

Daily life 231

Chapter 231 Variant Spirit Vein

The breathtaking view of the Star blooming mist valley destroyed all the foreboding thoughts that Yang Qing had of his impending family dinner and whether his grandfather together with his cohorts would try to pull something during said dinner.

The valley before him washed everything away. The Order had spent the same amount of effort and resources into the valley, that they did when creating the Institute, the Courtroom building, or the Requiem prison.

All three of these places were core to the functioning of the Order, whereas the Star blooming mist valley was a land that all throughout the year would be used once or twice. However, despite its minimal usage, the Order still spent world breaking level of resources building it. Their abodes were the only place that seemed to have been neglected in terms of resources used especially when you concentrated on the areas those in the core formation or the palace realm lived at. This was one of the underlying factors that made Yang Qing suspect that the Order had every intention of working them to the bone otherwise why would they spend the least amount of resources in their employees' abodes?

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"I wonder how much they spent on this?" Yang Qing wondered as he admired the scenery before him.

The valley was gently sloping and had grass that was uniform in size. Even though they looked like regular grass, every single blade present was a monarch-grade herb, with a couple of ascendant-grade herbs mixed in. They served no other purpose than adding a cool and refreshing feel to the place.

The whole valley was also surrounded by a milky white mist with flickering stars. The starry mist was a result of a variant spirit vein that was in the ground below the valley. That vein was also responsible for the grandeur of the place including such dense spiritual essence that it put the dark valley to shame. Yang Qing's body even started circulating by itself because the qi was not only dense but it seemed to have whispers of the dao along with faint roars of an auspicious beast.

The manifestation of dao within the spiritual qi was a characteristic of one type of spirit vein and that was the ancestral dragon spirit vein something that could only be seen in the holy lands, a few long-

standing rank 1 organizations that could essentially be considered quasi-holy lands and some hidden organizations.

Ancestral dragon veins were spiritual meridians that gained some sort of conscious spirituality and were touched by the origin source of the planet. If they were to be classified in terms of treasures they could be considered a quasi-origin treasure whose very nature was tied to the fundamental rules of the planet and in some sense could be considered indivisible from it. Treasures of this nature were considered nigh indestructible and inexhaustible.

The spiritual qi of an ancestral dragon vein would never dry up no matter how much it was used since its very existence was tied to the planet. As long as the planet existed so would it. Having an ancestral dragon vein was a guarantee of the continuity and survival of any organization or race that owned it because its very existence could be considered eternal.

The vein not only provided dense spiritual qi but the dao whispers that accompanied it were also useful to those that were within its sphere of influence. It helped cultivators in gaining insights into different forms of dao thereby creating a route for them to the palace realm which was tied to a cultivator's understanding of the dao and when it came to natural herbs and artifacts, the dao whisper exposure increased their likelihood of awakening their spirituality.

However, it wasn't without its drawbacks. Cultivators with weak foundations such as those in the foundation establishment realm and below and even some core formation experts, could not survive more than a minute around it. The dao whispers would drive them insane and the dense spiritual qi also came with a heaviness that could crush a body-refining realm expert into a bloody paste. This was why the Order spent considerable resources to carve formations that reduced the effects of the ancestral dragon vein in certain areas of the valley.

There were octagon-shaped blue jade platforms all around the valley which was the area the guests sat. Some of those platforms had been inscribed with those formations to aid the guests with weak cultivation bases to be able to survive in the area.

Currently, the location was filled with various staff members from different departments and divisions such as the formation hall and the craftsmanship division. They were doing their final touches to the place to make sure everything was in order.

Yang Qing was guided around the area by Song Guozhi, being shown which guests sat where, and where he would be welcoming the guests among other things. It wasn't his first time here since he went through the same thing when he started as an outer core court judge.

However, there was a difference between then and now, one of them being the range of the guest list. The number that would be coming for the celebration tomorrow was over hundred times what he got when he started. It was to be expected since the larger part of the cultivation world of the Southern continent would not be concerned about some new core formation judge no matter how much talent he had, but it was a different case if it was someone at the palace realm.

Someone at that level would draw eyes from various powerhouses who would want to pay close attention to how powerful the new palace realm judge from the Order really is and use the information to measure them against their own people. It was also a way for them to roughly gauge the power level of the Order and even extrapolate their potential power level in the future based on present findings. For example, a present palace realm cultivator could be a future domain expert in 100 years. With such summations, these powers could guess the power distribution of the Order over the years.

As the man of the hour, Yang Qing was greeted enthusiastically by the staff members present as he gave them a smug humble polite nod in return. He even changed his walking style and gait to try and seem more refined.

