Mind Palace

The area in between his eyebrows was opened up, which meant that the preparations had been completed and now, all he needed was the opportunity to act.

“If Lady Wang wants to hurt me further, I will kill her and disappear. This seems like a good idea! However, how should I pass this dream world?”

Seeing the life of Yang Fan, the essence of breaking through seems to lie in the Yang family!

“Furthermore.....there is martial arts!”

As he spoke, his eyes were filled with excitement.

The Xia and Zhu Countries were separated from the rest of the world. Their knowledge was shallow and Wu Zong was the highest level in the world of martial arts for them. However, it was different in the Da Qian Empire!

After Wu Zong, one could explore even more realms and be on par with an Elemental Opening spiritual knight!

The Yang family's Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique was one of the possible techniques to do so!

"Probably... Yang Fan's inheritance is the existence of this dream world!"

With these new learning pointers, Fang Yuan was very happy.

This might be because he was a dream master and therefore the benefits he had gotten from this dream world could exceed his expectations.

"The final inheritance for a dream master will likely be the real dream world which he has gathered from his memories.....No matter what kind of techniques, treasures, experience or connections there are, all these can be passed down fully as an inheritance!"

Suddenly, Fang Yuan had a thought. "Maybe.....Was one of the inheritance that Master Wenxin had left for me one of the dream worlds that he had experienced? Hold on..."

He looked at this seemingly real world and realised that something was wrong.

"There is no difference between the real world and the dream world.....Such a seemingly real dream world filled with complex memories. If all these come together, will they combine? This is one of the risks in a dream world."

Accepting another set of memories might pollute him and even develop a new set of personality and character.

In the previous world he lived in, he would describe it as schizophrenia, but a dream master can leverage on this to experience a whole new life!

"An evil dream master might have a way to make it happen!"

Fang Yuan took note of that and started to sort out the new knowledge he had about martial arts.

"Even for a family that trains in martial arts, a martial arts instructor will only teach the contents of the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique for the 12 Gates. For the method on how to break through Wu Zong and the way to cultivate after Wu Zong, it is a secret and a bast*rd like Yang Fan will not know about it. Yang Hu, on the other hand, will probably know....."

"I have heard from some of the martial artists of the older generations that there are Wu Zongs who are on par with spiritual knights in the Elemental Opening Realm.....That realm is named.....Meridian Opening!"

His eyes were glittering.

The dream world of a dream master was the greatest treasure.

As Fang Yuan was attempting to fulfil the requirements of the dream world to break out of it, at the same time, he was digging out these treasures.

"Talking about fulfilling the requirement, Could Yang Fan have gone to Xia Country after exterminating the Yang family? If that was true, the difficulty level would be unimaginable....."

Fang Yuan shook his head. Even if he was at his peak level, he was of no match for an Elemental Breaking spiritual knight and a Meridian Opening martial artist.

“Yang Fan!!”

At that moment, there was a loud voice which irritated Fang Yuan’s ears, as though a tiger had just roared by the side of his ears.

“Kacha!”

The weak wooden door broke opened and a strong teenager barged in.

He had thick eyebrows and fierce-looking eyes. He had two yellow cheeks and his forehead seemed to have a few spiritual prints, which formed a character ‘王’. His moves brought about an amazing power like a tiger reincarnated into a human.

“It’s Second Brother!”

Fang Yuan, taking on the identity of Yang Fan, greeted him with his fist. “May I know the purpose of your visit?”

Lady Wang had 3 children, 2 boys and 1 girl. Fang Yuan had no business with them and dropped the formalities.

However, the essence of Yang Hu surprised Fang Yuan.

‘He is huge and has Tiger Bones. Rumours have it that he opened a Tiger Meridian too. Indeed, he is very impressive!’

At that moment, Fang Yuan could feel that Yang Hu’s inner strength was beyond normal, his body seemed to contain a furnace. Next to his heart, a spiritual pill was constantly pulsating and supplied spiritual force to his whole body.

“Good spiritual pill. Compared to this, Lu Renjia’s pills are trash....”

Fang Yuan thought, “With the help of the spiritual pill, if one was cultivating the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique which required strong foundations, one would even be able to defeat 4 Heavenly Gates martial artist even if one was just an 8th Gate martial artist!”

“Hmm?”

As he saw Fang Yuan, Yang Hu frowned and realised that his fourth brother was different.

Immediately, he became angry and said, “I have reports from my men that you disobeyed Father’s order and talked back to Mother? Is your mouth itching? Do you want to lie in bed for a month?”

“This matter.....was already 7 days ago....”

Fang Yuan was speechless at that point.

This teenager waited till now to reprimand him about this matter? This matter was already history. He was heartless, and there might be a possibility that he bothered about this as someone might have tried to fan the flames between them.

Fang Yuan squinted his eyes. He recalled from Yang Fan's memories that Yang Fan was once beaten by Yang Hu till he vomited blood, causing him to lie down on the bed for a month straight.

"So, you still dare to talk back to me?"

Yang Hu stared at Fang Yuan, grunted and went forward.

"Yang Hu!!!"

Fang Yuan took in a deep breath and shouted. "I was ordered by Mother to be locked up in solitary here. You have broken the rules since you broke in!"

"Plus, you are a martial artist and you dare to bully a normal person like me. Furthermore, we are brothers as well. Do you still want your reputation?"

Even though Fang Yuan spoke very fast, it was clear and impactful.

Yang Hu was startled and stopped moving. He hesitated to take action on Fang Yuan.

He was not afraid of anything in this world but he still considered the strict orders set by her mother.

"You....."

Yang Hu retreated to the entrance before starting to react. His face was flushed as he cracked the knuckles in his fingers.

"Second Master!"

At that moment, a person appeared and stood in the way of Yang Hu. "Fourth Master is right. Plus, you still need to go and greet Mother!"

'Yang Qing!'

Fang Yuan recognised the martial arts coach who talked endlessly on the training ground. He then squinted his eyes.

"Hmph, I shall let you go for now. I will come back and settle this once I'm done seeing Mother!"

Yang Hu said angrily and turned back.

"So sorry, Fourth Master!"

Yang Qing smiled and apologised. He seemed like a good old man. If Fang Yuan didn't know his true colours before this, he would probably be deceived by his honest look.

"Not your fault. It's just that my door...."

Fang Yuan pointed at the broken door and gave an innocent look.

"I will send people to fix this!"

Yang Qing became pale and unsettled as he hurriedly left.

.....

Inside the room, incense was burning and it gave out a spiritual aura.

Lady Wang took a few sips of the spiritual soup, and her golden nails were shining brightly. As she saw Yang Hu coming in, she frowned. "You went to look for Fourth Brother?"

"I heard that he disobeyed the house rules and so I went to look for him...."

Yang Hu was like a jerk on his own, but like a tamed cat in front of his mother.

"You have already matured, so why are you still being so calculative towards your brother? Don't you want your reputation?"

Lady Wang's eyebrows stood up as she started to scold Yang Hu.

"I was being anxious on behalf of you. Yang Fan was preparing for his imperial examinations. Should I go and break one of his arms...."

