

Carefree Path of Dreams

Chapter 3: Spiritual Tea

The fire from the burning charcoal was heating the bottom surface of the small red teapot constantly, boiling the tea inside the teapot. Water bubbles started forming, with hot steam rising into the surroundings.

In front of Fang Yuan placed a tea set. He prepared the tea meticulously, firstly by letting the tea to be boiled. The first set of tea was not to be consumed as it was used to clean the tea set. After which, the teapot was sealed immediately with the next set of tea boiling, ready to be poured evenly to the teacups and served. Every motion in this process was so natural that one can even sense the peace and tranquility.

Though Fang Yuan's house was simple, he had tea leaves.

Having that tea leaves was not the only thing that was special in his house as the tea leaves was one of the premium goods cultivated by him personally. Besides, he showed superior standards in the preparation of tea ceremonies, which was well commended by Master Wenxin.

Of course, the previous visitor was wicked and so did not experience such great treatment.

The surrounding of the teacups was filled with the fragrance of the tea. Fang Yuan gently lifted up his teacup in a calm motion and began tasting the tea slowly.

To him, the tea ceremony was not just for self-cultivation, but also to remember Master Wenxin's works.

Although Master Wenxin did not teach Fang Yuan martial arts, he did teach Fang Yuan the techniques of the meditative tea ceremony.

Making tea helped to cleanse the soul, which helped the state of the soul to have a greater sense of well-being.

But why a great sense of well-being?

A grandmaster once said, " Not thinking of one's body, not fiddling one's intelligence, being separated from the body, free from the shackles of wisdom and becoming as one with mother earth. This is the state which has the greatest sense of well-being."

The main idea behind Master Wenxin's tea ceremony was to have a unity of man and nature, so as to achieve the great sense of well-being.

For Fang Yuan, he loved making tea. He even went to look for a tea set that was of high quality just to make tea.

However, things were different now.

From the tea aroma, Fang Yuan only felt warmth to his stomach, and then a thin layer of coldness, thus bringing a cooling effect, making him forget how cold or hot the surroundings had become.

Living in the valley and not disturbed by the chaos from the world elsewhere, Fang Yuan drank and cultivated tea every day with a strong will and determination.

To achieve his goals, he had to be determined and have the will to concentrate.

After tea, it was the best time to reorganise his thoughts as his mind would be clearer.

"Recently, I have gathered all the crops in the valley and re-cultivated with [Botany (Level 3)], and indeed the result is very different. The result shows that I have improved further as compared to his previous best results. The mutation probability is also extremely low since there is not even one case appearing in the whole valley. Of course, it is hard to say for now as the Vermillion Jade Rice is not harvested yet..."

Shaking his head, Fang Yuan got up to get the hoe, bamboo baskets and other equipment before starting on his daily cultivation of crops on the farm.

Watering the crops, adding fertiliser, loosening of soil and then treated in accordance to the needs of the different crops. The whole process was a smooth one.

At high noon, Fang Yuan sat on the rocks and quickly drank a gourd of spring water. Looking at his farm, he felt as though a farmer had just harvested his crops, heart filled with joy.

Fang Yuan then started consuming the rice balls that he had prepared in the morning and a flash appeared in his eyes again;

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 1

Spirit: 1

Magic: 1

Age: 18

Cultivation: None

Techniques: None

Skills: [Medicine (Level 1)], [Botany (level 3)]"

...

"Essence, spirit and magic refer to my physical fitness....."

Thanks to the care by Master Wenxin and his botany skills, Fang Yuan didn't really suffer in his early days. He was well fed and taken care of, allowing his foundations to be strong at the age of 18 and similar when compared to other adults.

"[Botany (Level 3)], with a very low chance of evolving into special traits...."

Fang Yuan sighed and then continued eating his rice balls.

The rice balls were made from the Pearl Jade Crystal Rice cultivated in the farm. Each rice grain was as small as a baby's thumb size. The rice grain was as if an art piece as it was clear and bright. The fragrance of the cooked rice was excellent. One could feel the crisp of the cooked rice which was incomparable to glutinous rice. The rice even tasted great without any side dishes. The rice was best served with sour beans and sour plums.

Jade Crystal Rice had a very high nutritional value. Jade Crystal Rice soup could be fed to babies in replacement of milk. Fang Yuan only ate one rice ball and he was recharged with energy. He then began to continue his work.

"The Fragrance ball and Rutaceae are ready to be harvested. Old Tian from the Medicine Hall should be here soon to collect them in exchange for salt and oil...."

Sometimes, Fang Yuan went around his farm to pluck a few fruits to eat and to ponder about future plans.

A few moments later, a touch of green met his eyes, making Fang Yuan slow down his footsteps and whispered "Hey".

Here laid a tea forest and the tea trees were specifically chosen to grow tea leaves which were straight flat. The tea leaves also had a fresh orchid fragrance to it, which make the tea leaves Fang Yuan's favourite.

However, at that moment, something was different.