It took them almost three hours before Song Guozhi finally finished guiding Yang Qing on all the procedures and forms of decorum he needed to do tomorrow. In addition, much to Yang Qing's pleasure he even gave him a prepared speech which he could use should he need it. Yang Qing warmly accepted it as he made a promise to return the favor should Song Guozhi ever need it. He had done it as a form of politeness and didn't expect someone like Song Guozhi who was a picture of propriety to accept his offer. However, despite the surprise, he wasn't too worried about what type of favor Song Guozhi would ask for. Based on his personality it wouldn't be something out there and if Yang Qing could help he would only be too glad to do so.

After they left the Star blooming mist valley, they both went their separate ways. Song Guozhi went to finalize a few matters while Yang Qing decided to use the little brief time he had before his dreaded dinner at the Yang's to check on Ma Yuan.

Zheng Hu had checked him at one of the courtyards within the Order called the White River pearl courtyard. It was a quaint place for someone who wanted some peace and quiet. Ma Yuan seemed at ease in the place, he even seemed a bit younger, especially with the new pristine white robes he had on, and the little grooming he had done.

Yang Qing didn't stay too long with him and had only come to fill him in on the potential leads he had gotten from the jade talismans he had gotten from Song Guozhi on tomorrow's guest list. He also came to give him an invitation to his promotion ceremony as a form of much-needed distraction for Ma Yuan who was all too glad to accept it since he has been a bundle of nerves from the moment Yang Qing agreed to help him find his wife and daughter.

After exchanging a few words, Yang Qing left and made his way to the Glowing Respite Valley. The time had finally arrived for him to show his face at the Yang family's compound. He had also heard from Zheng Hu that the Zou siblings were at his family's place. Despite his reservations, he had to go home at all costs lest those two siblings turn into unwitting guinea pigs at the hands of his family even before they had a chance to take their examination.

"I hope they are at the Medicine Valley...I can't believe I a palace realm cultivator am afraid of a bunch of old men at the foundation establishment realm. I'd be a laughing stock if other people heard this, especially that bastard Huilang," Yang Qing thought as he ruefully smiled at his trembling hands.

Chapter 232 Yang Qing's Family (1)

Yang Qing decided to grab Ellie and make his way to the claw section of the Glowing Respite Valley. If he was going to suffer, he would rather bring company to share the suffering with him, and Ellie was the best partner for that.

He had zero qualms about exposing her to whatever dangers that may or may not be in his home. She'd been stealing from him for too long and after the stunt she pulled a few days ago with the Scion of the Golden bamboo pavilion, Yang Qing felt no guilt whatsoever about potentially subjecting her to torment. In fact, some part of him in the deepest recess of his petty soul, hoped that Ellie would become targetted.

Ellie who has had a few brushes with the Yang family showed visible fear at going with Yang Qing to his family's place, but at Yang Qing's 'polite' request she could only comply but not before scoring a few consolation prizes here and there in the form of fish, from Yang Qing, which oddly enough, didn't refuse which made Ellie only warier. But she soon resolved herself to whatever will happen, will happen. It was not like there was any way out for her.

Thus the duo, one bird, and one young man, mopingly made their way to the claw section of the Glowing Respite Valley. The claw section was the area the families of the employees of the Order settled at and those students who had no families or guardians. They were given simple courtyards to settle in

when they were on holiday or breaks from the Institute even though as students they would also have other accommodations within the institute.

The system was put in place to help create a sense of cohesion between all members of the Order be it the families or the students.

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Yang Qing had endless sighs, while Ellie had low whimpering chirps the closer they got to the valley, at some point it even seemed like Ellie was frozen in midair because of how slow she flew. Yang Qing had no complaints about it since he was in no hurry to reach his family's place either. But even with the delay tactics, they eventually still reached the claw section of the Glowing Respite Valley.

Even though the area could be considered a place that housed the families and relatives of Order employees, it looked no different than an established city. There were businesses all around, from markets, to restaurants, to smithies to alchemy shops and other cultivation-related businesses.

There seemed to be some form of order and structure to the arrangement of the area, especially when it came to the arrangement of the buildings and the business.

The sun was already down but the area was still packed with people. Cultivators of all ages and gender were moving about with liveliness about them. The streets had white glowing poplar trees which was the source of light to the area. It added some beauty to the area with fireflies dancing around it with their golden glows and the night clear skies above that were filled with a cluster of stars.

Originally the area wasn't this way. When the Order just started, the area was as lifeless as a graveyard. The area was about the size of a medium-scaled province of a rank 2 Empire. It was around 470,000 square kilometers. Because of how big the area was and the few families around, there was rare communication and interaction between the families or the people from the Order. As time progressed, the population of the Order grew as a consequence of its increasing reputation. This increase in number was also reflected on the families' side. Of the entrants, some came with their immediate families, while others came with their whole clans. Slowly over time, the blank vacuum in the area got filled and a town grew from that.