"Jerk!"

Lady Wang was really angry this time. "What do you take me as? Since Fourth Brother wants to prepare for his examinations, why should I be in his way? Chun Lan, please go and tell Yang Fan to study hard and prepare for his examinations. Also, send 10 taels of gold to him for his examination fees!"

"Yes, Lady Wang!"

One of the servants left. Yang Hu scratched his head and was confused.

"Little Hu, you can leave first. Ask Yang Qing to see me!"

Lady Wang stroked her golden cat and her eyes glittered.

"Fourth young master, the missus has already lifted your restraining order and have given you 10 gold taels to let you prepare for your exams!"

Chun Lan was around 16 or 17 years old and wore a red dress. When she smiled, two dimples could be seen.

"Help me convey my thanks to the missus!"

Fang Yuan accepted the gold and said indifferently.

"You...hmmmm!"

She stomped away angrily when she did not receive the response she expected.

"How cute...even though she is angry!"

Fang Yuan returned to the house and started to pack up his things. He smiled coldly.

When Yang Hu came looking for trouble, He purposely dragged Lady Wang into the picture.

No matter how hypocritical and evil the person was, she would maintain a kind front in front of the clan.

Lady Wang was not willing to bear the name as the person who purposely prevented the child from taking the imperial examinations.

After all, she had other methods that were more direct and efficient.

For example...generously giving him the money and wait for him to leave the Yang Family before purposely making things difficult for him or even kill him, creating a case with no lead!

"I would definitely die if I was still the weak youth!"

Fang Yuan's eyes were deep and he had an epiphany.

"Maybe Yang Fan never completed the imperial examinations. However, I must be successful and make a name for myself! It is a reasonable goal!"

Truth be told, this was a test to see where Yang Fan's desires lie.

Was it a success or was it revenge? Was it something else?

"I just do not know which rat will come."

After a while, Fang Yuan carried a small bundle and walked out of the Yang Family gate under the malicious gazes.

The Yang Family was located on the outskirts of the county and was half a day's journey away from the city where the imperial examinations were held.

There were carts pulled by donkeys available. However, Fang Yuan chose to walk. He walked slowly and arrived at a dense forest.

"How? Isn't it time to show yourself after following me for so long?"

Fang Yuan took a breath. He suddenly turned around and looked behind him.

"Fourth young master can actually detect me?"

A black shadow walked out. It was Yang Qing!

He had not changed his clothes. He walked out confidently in front of Fang Yuan, fists clenched. "Please forgive me, young master, I am only following orders!"

"You are here to kill me?"

Fang Yuan shook his head.

Yang Qing smiled and his expression grew dark. "How did you know?"

Fang Yuan replied, "Sigh, Lady Wang would be too kind if you are dressed as such to break my limbs. However, she is crazy and no medicine can save her!"

"It appears that the people in the residence have misunderstood you!"

Yang Qing nodded his head, "Fourth young master, you are as intelligent as the eldest young master and the third missy!"

He slowly moved forward, his palms had already started to gather yin energy.

He had already received orders from Lady Wang and must not fail his task!

Yang Qing became fervent after he remembered what Lady Wang had promised him.

‘There is not much hope for me left. However, this is for my beloved son.’

“It seems that you are sure that there is no one around to dare to act here!”

Fang Yuan looked towards Yang Qing.

“That’s right!”

Yang Qing appeared to be pleased with himself, “Even if you shout till you are hoarse, no one would come to your help!”

“Why do these words sound so familiar?”

Fang Yuan was speechless, “This can already be considered overconfidence?”

“Overconfidence?”

Yang Qing could not understand what Fang Yuan was talking about[1]. His face showed his desire to kill.

“Huff...”

Fang Yuan exhaled, “Whatever happens here would not attract the attention of the Yang Family.”

He touched the space between his brows. In that instant, clouds started to emerge in the surroundings!

Heavenly and earthly energy started to gather to form a spiritual whirlpool which enveloped him.

The spiritual energy in Da Qian was denser than that in Xia Country by a huge margin which caused Fang Yuan to take on a terrifying appearance as a dream master.

“Elemental Force is the force of the heavens and earth! What I have as the dream master is the Dream Elemental Force!”

In his mind, threads of energy from the heaven and earth converged and mixed with the magical energy to form a Dream Elemental Force embryo which once again transformed into a ball of mercury-like Dream Elemental Force.

In an instant, Fang Yuan transformed into a dream master!

Yang Qing could not believe his eyes after witnessing the transformation.

“Impossible!”

He collapsed onto the floor and soiled himself. “Even the young master had not become a spiritual knight...you, you are just a commoner! Yes, you are not Yang Fan but a demon who possessed him! You are dead, once you are discovered, you will be arrested!”

“Idiot!”

Fang Yuan looked at him and waved his left hand.

Huhu!

The Bewildering Fog started to move forward. Yang Qing, who was on the ground, rolled backwards and retreated.

“Oh? It appears that you were only putting on an act!”

His technique was good. While it was unsightly of him to roll around on the ground, his speed was fast as lightning.

If Fang Yuan had been complacent and walked up to him, he would have regretted it.

No matter how good Yang Qing’s lightness skill was, he was unable to outrun the fog.

Yang Qing gave a look of despair as the fog surrounded him before it was dispelled.

Fang Yuan walked forward and looked at Yang Qing who looked empty.

He lifted Yang Qing and used shadowsteps to arrive in the middle of the dense forest.

“Dream!”

After Fang Yuan found a cave, he took a deep breath, touched the space between Yang Qing’s eyebrows and used his ability.

“This is Yang Fan’s true dream world. As the rules of this world is the same as the real world, it means that the living things have consciousness and dream worlds...as such, I can enter their dreams as well! A dream within a dream!”

In that instant, many thoughts flowed into Fang Yuan.

Inside the cave, Fang Yuan’s real body was motionless as he delved into the mind of Yang Qing and looked for the information that he was interested in.

“It was really that vicious Lady Wang’s idea to send him here!”

“Even though he committed many crimes, he was extremely good to his only child. He only helped them so that his child could have a future...”

...

Fang Yuan looked through all his memories. One memory caught his eyes:

In the dream world, within a secret room, an elder spoke solemnly, “Yang Qing, you have broken through the 4 Heavenly Gates. Now it is time to impart to you the part of Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique that is relevant to the Wu Zongs. You must remember...”

...

Fang Yuan went through and remembered all the memories.

After a while, he opened his eyes and smiled. “It appears that after Wu Zong, there is another level, the Meridian Opening Realm!

He had really achieved a lot by entering the dream this time.

Experimenting with dreaming within a dream was only one of the small ideas that he had.

The big idea lied with Yang Qing's martial arts knowledge as well as memorizing them so that he would be able to use them next time!

"The most important stage for a Wu Zong is the Elemental Gathering Realm where they gather elemental force and give it form outside of one's body. In Xia Country and Wu Country, there are many Wu Zongs, including General Fei Long, who are stuck at this stage...In Da Qian, the spiritual knights have Elemental Opening Realm while the Wu Zongs have Meridian Opening Realm! This meridian is no common meridian. Rather, it is spiritual meridian! Since the path to cultivating martial arts had been destroyed, they used elemental force to train their spiritual meridian for cultivation! For every meridian that is opened, the Wu Zong would gain 1 elemental power level.