Among all the tea trees, there was one that had a jasper-like tea leaves growing out, giving a crystal colour. The tea leaves from that particular tree were so special that without going through the process of frying of tea leaves, these leaves were able to give out a very strong fragrance on its own. This fragrance helped to keep the mind awake, leaving a strong aftertaste.

"Premium tea leaves! The premium of the premium!"

Fang Yuan gathered near that tea tree. "So this is the mutated result of the level 3 Botany tea leaves? Has this Houkui [1] become a spiritual plant?"

Unfortunately, he had only seen the grains of the Vermillion Jade Rice, making it impossible for him to compare.

However, such leaves were definitely special!

"It's afternoon, time is just right!"

Seeing this tea tree, Fang Yuan put aside all his worries at that moment and began plucking the special tea leaves to make tea happily.

"No... this is so tempting. I cannot endure anymore!"

After plucking those jasper-like tea leaves, Fang Yuan immediately put a leaf into his mouth.

"Ooohh...."

At the start, there was just bitterness but after which, a very strong taste of orchid came.

His tongue felt bitter with numbness as if it was electrocuted. A clean stream went straight into his mind, making Fang Yuan's eyes glitter, "Spiritual leaf! Definitely a spiritual leaf!"

"There is meaning in the bitterness. The original taste alone has such great flavour, I wonder what happens if such tea leaves are brewed into tea?"

Fang Yuan's eyes shone.

Nighttime.

Fixing, kneading, baking..... Fang Yuan was familiar with the procedures. The effect was still the same even though this time, the tea leaves were different.

Under the fire, he looked at the jasper-like tea leave. His face became sluggish, saying "Beautiful....so beautiful! This newly made spiritual tea is like an art piece!"

Fang Yuan then took out his tea set and went on with the brewing of tea.

At the end, the fragrance of the spiritual tea filled the surroundings, making the place feel as if it was in the Temple of Heaven.

"I can't forget this excellent fragrance and taste. It is definitely a special tea!"

At that moment, Fang Yuan became calm.

The tea ceremony was a process which included the cleaning of tea leaves. The process also removed one's distractions.

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered. His thoughts had become innocent as if they were like a pure child's.

A tea taster firstly smells the fragrance and then the colour of the tea. Just by the fragrance and the colour of the tea, looking at the cup filled with green clear liquid, Fang Yuan was moved as soon as his lip touched the teacup.

Boom!

It was as if a lightning bolt struck in his head.

As if he became a lone tourist walking among the heavy thorns, his tongue and taste being imprisoned by the bitterness of the tea.

While he was suffering, the thorns disappeared. He began to taste fragrance of the tea, as if the fragrance was like a flash flood, breaking the walls of bitterness, allowing the fragrance to take over the bitterness.

Fang Yuan stared into blank space. His eyes glittered.

Normally, after tasting something good, one will be moved with tears flowing down.

Fang Yuan thought this would only happen in his dreams but did not expect a cup of tea could produce such effect as well.

"Good!"

Finishing a cup, he began making another. The fragrance of the tea gradually faded away, but the taste of the tea became even stronger.

After 4 cups, the taste and the fragrance of the tea still lingered.

"Hoooo....."

After finishing the whole pot of tea, Fang Yuan exhaled with a long breath. The taste of the tea still lingered in his mouth, leaving a lasting aftertaste.

"This tea.... It is definitely special. It seems to be able to question the heart..."

Fang Yuan wiped away his tears, "Just one such product can make me feel as if my soul has been cleansed..... I wonder if this the effect of the spiritual object? Or is it just a fateful coincidence that a miracle happened with the combination of spiritual tea and meditative tea ceremony?"

He began questioning this miracle and subconsciously, he started calling out for his stats before staring into a blank space.

At that moment, his stats changed:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 1

Spirit: 1

Magic: 1.2

Age: 18

Cultivation: None

Techniques: None

Skills: [Medicine (Level 1)], [Botany (level 3)]"

"Magic increased by 0.2?"

Fang Yuan looked at his stats and mumbled.

These 3 stats: essence, spirit and magic did not have any changes since they rose to a value of 1 after his 18th birthday,

Now, however, his magic stats actually increased by 0.2!

No wonder Fang Yuan suddenly felt full of energy and was quick-witted, as if he became a lot smarter.

"According to theories, essence, spirit and magic are called the 3 treasures, which are the foundation of man"

"And according to my observations and hypotheses, essence refers to the body, the physical strength, the bones and other tangible parts of the body. Spirit refers to the non-tangible part of the body, like the power of the blood. Finally, magic, which refers to the mind, will, perception etc."

"Essence, spirit and magic; these 3 stats complement each other and have their own magical effect!"

Fang Yuan looked at the leftover tea leaves with his eyes glittering. "This tea actually helps to cleanse one's soul and increases the magical effect of it as well. I shall name this tea 'Questioning Heart Tea'."

[1] Houkui is a type of tea leaf