The area was partitioned into two areas. The first half of the area was where the businesses and other recreational facilities were, basically the town of the place, while the latter half was where the residences of the families and other students were located.

Yang Qing and Ellie slowly made their way past the town ignoring the bluster and liveliness of it all as they moved in the Northwest direction of the region, where the Yang family was located.

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"I guess I can't ignore this forever, luckily I don't seem to sense Grandpa around or any of the other elders," thought Yang Qing as he stared down at the grid system courtyards below him. There was an entrance gate with a board with the name Yang above it. There was no guard at the entrance since it seemed a bit silly to have one and even before they moved, the Yang family never paid any heed to anything else that wasn't tied to body refinement.

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"Let's land Ellie," said Yang Qing.

Ellie gently glided toward one of the courtyards in the middle right side.

The courtyard had a white color wall that had green lush vines latching onto it, it had grey tiled roofs and a high Horse-head wall with a small makeshift lake surrounding it.

There were other courtyards with similar designs which made the area seem like it had been built on top of water. The air surrounding the area had a refreshing river smell, and it was also mixed in with the smell of herbs.

Ellie landed in one of the land patches in the courtyard as Yang Qing made his way to one of the houses where he had detected his mom, his older brother, and sister-in-law along with their two kids who were both sons. In addition, he also detected Zou Yi and Zou Liqin there.

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"Hey Mom, Gen, sister Yao, Huan'er, Xie'er, Zou Yi, Zou Liqin, how are you all doing?" Said Yang Qing as he greeted his mom, brother, sister-in-law, his two nephews, and the Zou siblings respectively.

When he got into the house he found the group all seated around the table waiting on a fair gentle looking slender middle-aged lady to place a red clay pot on the table.

The middle-aged lady had a simple bun with a few strands here and there and a calm-inducing aura and smile to her. Her hair was black with matching eyes and bore a faint resemblance to Yang Qing and the 30-year-old gentleman that was seated at the table, who had short black hair, a look to him that made him seem polite and a person of few words. He had on white robes that had a few smudges here and there like something had spilled on them.

Next to him was a lady with red hair and an aura that was his complete opposite. At a glance, she seemed like the lively and outgoing type. She had a charming beauty with long curly hair.

At the other side of the table were two siblings, one of them had red hair and the other black and they resembled the 30-year-old man and the red-haired lady. The one with red hair seemed to be the older one and looked to be seven while the younger one looked to be five.

Zou Yi and Zou Liqin were seated next to them. They had on brand new light orange robes on and had an air of shy reservation to them but that changed when they spotted Yang Qing as their eyes shone with excitement.

The look of excitement wasn't them alone as the other two brothers next to them looked excited to see Yang Qing.

Chapter 233 [Bonus]Yang Qing's Family (2)

"For a moment there, I didn't think you'd come, Qing'er," said the middle-aged lady as she handed Yang Qing another pot to place at the table.

"I wouldn't have missed it, I did tell Gen I'd come and I didn't want to miss your cooking either," said Yang Qing as he grinned foolishly.

"I told you it would work," said the red-haired lady to the polite-looking man next to her called Gen who only smiled at her response.

Yang Qing's love for food which bordered on obsession was because of his mom. As body refinement specialists, diet was a key component to the goals of the Yang family so they put a lot of effort into developing their cooking skills to maximize the benefits they could get from the food.

However, efficiency didn't always equate to flavor. Most of the meals were bland except when it came to his mother. She was skilled in the nutritional aspect just as she was in realizing the flavors of the food.

Yang Qing may not admit it, but her cooking was the only reason he never ran away back then when he had been 'welcomed' into the Yang family way.

"You didn't come with that lovely girl Mao Yunru this time?" Yang Qing's mom meaningfully asked as she smiled lightly.

"I don't know what you mean Mom. I've had a busy day because of tomorrow's event so I haven't had a chance to see her," Yang Qing replied with a deadpan face like he was making a report to a superior.

His mother cast a long look at him before she slightly chuckled and said, "You haven't changed one bit,"

She ruffled his hair lovingly and added,

"Luckily your brother gave me some grandkids, if I had to depend on you..."

She left a few things unsaid but the meaning was clear which drew some laughs from his brother and wife while Yang Qing was stuck with a reddened embarrassed face.

"Uncle Yang Qing, tell us a story," Yang Huan his red-haired nephew boisterously asked with excitement in his voice. His younger brother, Yang Xie seemed equally as excited as he looked at Yang Qing with round eager eyes.

Yang Qing's shameless bragging talents came in handy in these situations where he'd get to play the uncle with cool stories who led an active life.

Over the years he has regaled them with tales of how he gambled with dragons, barbecued with phoenix flames, raced a golden roc, and won, along with other embellished tales. No matter how unbelievable his stories sounded, his nephews believed every word and always looked forward to his visits so they could listen to more stories.