This 'Elemental Power Level 1' was a unique notion of the Da Qian Empire. It could be seen as the full power of a newly ascended Wu Zong!

"The Giant Spiritual Strength that a person gains after breaking through to Wu Zong using Yang Family's Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique is actually 1 elemental power level! Those who advanced to Wu Zong using the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique are twice as strong as a normal Wu Zong!"

"That is not all, this spiritual technique can help cultivate 8 spiritual meridians. Even in the Da Qian Empire, this is quite an impressive technique!

The better the technique, the more spiritual meridians that could be cultivated. In the end, you would be able to undergo 'body forging'!

Rumours had it was a change that is similar to being reborn for martial artists. Even the elders had only heard of it and had never witnessed it with their own eyes before.

There were sayings that the more spiritual meridians opened, the stronger the power of the Wu Zong. The divine body forged would also be more terrifying and comparable to the bodies of the deities and the demons!

"The Meridian Opening Realm for martial artists is similar to the Elemental Opening Realm for spiritual knights and the Illusionary Divine Stage of the Dream Master! No one knows what the corresponding cultivation level for Body Forging was either ..."

Fang Yuan had the feeling that regardless of the pathways to cultivation, the end would be extremely frightening.

"What a shame...Yang Qing's memory only had the Giant Spiritual Technique to open the spiritual meridian and did not have the portion of Cast Body!"

This was natural. The higher the level of the technique, the more secrets involved.

Fang Yuan predicted that the last stage of the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique was either known by the clan elders collectively or was only known by the clan master.

"If I want to try next time, and able to procure the whole manual, the price would be terrifying..."

Fang Yuan could not calculate what would happen if the manual was spread to the whole of Da Qian Empire.

"Of course, the most important thing now is that I have a direction for improvement for my martial arts!"

He looked at the unconscious Yang Qing and suddenly pressed him with his right hand.

Yang Qing jerked on the ground and stopped breathing shortly after.

"It is lucky that I left early. If not, I would miss the timing of the exams!"

Fang Yuan walked out of the cave and struck it once with his palm.

Huala!

A small amount of spiritual light appeared on his palm and seeped into the rocks.

Not long after, cracks started to appear. The entire wall crumbled and buried the cave.

Although he would not admit to what he had done, it was better to have lesser troubles.

Without the interference from Yang Qing, the remaining journey was smooth-sailing for Fang Yuan. He arrived at the county at noontime.

The golden rays of the sun fell onto the tall building and added a golden sheen to the walls of the building.

The gate opened and the passers-by bustled around.

"The patrols are mostly martial artists (6th gate) with inner power?"

Fang Yuan's eyes shone.

Just this point alone showed that this city surpassed his Secluded Mountain Prefecture.

[1] Fang Yuan was using a slang that was relevant to the real world and as such Yang Qing of the dream world was unable to comprehend what he was talking about.

[Carefree Path of Dreams](#)

Chapter 167: The Imperial Examinations

"Master, do you need a room to stay in?"

After entering the city, Fang Yuan recalled his way and went to a hotel.

The location of the hotel was a little remote and the sign of the hotel was a little old. However, it was very tidy on the inside and no speck of dust was found on any of the tables and chairs. The antique furniture also brought an ancient feeling to the whole atmosphere.

Of course, the most important thing was that the price for a room here was rather cheap.

As he entered, a humble lad welcomed him.

"Hmm, is the room upstairs available?"

"Yes, of course!"

The lad was smiling brightly.

Fang Yuan nodded his head and booked the room for 10 days. He paid a 3 days worth of rent as deposit. Meals were counted separately.

"You can order whatever you want. If our kitchen doesn't provide, I will be more than happy to get it for you from elsewhere!"

As Fang Yuan reached his room, the waiter told him.

The waiter realised that even though Fang Yuan was dressed normally, his aura was a little different from others. Hence, guessed that Fang Yuan was rich and was travelling on his own, and could, therefore, get tips from him.

"That will be unnecessary. What do you have in the kitchen?"

"You're in luck! Our kitchen has just received two big pieces of beef and a piece of mutton. Chicken and duck are already prepared by our chefs. We also have the Green Lotus Rice, a type of spiritual rice. Anyone who eats this will have a lasting fragrance of the rice in their mouth. It is one of the popular dish ordered here."

The waiter said everything at one go.

"Hmm, I shall have a plate of beef, two plates of vegetables and a bowl of the Green Lotus Rice!"

He didn't expect such a small hotel to be able to provide spiritual rice.

After a while, the waiter carried a tray out. The sauce from the plate of beef smelled delicious. There was a plate of stir-fried vegetables and a plate of mushrooms with sliced meat. Then, there was a bowl of green rice which filled the air with the fragrance of a lotus. "Your dishes are all here!"

"Hmm!"

Fang Yuan tipped the waiter and signalled the waiter to leave. He then started with the Green Lotus Rice.

This spiritual rice was fragrant and soft, but it was not sticking to his teeth. The fragrance of the lotus filled his whole mouth. Even though the spiritual force this rice provided was not as much as the Flame Jade Rice, it was comparable to the Vermillion Jade Rice. Since this hotel was so small, this was already considered good.

"Just that.....for a dream world, this feels so real!"

Fang Yuan ate another piece of beef and he was thinking about something else. "I'm easily addicted to this dream world."

After a long sigh, he thought about other stuff.

"Now, Lady Wang would have known that something is wrong. It will be hard to guarantee that she will not take any action. I should head to the government office to register myself for the examinations first, just in case!"

The government of the Da Qian empire was richer than the one in Xia Country.

Legend has it that the founder of this empire was so magical and was able to suppress everyone. Even in today, many capable leaders were holding important appointments in the government of the empire. Hence, many of the factions and the rich households still abide by the rules set by the government.

Previously, when Yang Fan had wanted to sign up for the examinations, he probably had the backing from the government officials to go against his family.

However, Fang Yuan wanted to score well in the examinations only because he wanted to find out the method to break through this dream world.

After coming to a conclusion, he left the hotel and went to the city.

The government office was located in the heart of the city. Two stone beast statues were placed at the south entrance. Their heads looked like a tiger's or a lion's, and the eyes of the statues seemed to be glowing. The statues seemed to be alive.

These beasts were called the 'Eye Beasts'. It was said that the eyes could differentiate between good and evil. Hence, the government loved to use these beasts to maintain order in the city.

As Fang Yuan passed by the beasts, he felt something different.

"Magical weapon?"

From the eyes of the statues, he could feel a spiritual spell being cast in them and gave a sigh. The government of Da Qian was indeed spending a lot of effort on such stuff.

"To register, I will have to submit my name, place of birth, appearance, family background and also to nominate another person for guarantee purposes in order to sit for the imperial examinations successfully.....Of course, I'm from the Yang family and there is an advantage for coming from a rich family. However, I will still have to pay for the examinations!"