"Not now, but later I promise I will." Yang Qing said as he ruffled both their hair when he saw how downcast they seemed.

"By the way Gen, where is Dad?" Yang Qing suddenly asked after he placed the last pot on the table.

The question had been directed to the 30-year-old polite-looking man across the table from him. Just like Yang Qing, he too has endured the torture of the Yang family however he showed an acumen for alchemy which saved him from following Yang Qing's path of being the Yang family's guinea pig. Though being an alchemist helped him, it was only by a tiny bit since he would occasionally be 'consulted' on a few things.

"Dad is at the institute, he said he had a lot to prepare for with the upcoming intake so he wouldn't be able to make it," Yang Gen said with an awkward smile.

"His hiding from grandfather, isn't he?" asked Yang Qing.

Yang Gen gently nodded as the two brothers and the red-haired lady shared a reuful smile.

"Grandpa really did a number on him," Yang Qing slowly muttered as he shook his head.

Their grandfather had inherited the Yang founder's personality and passion when it came to excavating the mysteries of the body-refining realm to the point that some even suspected he was the incarnation of their founder. He only had one child, their father. His father got subjected to all sorts of tests since he was a child that it made what Yang Qing endured seem like a vacation.

His father later run away from home when he couldn't take it and only came back after he had broken through to the foundation realm so he could be deemed 'unusable' for any future body-refining experiments. However, he had grossly underestimated his father's, their grandfather's commitment to the body-refining physique.

A new level of torment soon ensued as his father was used as a test subject on some more hypotheses. Those tests bore some fruit which prompted their grandfather to also break through to the foundation establishment realm to try and increase their efficiency of study. The torment only stopped when their father broke through to the core formation realm which only happened after they came to the Order. Moving here served as a blessing to him since he got a job at the institute as one of the foundational instructors in body refining. This ensured he would spend as little time with their grandfather as possible and also their grandfather landed a position in the Medicine Valley. Yang Qing and the rest of the family had no idea what he did there since they were afraid to go visit him, all they knew was thanks to his work there, he rarely came home.

Luckily for Yang Qing and Yang Gen, their father didn't inherit their grandfather's temperament and even encouraged them to break through as fast as they could. The two brothers heeded their father's advice though it's not known if it was to heed their father's advice or some other underlying reason but they did as they were told, Yang Qing was a palace realm expert and his brother was a core formation expert.

Their father even purposely invited their grandfather over and a few of the elders to celebrate, though in the real sense, it was some form of vengeance to irk them. It worked too since a few friends of their grandfather vomited blood in the celebration held when Yang Qing broke through to the core formation realm while his grandfather didn't look like he was far behind. When Yang Qing broke through to the palace realm, his father hosted another celebration again with much more fanfare. However, at that time his grandfather along with the few old men were rather reserved and they even seemed jovial in his breakthrough which rang alarm bells on Yang Qing, his brother, and their father. Such a calm look from those old men could only mean one thing and it wasn't good for the three of them which was why Yang Qing was hesitant in coming back and as for their father, after all the stunts he has pulled over the years, Yang Qing had doubts if he would ever come back. Since that celebration, he has never stepped foot in their home and even tried to convince their mother to relocate to the accommodations at the institute.

"I hope grandpa doesn't come,"

"Me too,"

Chapter 234 Arrival Of New Guests

"What are you two saying? How unfilial can you be? The achievements you have today are thanks to the tireless efforts of your grandfather and the other elders of the clan.

They used all the resources they had and even traded their research so they could help you all improve.

You both should be more thankful and it might not even be a bad idea to go see him once or twice," said their mother as she gently chastised Yang Qing and Yang Gen.

"Mother there are no outsiders here, there's no need to pretend that Grandpa and the rest made some grand sacrifice with those resources. We were nothing more than experimental subjects to them.

Do you remember that one time Qing had a toad's head for a week all thanks to their help or the other numerous times we have lost some function or part of our bodies due to their well-meaning ideas and guidance?

While I do thank them because they genuinely did care and try to help us in their own dysfunctional way but visiting him is out of the question. Who knows what he has been up to over the past few years at the Medicine Valley, I've heard some stories and it's enough to frighten me from going there.

I'm sorry Mom, Qing can go but I'll put a wide berth between me and Grandpa. It wouldn't be a bad idea to join Dad at the institute."

Zou Yi and Zou Liqin were surprised to see that all those words came from the polite-looking Yang Gen. They had assumed he was the silent type but at the moment he seemed to have turned into someone else.

He may have been soft-spoken when he made that statement but one could detect firm stubbornness beneath it.

Other than them, the rest were not surprised. Yang Gen may seem polite but he has hard-headed and a bit rebellious at times. Yang Qing's habits especially when it came to causing trouble with the Order all came from emulating his brother.

"Well said big brother," Yang Qing said as he drew a thumbs up at Yang Gen however he shrunk back when he saw his mother's calm gaze.

"Fine, then can you go see your father after and bring him some of the leftovers," their mother, Mai Ha said as she sighed.

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"So, how do you two find the Order?" Yang Qing suddenly asked the Zou siblings who had been silent all this time as they exchanged a few glances here and there.

"It's been okay, thanks to the help you gave and also Master Hao Da, we were able to settle in well. He ensured we got a place to stay and even guided us here where Auntie Mai has been taking care of us the past two days," Zou Yi politely answered.

Around unfamiliar settings, he was always the freest in communication while his sister Zou Liqin was a bit more reserved and it took time for her to be comfortable enough to be expressive.

"So Hao Da was the one who guided you here, I'll have to thank him later," Yang Qing muttered.

"He's changed so much, I almost couldn't recognize him as that kid with anger and resentment filled in his eyes. I was always worried about him. I'm glad he managed to find some peace from whatever he had been battling with when you guys were young," said Mai Ha with a gaze that had a hint of sympathy in it.

"I was also surprised when I saw him, he seemed calmer and freer than he was. He is even about to be the next branch chief of the Three Fires branch in the next month or so," said Yang Qing.

"That's a huge post, if they can trust him with that level of responsibility, why wasn't he been called back to the headquarters? Hasn't he always wanted to be stationed here as a judge? It was all he talked about back then," said Yang Gen.

Hao Da had struck a deep friendship with Yang Qing and eventually, during holidays he would spend it with them since he never came with any family. He had cut ties with the Hao family when he ran away after his only living relative, his mother passed away.

So after meeting Yang Qing and striking a friendship with him during their punishments, he eventually became a guest of the Yang family household so he was familiar to them.

"The headquarters did offer him a post here but he turned it down and preferred being stationed outside. Maybe he found what he had been searching for out there and the pay and resources afforded to him as a branch chief isn't bad either.

I don't know yet how much I'll be making but I was told a branch chief with the same cultivation realm as me earns almost ten times as much as I do. Being a branch chief of a place as prominent as the Three Fires sect wouldn't be bad," Yang Qing said after some thought.

"Well if he is okay with it, that's all that matters," said Mai Ha as she removed the lids of the pots releasing a thick wave of misty tantalizing food scent.

Yang Qing's stomach grumbled instantly along with Zou Yi's.

The spreading on the table instantly made Yang Qing forget all the reservations he had about coming here.

There was sweet and sour pork fillet that was crispy red-orange in color, Kung pao chicken, braised beef fillet with scallion, red braised pork, shanxi pasta, and spring rolls filled in two large earthen bowls.

Yang Qing didn't waste even a second as he used his chopsticks to pick a lot of everything. Luckily the quantity was large enough that even his gluttony didn't reduce the quantity.

"Mom you've really outdone yourself again," Yang Qing said with crescent-shaped eyes as he savored the crispy taste of the Kung Pao chicken.

A few minutes in, sounds of satisfied sounds rang all around. Just as Yang Qing was about to add more sweet and sour pork fillet to his plate, his chopsticks froze midway to the pot.

"What's wrong?" Yang Gen asked with a raised brow.

"He's here," Yang Qing grimly said.

"You're sure it's him?" Yang Gen asked as his voice cracked up a bit.

"He is the one person I can never confuse and he isn't alone either, he came with the rest."

Yang Qing slowly finished adding a little sweet and sour pork fillet and then sat down.

He was no longer that excited glutton from a few seconds ago but instead had a grim look to him as he had his meal. It was like that of a person enjoying his final meal before his execution.

Chapter 235 Solution For Past Mistakes

Their mother, Mai Ha didn't seem to have noticed anything as she encouraged the Zou siblings to eat more while Yang Qing's nephews were deeply engrossed in their eating. They looked like mini Yang Qing.

The only people who seemed off were Yang Qing and his big brother Yang Gen.

They both ate in complete silence as they waited for the inevitability. It didn't take them too long before a burst of boisterous laughter and sound came from outside the walls of the courtyard.

"LITTLE QING, COME AND GREET YOUR GRANDPA...Mmmmh is that spare ribs? I've stayed cooped up in the valley for so long that I've forgotten how great Ha'er's cooking is.

Qing'er bring some spare ribs, will you?"

Yang Qing flinched a little when he heard that voice.

"You heard him," Mai Ha said as she pointed at the pot of braised beef fillet with scallion.

Yang Qing could only begrudgingly put his chopsticks down and start scooping the braised beef fillet into a large pallet. He had scooped a large quantity that matched what he had on his plate, which was enough to feed five people.