As he entered through a small door with other scholars, Fang Yuan gave a cold look. He was already familiar with the registration process but inside, he was complaining about it. "If the government collects fees for every imperial examination back in the olden days, I'm afraid everyone would complain about it..."

When it was his turn, he filled up his surname, his signature and stamped his fingerprint. After making payments, he received a wooden board.

On the board, basic information about him was written on it, including his facial descriptions. He was given two copies of it, and the wooden board was used as an entry proof to the examination hall.

"I have heard that the rules set by the founder of the Da Qian Empire were unconventional and there are many complaints about these rules!"

After he left the government office, Fang Yuan rubbed the wooden board and his face was expressionless.

If this had happened in the olden days, where scholars were insulted with money, some of them would be very grief-stricken and would rather die.

However, this world was different!

Only with strength comes power. It would be strange to see a scholar overthrowing those people with the existence of powerful people like Wu Zongs and spiritual knights around.

If not for the existence of cultivation in some scholars, the scholars probably would not have any power.

"Sir, please stay where you are!"

Just when Fang Yuan was about to leave, a scholar dressed in green came over. "I'm Xiao Mu. Are you also preparing for this imperial examinations?"

"I'm Yang Fan!"

Fang Yuan greeted him but felt that the expression Xiao Mu was giving was a little strange.

Previously, Fang Yuan did not realise anything strange from him. Now, he could feel a slight dream elemental force from him, and it was in a form of a print.

That print meant that he was under scrutiny from some dream master, and no outsiders could meddle with it.

As Fang Yuan saw the print, he became a little fearful.

"He has piqued the interest of a dream master...."

Fang Yuan released a little of his magical energy and thought to himself. "His potential is great. He is more than capable to be a spiritual knight or an alchemy master, but he is just a few steps away from becoming a dream master. However, he does not seem like he is not looking for disciples, but rather, has an evil intent!"

Spiritual knights can have spiritual servants. Similarly, a dream master can have servants, especially through the usage of this type spiritual prints.

As Fang Yuan looked at Xiao Mu, Fang Yuan pitied him.

Xiao Mu's face was pale. He had panda eyes and eye bags, and it seems like he had not been sleeping well.

"So you are Brother Yang!"

Xiao Mu greeted him and continued, "I admire your good looks and I want to be friends with you...."

"Friend?"

Fang Yuan chuckled and said, "My focus now is to score well for this examinations and I would prefer to study without any disturbance. If you still have the intentions to make friends, mind if I suggest to gather with a few other friends once the examinations are over!"

"I'm sorry!"

Xiao Mu blushed and bowed apologetically. He wanted to know where Fang Yuan stayed.

However, Fang Yuan gave an unhappy expression and left.

"Hey Brother Fang....wait for me!"

Xiao Mu tried to catch up with him but was too physically weak to do so. After passing a street, he lost sight of Fang Yuan and gave a hopeless look.

Suddenly, he appeared to be in pain and started to touch his own neck. He then went to a small alley and his breathing became heavier and heavier.

"Phew....Phew....."

His face became distorted and veins were now visible on his face. While panting, he exclaimed.

"No.....Stop torturing me already.....That man! You felt it for yourself, that man! He will be able to satisfy your needs. Look for him, and leave me alone!"

His eyes became bloodshot. The most mysterious thing was that a green-headed ghost face appeared on what used to be his clear neck, like a tattoo!

.....

"That guy is a big problem for me!"

As Fang Yuan returned to the hotel, he recalled the weird feeling he had gotten from Xiao Mu and tensed up.

If it was any other person, he would have beaten the person till he was unconscious and entered his dream to find out more. However, Xiao Mu had a dream master's print, and he might have the resistance against dream masters. Hence, if Fang Yuan recklessly entered Xiao Mu's dream, he might walk straight into a trap and be fighting against the dream master who was behind this.

Only an idiot would look for trouble by making a new enemy.

Plus, he was here for the imperial examinations, and not this.

"This man is trouble and is going to be in the same examination room as me. Even if I can avoid him now, it will still be difficult for me to avoid him after the examination.....Alright, I shall entertain him after the examination!"

Fang Yuan yawned and opened his book.

The focus of the examinations was on real-world situations. Since he had 6 years of knowledge from Yang Fan and his own prior experience, he wasn't afraid of this examination.

The only thing he had to take note of was the notes and research beyond the examples of Da Qian. For that, he would have to revise one more time.

.....

Time passed quickly and it was the day of the examinations.

To be an official, one had to start off as a clerk first, and there were many levels for clerks. The highest level would be the supervisor, followed by an orderly, and lastly the service worker. There was a hierarchy to it.

Once one scored well in the examinations, one could directly take up the role of a supervisor. If everything goes well, one would be promoted to become an official of the government. By then, one would have the backing of the government and would be considered the same level as the politicians. With this protection and backing, it was indeed good to be an official of the government. This was why many scholars had come for this imperial examinations.

At the break of dawn, many scholars were already waiting outside the examination hall. Some were carrying lanterns and their writing materials. The richer ones had their servants by their side.

Fang Yuan easily found Xiao Mu with his sharp eyes.

Xiao Mu was in the middle of a crowd and was acting suspiciously. He kept looking around and seemed like he was looking for something.

'What a greedy person!'

Fang Yuan gave a cold laugh.

At that moment, Xiao Mu saw Fang Yuan and gave a happy face. He wanted to come over and to talk to him.

"Dong! Dong!"

Suddenly, along with the sounding of the gong, the door to the examination hall was opened. Two rows of soldiers then came out in an orderly fashion. "It's time. All scholars please enter the hall! Prohibited items are not allowed in this hall. Whoever gets caught will be given 50 strokes of the cane and banished far away from the city!"

"Whoosh!"

The many scholars filled up the entire hall in just a short period of time.

The seats were already allocated long ago, but these scholars still rushed into the hall as though they would lose out if they were the last to enter.

Among the crowd, Xiao Mu was pushed forcefully by the crowd into the examination hall as he smiled helplessly at Fang Yuan.

Fang Yuan thought to himself that whoever was friends with him would be unlucky for the rest of their life.

"There will be a physical check. All reading materials or anything related to the content of the examination is not allowed!"

At the entrance, there was a proper procedure for the physical check. However, the scholars were not checked by humans. Instead, the Eye Beasts were checking them like a demonic magic mirror. All scholars were instructed to pass by them and anyone who had evil intentions would be identified easily. Those identified would suffer all types of punishments, and it would be too late to regret.

"This is just a county level examinations and yet spiritual knights are deployed here to overlook the examinations?"

Fang Yuan became a little frightened.

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 168: Ghastly Head

In the middle of the examination grounds, there was a tall building.

There was a good view here; every student could be seen clearly.

An official with a spiritual bird sewn on his shirt smiled. "We have 3112 candidates today, which is a thirty percent more than the previous year, showing the education level of our county."

He was the governor of the county. The other two officials saw that the main official was in high spirits today, and were also rather happy.

However, there was a Daoist carrying a feather fan, looking at the examination grounds, unsettled.

"Daoist Fei Xiong, what's the matter?"