Other than sharing a last name together, Yang Qing and his grandfather both shared a voracious appetite. Though the latter was comfortable with missing a meal or two and substituting it with fasting pills whereas Yang Qing would rather lose an arm than miss a meal and he also prides himself in being one of the few cultivators who has never consumed a fasting pill. It may not be a bragging point to the vast majority but Yang Qing somehow made it seem righteous not eating one.

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"You're not coming with me?" Yang Qing pleadingly asked his brother after he had finished with the braised beef.

"He asked for you, not me," Yang Gen innocently replied.

"He is already here, it's not like you can avoid him now," said Yang Qing as he tried to convince Yang Gen to go with him.

"I know, but I want to enjoy those brief few seconds of freedom when you and he are exchanging greetings. I'm sorry little Qing, I will have to be selfish just this once. I hope you understand," Yang Gen said as he offered an apologetic smile and short head bow.

Yang Qing could only gnash his teeth as he made his way out like a soldier forced into the frontlines of a battle he knew he had no chance of winning.

Outside, he managed to spot five old men huddled together scrutinizing Ellie with deep fascinated interest in their eyes.

"Ellie don't be like that, I promise it's just one jar's worth this time. You can easily replenish that amount within a minute and you will not be doing it for free. Over at the medicine valley, we have a lake filled with all kinds of fish, I'll let you take away some," said one of the elderly men as he tried to coax the nervous-looking Ellie.

Ellie who had been chirping in warning as she threatened to fly away suddenly paused midair. Her gaze now shone with a look of contemplation.

"Looks like she has already fallen for Grandpa's schemes. That greed of hers...." Yang Qing shook his head in exasperation as he watched an elderly man with simple grey robes, a slender figure, average height, and a head filled with grey hair tied in a daoist topknot, smooth talk Ellie into donating her blood.

It didn't take long before Ellie agreed to the elderly man's request but not before making a few threatening noises which wasn't difficult to guess was her warning the elderly man not to overdo it.

The elderly man had a foundation stage establishment strength but he managed to expertly poke a small hole in Ellie's underwing to draw blood, which he then drained into a dark ceramic crucible that he stored away immediately after with a face that resembled that of a kid that had just gotten the toy they wanted. The other elderly men surrounding him all had similar expressions to them.

Yang Qing sighed as he made his way over to them.

"Hey Grandpa, Elders," Yang Qing said as he cupped his fists to them in greeting.

Their clan never cared much about observation of certain societal norms so they were usually very casual in a lot of things like greetings and even preferred it that way, hence Yang Qing's overly casual greeting to them.

"Little Qing...", said the elderly man who had just drawn blood from Ellie.

He had facial features that shared some resemblance to Yang Qing except for his hair. Yang Qing was the only person who had green hair in his whole clan despite his mother and father having dark hair. His color changed the moment he unlocked his Yin-Yang jade bones of the peerless jade physique.

"Why did you have to break through, we could have delved much deeper into the body-refining realm with your help. The clan has never had someone with your level of talent. Little Qing with your help we had a real chance of realizing the founder's dream," the elderly man said in lamentation as the other elders voiced their own words here and there, echoing his sentiments.

"What dreams? Didn't the founder just want to find a way of improving his cultivation aptitude? If he had a talent for sensing qi, I doubt he would have even given the body refinement realm any thought. Looking at their distraught and burdened faces one could easily believe their spiel," thought Yang Qing.

"And it's the fault of that foolish son of mine. Just you wait Wunlai, you think just because you're in the core formation realm, you can do whatever you want, this old man will show you," said the elderly man as his eyes flashed with a cruel vengeance.

Yang Qing couldn't help but offer a silent prayer for his father.

"Grandpa here is your..."

"Little Qing, Grandpa, and the elders have very important and exciting news to share with you. We can finally rectify the damage your father did to you and your brother," Yang Qing's grandfather interrupted Yang Qing when he was about to hand him the braised beef.

Yang Qing looked quizzically at his grandfather wondering what crazy thing his grandfather was about to suggest now.

His grandfather didn't keep him waiting that long.

"After years of tireless efforts, the elders and I, along with the assistance of some of the people from the Medical Valley, we have finally found it, a way to still explore the body refining realm even after you have broken through to higher stages.

Little Qing you know what this means right? You, your brother, and that unfilial son of mine can finally continue on with me and the rest of the Yang members in our grand venture of the body refining realm," Yang Qing's grandfather said in excitement as a youthful passionate aura surrounded him.

"How?..." Yang Qing weakly asked almost as if afraid to ask.

"Body regression," His grandfather replied with a smug expression on his face.

Chapter 236 Grandpa Yang Fen's Pitch (1)

Seeing that smug grin on his grandfather's face, it took Yang Qing all he had not to fling the bowl of braised beef he had on him toward his grandfather.