As the governor noticed, he began to worry. "Could it be a problem with the spiritual array on the Eye Beasts?"

The Eye Beasts were used to catch those who might cheat, but it was not without its loopholes.

"Nope!"

Daoist Fei Xiong returned to his position. In front of him, there was a small array set-up, with a few specimens of the Eye Beasts, as though they were alive as their eyes were glowing.

"The energy in the spiritual array is normal and had already picked out 32 candidates. Please be assured, there would be no chance of any of them slipping through!"

Daoist Fei Xiong promised.

"Very well!"

The governor sighed but did not detect the suspicion in Daoist Fei Xiong's eyes.

"The weird part is that the Eye Beasts' eyes flashed for a while just now, and was evident that a highly skilled person interfered with it. However, after scanning the entire examination ground, we could not find anything... Only one person is suspicious."

Daoist Fei Xiong stroked his beard, and a thought ran wild in his mind. "It seems that among these candidates, there is a mysterious one!"

With his spiritual techniques, his left eye flashed red and was no different from that of the Eye Beasts.

In front of him, a faint glow appeared and landed in front of the last registered candidate.

That candidate was pale and had weak knees. Who else could it be other than Xiao Mu?

...

In the examination grounds.

Every candidate was separated by a wooden partition and had a wooden table in front of them. It was extremely squeezey to even move about between the partitions.

Fang Yuan concentrated in his seat and snickered. "How dare you find trouble for me, I'll keep you busy!"

The spiritual array in the Eye Beasts could not detect him as they were tricked into taking him as a normal person.

Xiao Mu was not that lucky.

Although he also hid his spiritual energy, Fang Yuan's underhand means still exposed him.

As of now, he should be closely watched by the officials already.

With the fun of mischief, Fang Yuan happily opened the examination script and started to read through it.

Although this examination lasts only a day, there were many things being tested.

The first question was about Confucian studies.

It was just filling in the blanks. However, they did not test the Confucian classics. Instead, they tested astronomy, physical geography, and human geography.

This not only tested the candidates' experience, it also tested them on their knowledge of words and their mindfulness.

After all, the answer script was not allowed to have any cancellation or removal of markings and had high expectations for every candidate.

After the simplest Confucian studies, it was on mathematics. For the Da Qian empire to recruit clerks, they had to be proficient in mathematics and be familiar with all 8 volumes of 'Mathematical Studies'.

There were requirements to calculate area, volume and composites, making Fang Yuan think about his previous life.

Fortunately, Confucian studies were the foundation of Yang Fan, and he could answer them all.

As for the mathematical problems, with his high magical energy, his mental sums skills were impressive. Furthermore, he had learnt the basics of computing sums in his previous life, and could, therefore, answer any question that came his way.

After calculation and ensuring that he made no careless mistakes, he wrote down the answer.

Calligraphy was not Fang Yuan's forte, but with his impressive control of strength, every stroke of his was not the perfect calligraphic stroke, but it was distinct enough for one to understand.

As he understood the nature of examinations, how could Fang Yuan not know the importance of it?

They did not require a perfect handwriting; just a discernable one would do.

Unknowingly, half a day passed and it was noon.

He did not need to lift his head; the rustling sound beside him told him everything.

'Most of them are in the mathematical section now, but there are some who have yet to fill in the Confucian studies?'

Fang Yuan shook his head, placed his brush down to rest and drank two mouths of water.

"The mathematical portion also tested one's endurance. Without enough endurance, how can one last so long? I'm afraid they would vomit blood from extreme fatigue!"

As he was deep in his thoughts, there was a commotion East of him. Two soldiers carried out a candidate, whose clothes were stained with blood.

Both students beside Fang Yuan witnessed it and were lost for words.

Fang Yuan, on the other hand, did not care one bit and flipped open the last examination script.

It was on policy making and was a practical topic. The question posed was in the form of a case and required the candidate to base on the classic laws to make a judgement. It was very subjective and was a trap for most candidates.

If the candidate only knew to study from the books, he would be trapped in this question.

Without hesitation, Fang Yuan took up his brush and started to write.

Regardless of how uninformed he was on policy-making, he was still once a Prefecture Master and had the experience.

However, he needed to take note of the difference and not bring it laws which the Da Qian Empire did not have.

As he completed the examination, he still had two hours of time left.

Of course, Fang Yuan didn't wait any longer. He called for the official and handed in his script before arriving at the holding room to drink tea. After there were enough students in the holding room, the soldiers escorted the entire batch out.

"If nothing weird would happen, then I would be able to get it!"

Once he exited the examination grounds, Fang Yuan was brimming with confidence.

"And by then, I will know what this Yang Fan really wishes for..."

"Brother Yang!"

At one side, a pale candidate exclaimed with joy and arrived in front of Fang Yuan. "Who would've thought that Brother Fang had also completed the examinations! Why not go for a drink, my treat?"

"Sure!"

Seeing the skinny Xiao Mu, Fang Yuan nodded his head, and unknowingly took notice of his neck.

'Even though you might have the print of a dream master, coming up to me to seek your death? Or seek your death?'

Of course, Xiao Mu could not detect anything unusual.

Even when he was at the examination grounds and was detected by the officials, he thought that he did not cover himself up well enough. Now, he wanted Yang Fan to bear the brunt. He treated Fang Yuan like his father and pulled him to a restaurant, sat down and started to drink with him.

"Where did Brother Xiao come from? Could it be a Xiao Family in this county?"

Fang Yuan held the cup of wine, his face flushed.

"I'm not afraid to let you know, I am indeed a member of the Xiao Family, but my ancestor was a bastard, and so now we are just a normal family..."

At this point, Xiao Mu sighed and felt a little hatred in him.

"Come on, this wine is good stuff, let's have a few more cups!"

As he shared, he encouraged Fang Yuan to drink more wine. Fang Yuan drank a long and at last became drunk. He was then escorted back to his inn.

"Come... Brother Xiao, let's drink!"

Fang Yuan laid on his bed, full of alcohol. He mumbled a few sentences before going into deep sleep.

"Good chance!"

Xiao Mu's expression changed and did not appear drunk anymore.

He looked at Fang Yuan and twitched his facial muscles. Suddenly, he ripped his clothes apart, revealing a spiritual print on his neck, forming the shape of a green ghost head.

"See this? This is the person who is disturbing you!"

His words were filled with temptation, as though he was talking to a ghost. "Look for him! Don't disturb me! Go!"

Accompanying his voice, the tattoo on his neck started to glow and spin as though it had a life of its own. It was chuckling and slowed down.

"Good boy, go... look for him, don't bother me!"

Xiao Mu appeared crazy as he placed a hand on Fang Yuan. The tattoo slowly moved to his elbows, but soon remained stuck there.

"Go... go... why are you stopping? Why do you want to bother me?"

After countless attempts of encouraging it, Xiao Mu almost broke down. With a hint of sadness, he shouted. "Get lost! I have already found a scapegoat for you, so don't disturb me!"

"Jie jie!"

The laughter of the ghost was distinct in the quiet room.

Although it could not be deciphered, Xiao Mu seemed to have understood it. "You cannot do it... now? Do you need three nights of... contamination? Stay close... don't leave?"

"Pa!"

He clapped his hands. "Alright, I know what to do!"

Looking at Fang Yuan, he seemed rather unwilling but finally became cold-blooded. "Brother Yang, don't blame me! If you want to blame, blame it on the fact that we are the same type of people, and are harassed by this stupid thing!"

Xiao Mu had decided. He rushed down and was likely to be looking for the innkeeper to book a room.

On the bed, the originally drunk Fang Yuan opened his eyes. "This print... It's doesn't seem to be so simple..."

He acted weak to being Xiao Mu's guard down and reveal his true intentions.

However, his type of dream master print was very rarely seen. It was like a living thing, which confused Fang Yuan.

"From Xiao Mu's reaction, it seemed like he suffered a lot from the print, but it does not seem to be as simple as a dream master looking for a servant, could it be..."

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered.

...

After a few hours.

He faked to become sober and saw Xiao Mu as he arrived downstairs.

"Brother Yang, you're awake! I have specially asked the kitchen to prepare soup to sober you up!"

He was full of smiles, which was infectious. "After a good chat with you, I felt schooled in your knowledge of the world. How I wish I could learn from you day and night. I have shifted here to be your neighbour, and I hope you don't mind!"

"Since this is an inn, everyone here is a guest! You're thinking too much!"

Fang Yuan smiled. "It's a good thing I have nothing on this few days and have to wait in the city for the results of the examinations to be released. I was still wondering how I would spend my days!"

"If Brother Yang doesn't mind, I'm willing to treat you to a tour around the city!"

Xiao Mu was pleased, as the fog in his eyes grew bigger...

It was midnight and everyone was tired and resting.

"Coming!"

Fang Yuan extinguished his candle and crossed his legs on the bed. He noticed faint green Bewildering Fog coming from the room next to him and snickered. "I want to see what you are!"

He concentrated and waved his hands. A white Bewildering Fog appeared, blocking the green fog. He took a little of the green fog and wrapped it around his palms, like a green snake slithering around his fingers.

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 169: Ranking

"There is no doubt that this is the work of a Dream Master!"

The green fog appeared to be alive and twirled non-stop around Fang Yuan's finger. It tried to enter the space between his eyebrows.

However, the green fog would be blocked by a ray of light, which gave off an aura like the Five Fingers Mountain, every time it came close.

"That Xiao Mu should have been confused by the fog and as such, experiences nightmares every day. There could be other damages..."

Fang Yuan muttered, "What does that Dream Master want?"

He took a few steps forward and arrived beside the wall. He released his magical energy and broke through the green fog.

A hazy guestroom appeared before his eyes.

Although it was no different from this world, the room was filled with the dense green fog. On the bed, Xiao Mu's eyes were tightly shut and his eyeballs rolled about under his eyelids. He tightly gripped his blanket which was torn. He appeared to be tortured.

Around his neck, the green demonic tattoo became even more obvious and expanded to his chest. It looked as if it was about to leave his body.

"The more painful the nightmare Xiao Mu experiences, the more powerful and larger the tattoo becomes...it looks like..."

Fang Yuan moved his eyes.

At this moment, the void started to shack.

He was stunned. He looked at both his hands, "Dream-build!"

Threads of inner power appeared, they broke through the Death Gate and arrived at the 4 Heavenly Gates.

"I have recovered my Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 9)?"

Fang Yuan was pleased, "I have found...the gateway to Yang Fan's ideas!!!"

In order to leave the dream world of others, especially that of an evil dream master, suicide was out of question. On the other hand, unless his cultivation was higher than that of the said dream master, it would be futile as well.

The only way to escape was to 'obey'!

By complying with the subconscious mind of the original host of the dream, one would be able to exit the dream world!

"My dream-building ability had returned even though it was previously sealed. Does this show that I have reached the pivotal point?"

Fang Yuan looked at Xiao Mu who was still having nightmares.

"That's right...Yang Fan eventually becomes a Dream Master! Given his status in the family, how could he have a master to guide him? Unless it is an encounter by chance!"

"Unless.....could it be that his chanced encounter is here?"

With this thought, Fang Yuan, who had originally wanted to interfere, hesitated. After thinking, Fang Yuan left.

...

"Brother Yang, how did you sleep yesterday?"

The breakfast in the guesthouse was sumptuous. There were buns, cakes, biscuits etc. Fang Yuan took a bowl of porridge and slowly ate it.

Xiao Mu had dark circles under his eyes. He sat opposite and wanted to say something but hesitated. He could no longer take it and finally asked.

"Ah? Me?"

Fang Yuan was stunned. "Not bad, a night without dreams, why?"

"Nothing!"

Xiao Mu's face was contorted. Fear, sadness, jealousy...all kinds of emotions were mixed and could be seen on his face.

Fang Yuan gazed at Xiao Mu who flushed and hid back in his room after bidding Fang Yuan goodbye.

"Interesting! Really interesting!"

Fang Yuan thought as he looked at Xiao Mu.

This Dream Master's marking did not appear to be like those common markings. Rather, it appeared to have many secrets hidden within.

It was hard to tell whether it was a blessing or a curse for an ordinary person to receive it.

...

In the examination hall.

More than a dozen rooms were open. Countless invigilators were looking at the scripts in front of them meticulously.

As the Head Invigilator, the governor did not have much tasking. All he had to do was to supervise the evaluation of the scripts and come out with the rankings afterwards.

While the first and last in ranking may appear to have done equally well in their examinations with no difference in their scores, their backgrounds mattered and could affect their scoring. This was worth fighting for.

It was just that it was not so intense.

The governor was a product of doing well for the examinations and as such, he knew full well that the thin scripts could determine the status of the commoners and as such, dared not neglect his duty.

"Governor! The recommended script from Room B!"

An aide jogged forward and presented a script.

"Hmm?"

The governor took a look at the script and nodded his head. Without looking at the answer, the words looked nice and grand. There was just a small amount of cursive in the middle of the script that marred the neatness of the script which was a shame.

However, considering the young age of the student, it was hard to come by.

After reviewing the script, he was satisfied that there was no problem with the logic and the calculations in the script. The only issue was with the question that was subjective where the examiners would score him as they see fit. However, he would not receive a low score for it.

He could not help but remark, "Good...He would most likely be ranked first!"

He immediately ordered a person to retrieve a small knife and cut open the seal that was covering the name of the person who submitted the script. "Xiao Mu? Hmmm? He would be ranked 1st if nothing unexpected happens!"

"Xiao Mu!?"

Daoist Fei Xiong, who was originally sipping on his tea unhurriedly, asked, "Xiao Mu of the Xiao Family?"

"That's right!"

The governor nodded his head as he saw that the interest of the spiritual knight was piqued. He remembered something. "You once heavily monitored a student in the examination hall. Could it be the same person?"

"That's right...I did not notice anything strange!"

Daoist Fei Xiong shook his head slowly.

"This..."

The governor was suspicious and took the script aside.