"Old man, you've finally lost it. Is this what you and the rest have been doing at the Medicine Valley? Thinking of ways to cripple someone's cultivation?"

I've seen you do a lot of things over the years but I didn't think it'd reach this level. Nope, No Grandpa I'll have to outrightly refuse you. You can forget about using me in any plans you and the elders have cooked up.

How did you even rope in the Medicine Valley into your schemes?"

Yang Qing decided to draw a clear line at the get-go before things went downhill for him. He even started to worry about the Medicine Valley and how it could have potentially turned into his grandfather's backyard for crazy experiments.

"What do you mean by crippling!?" His grandfather, Yang Fen became livid in an instant as his eyes widened and his face turned beet red showing how angry he was at Yang Qing's accusations.

"Qing'er I know you and the rest bear some resentment against us for the things we did which I understand, but do you think we are careless enough to cripple someone's cultivation all for the sake of furthering our research in the body refinement realm?"

Do you really think I'm that sort of person? If I was, I wouldn't have let your father off when he came back after breaking through to the foundation establishment realm. With the knowledge I have, it wouldn't have been difficult for me to cripple him, even if he was a couple of realms above me, but I didn't do it.

The fact that my own grandson would think this of me..."

Yang Fen's voice turned low as he shook his head in disappointment.

The elder's around him all started berating Yang Qing for how unfilial he was and how they had been doing all they did for the good of the clan.

"Was I wrong?" Yang Qing couldn't help but second-guess himself once he saw their reactions.

"I'm sorry Grandpa, Elders, I was careless and impetuous with my remarks. Please forgive me," said Yang Qing as he bowed deeply toward them.

While he did feel sorry for being rush with his words, there were aspects of it he would still hold on to. He had already firmly decided against participating in any experiments with his grandfather and the rest no matter how grand they made it seem to be. He had fallen for that trick one too many times.

Even after he had managed to break through to the Peerless jade body physique, they still continued on with their experiments and efforts to see if there was a realm past the Peerless jade body despite one never being recorded in the whole history of the Southern continent. Yang Qing rushed to break through to the qi refinement realm to put a stop to it and the final nail in the coffin was when he decided to leave for the Order.

As for why he agreed for them to join him after, their zealous nature aside, they were decent people. Even when he broke through to the qi refinement realm, they did all they could to support his cultivation in that realm and they did the same for his father when he broke through to the foundation establishment realm. Also, though Yang Qing may hate to admit it, they were extremely skilled in their fields which would be of benefit to the Order and he would have worried about them if he left them alone outside, especially with their careless personalities when it came to everything else aside from body refinement.

...

"Qing'er, this is why you're my favorite," Grandpa Fen said with a peal of cheerful laughter as he took the bowl of the braised beef with scallions off Yang Qing's hand.

"Mmh, this is really nice. That foolish son atleast did something right by marrying Ha'er," Yang Fen said as took greedy bites of the braised beef.

"You bastard do you intend to eat all that by yourself,"

"And he ate the last of our fasting pills too,"

"DON'T YOU DARE TOUCH ANY, my grandson brought me this, go look for your own grandchildren and eat from them"

"How shameless can you be? Didn't you already eat the fish-flavored pork Fang'er brought me, I didn't even get a taste before you gobbled it all up,"

"He also ate the egg fried rice my daughter brought me, not a single grain was spared. Fen you bastard, I'm having my just rewards today,"

"Fen, what are you doing with that eleven fires lace flower? You're willing to use just so you can't share,"

"If you want to have my braised meat, you have to prepare yourself, Hehehe,"

"Two can play at that game, you bastard,"

...

Yang Qing watched five elderly men fight over braised meat as they poured all sorts of spiritual herbs famous for their aggravating properties into the braised beef.

None was willing to be outdone by the other, so despite the ruined flavors because of the added herbs and its accompanying side effects they still fought over the meal. The bowl even got ground to dust in the process. By the time they were done, some had talons for hands, others had blue sclera in their

eyes, and others lost hair among other strange effects on their bodies. His grandfather had a bird's beak for a nose.

However, despite their absurd looks, the scene didn't play out how it would have if it were any other normal person. They seemed unperturbed by the changes in their bodies, like clearly it wasn't the first time they had experienced something like this. It didn't take them long before their eyes shone with excitement as they started studying each other's changes as they took notes and shared different hypotheses and findings about the changes in their bodies.

Cough! Cough!

Yang Qing had to clear his throat a few times to get their attention.

"Shouldn't we head back in? Mom's food will get cold and Gen said he's missed you so much, Grandpa."

Yang Qing decided to interrupt their discussion before it went any further because by then it would be difficult to tear them away from it and it would last hours and hours. He also had no qualms about selling out his brother to the butcher while he was at it.