Not discovering a problem does not mean that there was no problem. Being the top scorer would require some connections. However, his answers were too good and the governor did not want to penalize him.

"Governor, the recommended script from Room A!"

After a while, another aide came forward and held up a script.

"The examiner of Room A was Lord Peng right? He is well-known for being old-fashioned. It is no easy feat to be recommended by him. Let me see!"

The governor was very curious and opened the script.

"Hmm, the words are not bad, neat and tidy, and the style is grand. However, Xiao Mu's writing is slightly better..."

His first impression was that the script was not exceptional. He took a look at the script. There was nothing wrong with the first two pages, the reasoning was clear and easy to understand, with his very own style.

"Hmmm, not bad? This is really not bad!"

He read and read again. He could not help but praise it, "Good, an older and more experienced person might not be able to produce a better standard!"

"Oh?"

Daoist Fei Xiong was interested and came forward to take a look.

"This essay displayed maturity and the crucial thing is that the experience is rich. This is really unbelievable!"

The governor heaved a sigh and took out Xiao Mu's script.

By comparing the two scripts, the governor could see the difference in style. While Xiao Mu's words were good, it was lacking in character. It was just like a lone soldier who was great on his own. However, when met with a strict and impartial formation of troops who were common at best, the lone soldier would have to retreat.

"Which one do you think is better?"

Daoist Fei Xiong stroked his moustache. "Based on their scripts, I can tell that they are exceptional. I am interested in the two of them!"

"These talents are scouted by the imperial court, don't think about taking them in and teach them cultivation!"

The governor chided.

"How is it easy to find those talented in cultivation..."

Daoist Fei Xiong shook his head, "They had just accumulated good karma, now it's time to see their nature!"

A sign of curiosity flashed across his eyes.

He did not know who the script belonged to. However, he knew that Xiao Mu had a great aptitude.

He made up his mind to find out who the script belonged to.

"Haha...employing the young talents for the country is one of life's important task!"

The governor laughed and started to cut open the seal.

The two aides and even Daoist Fei Xiong leaned in to take a closer look.

...

Three days past in a flash.

Fang Yuan and Xiao Mu arrived at the examination hall and found a teahouse to rest in while waiting for the news.

"Brother Xiao is exceptional, you will definitely come first!"

Fang Yuan smiled and said as he saw that Xiao Mu was anxious.

Those that sat near them were also scholars and smiled with good intention when they heard him.

"I am indebted!"

Xiao Mu smiled. His smile looked worse than when he cried.

He was anxious, not because of the ranking of the examination but rather, because of Fang Yuan.

This was because, for the past few nights, he had intentionally tried to harm Fang Yuan to no avail. This caused him to feel suspicious and as such, he could not help but be unnatural around Fang Yuan.

"The results are out!"

After three blasts, the examination hall opened and a few aides came out, carrying the name list.

Numerous candidates surged forward and gathered at the wall.

"Haha...I made it!"

"It is lamentable that my hair had already turned grey when I finally had a chance to improve my social status..."

"I will come back after one year!"

Those that made it and those who did not, happiness, sadness, regrets and other types of emotions were mixed and felt by Fang Yuan.

"They are already so crazy even though this is not the true imperial examinations where those who made it will become officials. How would they react when they passed the actual imperial examinations?"

He sighed and look at the name list and saw that Xiao Mu was in second place. He immediately turned around and congratulated Xiao Mu, "Xiao Mu, congratulations!"

"Ah?"

Xiao Mu was stumped. His eyesight was not as good as Fang Yuan and did not realise that he not only passed but got second placing when his acquaintances came forward to congratulate him. He smiled and said, "I will treat all of you to tea!"

"Brother Xiao appears to be enjoying himself?"

Fang Yuan asked, "Why aren't you the first?"

"Brother Yang must be joking. A pass is a pass, no matter how high or low the score, everybody starts at the same place. What is the difference?"

Xiao Mu forced out a laugh, "Who is the candidate that got number 1?"

"He is right in front of you!"

A candidate nearby pushed Xiao Mu's shoulders and came forward. "It is Brother Yang Fan!"

"Oh? Is that so?"

In his heart, he was unwilling. However, he forced himself to congratulate Fang Yuan. "You are much more talented than me. It is only natural that you deserved it!"

He knew that Fang Yuan was better than him. However, when he thought of the mark that followed him like a parasite but let the person in front of him go, he was no longer able to suppress his bitter resentment.

'Why? Why is the person more talented than me, yet he did not have to suffer what I suffered, why are the heavens so unjust? Why is earth so unfair? Hate! Hate! Hate!'

Xiao Mu looked dark and a green light flashed across his eyes.

[Carefree Path of Dreams](#)

Chapter 170: Green Ghost

In the middle of the night.

In the inn, there was a warm light come from a lamp in Fang Yuan's room.

"Brother Yang, you're not asleep?"

A shadow covered his light, and his voice was sinister.

"I knew you'd come!"

Fang Yuan opened the door and invited Xiao Mu in.

Xiao Mu was shocked. He saw a pot of wine on the table and two other dishes. The most crucial was the two sets of cutlery and bowls, which meant that Fang Yuan was expecting someone.

"Have a seat!"

Fang Yuan took a seat himself and poured a cup of wine for Xiao Mu.

"Alright!"

He sat down and drank the cup. A taste of spiciness filled his mouth and up to his nose, and he felt as though he was reborn, with a tinge of anger.

"Do you know that I admire you?"

After a long while, Xiao Mu opened his mouth, with a tone of disappointment.

"Oh? Why is that?"

Fang Yuan toyed around with the cup in his hands, and he didn't know whether to laugh or not.

"You are smarter than me and luckier than me!"

Xiao Mu was reduced to tears. "Why... You have everything that I admire, and yet you don't need to be disturbed by this stupid thing!"

As he lamented, he ripped the shirt revealing his neck. A Ghost Head tattoo appeared, as though it was smiling. It had a dark green colour on half of the ghost's face.

"And because of this, you're out to kill me?"

Fang Yuan asked calmly.

"That's right, I'm here to kill you!"

Xiao Mu nodded his head.

A layer of green fog appeared and covered the entire inn.

Regardless the innkeeper, or the waiters, or the other guests, they were all in deep sleep, and their faces appeared to be in fear, as though they were suffering from a nightmare.

At this point in time, the tattoo climbed up to Xiao Mu's face, and slowly into his eyes, as though it was unnerving.

Due to the print, his voice was also affected.

"Oh..."

As Fang Yuan witnessed this, he looked at Xiao Mu with pity. "Your pain and suffering, it's all about this print? If you knew it's true value, I'm afraid you will be regretful!"

"You know its origins? Tell me!"

The other half of Xiao Mu's face appeared to be hopeful, as he stretched his hands out.

Fang Yuan's eye flashed and he struck his right index finger out.

"Kacha!"

An ear-piercing fracture was heard.

Xiao Mu shrieked and fell to the floor. The bone of his right arm was completely shattered and was bent in a heart-breaking angle.

Breaking through the 9th Gate, with the evolved Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique was not something a normal human being could handle, albeit not achieving its full potential.

"You are... a martial artist?"

Xiao Mu laughed cunningly. "It's useless. Although I have not learnt martial arts, I have previously sought the help of ten over martial artists, but they all died under this print!"

"Jie jie!"

Accompanying the weird laughter, the Ghost Head tattoo grew larger as though Xiao Mu had worn a mask. As it opened its ghost eyes, it stared at Fang Yuan with curiosity.

"Good boy... Kill him!"

Xiao Mu pointed at Fang Yuan, and his expression changed from one of sucking up, to one of temptation, to one of rave... he was drowned in expressions.

"What a pity!"

Fang Yuan casually commented after seeing this.

"What did you say?"

The human side of Xiao Mu's face became flushed, and his eyes were bloodshot.

"I said that I pity you! You have already detected the print's objective, and yet you don't know how to control it. You only know how to follow it's instructions, feed it and become its slave!"

Fang Yuan tore Xiao Mu's phobia apart mercilessly. "Not only your magical energy but even your body has rotted away. It was a chance for you, but it became your dictator, and you deserve this!"

"Fear to such a stage where you do not think about yourself, but channel the hatred to others, enraging yourself, but you are just a little bug full of pity!"

Every word and sentence was true, and Xiao Mu could not argue. In fact, it enraged him further. "I want you to die!!!"

Suddenly, his tone changed to one of temptation and command. "Hurry up, kill him! Kill him! Kill him! If you can do this, I will give you my entire dream world!"

"Jie jie!"

Suddenly, a blood-curdling event happened.

A distinct sound came from the face of Xiao Mu. He stood up forcefully and shot out a red beam of light from his ghost eye as he examined Fang Yuan. "You are right. This boy is a disappointment. I still thought that if he passed the training, we could even recruit him in!"

The human side of Xiao Mu became fearful. "Who are you? Why can you control my body?"

"Haha... I am Qing Gui. Did you not cry and beg me to help you?"

A mocking voice came out from Xiao Mu's mouth. If someone were to see this scene in the night, they would surely have nightmares.

"You are it, the Ghost Head tattoo!"

Xiao Mu finally understood. Unfortunately, he could only control the human side of his face. All the other parts of his body were under the green tattoo's control.

"Taking over?"

Fang Yuan became serious.

"After being infected by my Qing Gui print, you can train whatever you want with a boost in your magical energy, and you will be initiated into the Sect. I can also adopt your human form!"

The half-face of Qing Gui was full of pride.

'Evil dream master?!'

Fang Yuan came to a conclusion.

This Qing Gui dream master was fated to have met Xiao Mu as it detected that he had an above average magical energy. However, he was still far from the standard of a dream master.

Therefore, he imprinted the Qing Gui tattoo on him to test him.

If he could successfully defeat the dream demon, he could make the Qing Gui tattoo disappear. His magical energy would increase by folds and he could inherit the gift of being a dream master.

However, if he failed, he would be countered by the print. The print would then consume his Essence, Spirit and Magic to grow, and finally, take over his body!

'This most important thing is..... This was such an important test to him, and yet he did not tell his disciple anything!'

Fang Yuan mumbled to himself. 'Such lack of regard for human life, it is indeed an evil and immoral path!'

"You must be wondering why I did not mention this before?"

Qing Gui laughed. "If I told you, then what is the true meaning of training? How can you become a dream master without tribulations?"

"Dream master?!"

The human half of Xiao Mu's face was in shock.

He was regretful! Extremely regretful! He was being ostracized by his family and was not allowed to practice martial arts, which was why he shifted his focus to the Imperial Examinations.

However, there was a dream master's inheritance right in front of him, but he did not treasure it. Rather, he allowed the inheritance to take over him!

"Master! I am willing to become your disciple, and learn the ways of a dream master!"

Xiao Mu exclaimed, but it was too late.

"Heh! You are always like that, and I'm sure even if I had nurtured you, you would still be the same! Just be a good boy and let me take over you!"

Qing Gui started to snicker, and the dark green colour started to spread throughout his entire face.

As the end, it entered his eye and transformed his last eye into a Ghost eye.

"Heavenly Ghosts Transformation Technique!"

A green fog appeared, engulfing Xiao Mu.

A chilly voice was heard, as though it had come from the depths of hell.

As the green fog faded, a green long-haired sinister young man with long eyebrows stood in front of Fang Yuan.

Every part of Xiao Mu was being transformed, and he disappeared from the face of the Earth.

"Qing Gui?!"

Fang Yuan took in a deep breath and looked at the green haired young man in front of him.

"That's right, that's me!"

Qing Gui's voice was not terrible. Rather, it was soothing and attractive.

"I see that your potential is greater than that previous garbage. How? Are you interested in becoming my disciple?"

Qing Gui looked at him in anticipation.

"Disciple?"

Fang Yuan changed his expression. "Do I need to have the ghost-like tattoo as well?"

"To be my disciple, that is a must!"

Qing Gui was filled with pride. "Do you know how scary my Sect's true ability is?! To join it is your fortune!"

"Of course, your potential is much greater than that garbage. You can straight away accept me as your master, and I shall help you get rid of your mortal ties!"

"Get rid... of my mortal ties?!"

Fang Yuan was lost for words.

If it was not him that was here, but the young Yang Fan, would he have the ability to say no?

"That's right! Since you've joined us, you cannot have any relationship with your family and friends. I will help you remove every one of them!"

Qing Gui chuckled. "Every person who becomes my disciple must pass this stage, to forget their mortal self. From then, you can focus on becoming a dream master!"

"Crazy fellow!"

Fang Yuan commented on this person in his own mind and made a decision.

Since he was not able to detect Fang Yuan's cultivation, it seemed that his cultivation was not too high.

He could understand. After all, the person here was just a print taking over a human body. Since the human body itself was a disappointment, the end product would not be satisfactory.

Just to be sure, he had to test.

"You want to get rid of my mortal ties?"

Fang Yuan showed a face of pride. "You do know that my family is the Yang Family. Can you remove all of them?"

"Yang Xinglie's Yang Family? That's rather troublesome!"

Qing Gui's eyes flashed and he snickered. "No worries. It's just one Elemental Opening spiritual knight, two Meridian Opening Wu Zongs... When my real body arrived, it would be effortless!"

Yang Hanglie was Yang Fan's biological father and the leader of the Yang Family!

From Qing Gui's words, Fang Yuan had obtained valuable information.

Firstly, he now knew the ability of the Yang Family. It was indeed a force to be reckoned with, with 3 Elemental Opening spiritual knights, which could easily create havoc in Xia or Wu Country.

The split body of this Qing Gui was not as skilled and could not take on an opponent from the Elemental Opening Realm.

Lastly, the true body of Qing Gui would have the ability to take on an opponent from the Elemental Opening Realm, even if he was just boasting!

'Could the Yang Family be destroyed just like this?'

Fang Yuan thought to himself, and could not guess what would happen next.

'However, I came in first in the Imperial Examinations, and there seem to be no improvements in my dream building ability. It seems like this was not Yang Fan's objective, and that leaves me either revenge or finding his biological mother...'

At this point, he squinted his eyes.....