"Gen'er said that? Hehehe you kids really are the best unlike your father," Yang Fen replied with a cheerful smile as he and the rest of the elders tabled their discussion.

"So what did you mean by body suppression?" Yang Qing decided to use the short walkover to find out more about their crazy suggestion. While he had no intentions of participating in it, it did not hurt to know more about what his father would be subjected to in the near future.

As a dutiful son, he felt it was his obligation to find out more so he could warn him later, after all, their father did look out for them in his own way when they were younger. Warning him of his impending doom was the least Yang Qing could do for him along with offering a silent prayer and burning incense sticks for him.

Chapter 237 [Bonus]Grandpa Yang Fen's Pitch (2)

"Like I said earlier, body suppression isn't crippling someone's cultivation, it's far from it." Yang Feng had an air of the seriousness of a scholar when he started talking.

"As researchers of body refinement, it is taboo for us to consider crippling someone's cultivation as a route for enhancing the body refinement since in essence crippling not only destroys one's cultivation but even their body's foundation which is in complete opposite of what we are after.

Yang Qing while what you went through and every other Yang member before may have seemed torturous, none of it was done without careful planning, which was built upon the foundation of countless years of research done by the Yang family.

Every experiment was done with the aim of promoting the body and not damaging it, despite how it felt, so never forget that. Our methods may seem cruel but their basis and target are pure and sound," Yang Fen said to his grandson.

Yang Qing on seeing his grandfather's seriousness nodded solemnly.

"Now the idea of body suppression was born from sealing one's cultivation base. Qing'er what if you could go back to body refinement or qi refinement or foundation establishment cultivation but still have the insights of a place realm cultivator? Do you think you could make further improvements in those realms using your current insights? And if you could, how huge would they be?

There are countless cultivators who wished they could go back in time and refine their earlier foundations, especially after meeting roadblocks in the journey ahead.

After years of work, we have finally created a potion that can help with that, though it's still in its early stages and we are not too clear on all the side effects yet. We called it the 'Body rebirth' potion and it can cause a cultivator to regress their realm by a single major realm. The regression is temporary of course and the current potency is just for a week. However, for that week, like let's say your case, for that week you'll have the senses and mind of a palace realm cultivator but the body of a core formation realm expert.

Though the current potion can only work for someone in the foundation establishment realm. We haven't yet found a way to make it work with core formation experts and above, but it's only a matter of time.

Qing'er this potion provides a chance for someone to undo their past regrets or relearn some things," Yang Gen said with shining passionate eyes as he clenched fists along with the other elders behind him.

Yang Qing had to agree that if the potion could do what he said it did, it was truly something, but he had doubts in some areas of it, especially its core function of changing the whole body back. This was essentially reversing time and undoing the work of the tribulation that usually melted one's body and reforged it as one advanced to the next major realm.

"Are the changes to the body a real change, Grandpa?" asked Yang Qing as he voiced his doubts.

"Well, the change is not a complete one since we run the risk of destroying one's cultivation if it was. What the potion does, is it digs out the memory of your previous realms that have been stored in your body and brings them back to the surface for that week.

Which also means that sadly you can't change much to your previous foundation other than examine it with fresher eyes." Yang Feng sighed with regret but he perked up immediately after.

"But it's not all bad because, for those with courage, they could dissipate their cultivation and start from scratch, and with the insights they gain from examining their earlier foundations they can make it sturdier the second time round and with greater speed too since they already have the framework," Yang Fen paused as his gaze turned distant.

"While I wholly do believe in the Yang family's ideology of exploring the body refinement realm, there are areas that I don't completely agree with and this change in thought started taking root because of your father and later grew because of you and your brother.

At this time, I don't believe it helps us by insisting that we should always maintain our cultivation base in the body refinement realm. Our breadth of knowledge and insight will become limited if we stubbornly stick to the past's framework thus halting our progress, which is why I think the family's research has experienced a long stagnation for the past 180 years.

There are things Qing'er that you can see now as a palace realm cultivator that I can not imagine because I'm not at your level. With each realm, a wider world opens up, and if we confine ourselves to the body refinement or the lower realms our vision will be limited along with how far we can actually dig into the body refinement realm.

The body rebirth potion was something one of our earlier predecessors thought about and who had the same doubts as us, so we took it up.

"Qing'er I'll admit I may have made that potion for selfish reasons but I also did it for you," Yang Fen said as he placed his hand over Yang Qing's head and cast a deep gentle gaze on his grandson.

Yang Qing finally had guesses on how his father managed to sneak out of the Yang family home and break through to the foundation establishment realm. If what his grandfather said was true, then it seemed more likely that his grandfather knew of his father's intentions and tacitly agreed to it. He couldn't help but re-evaluate the elder before him who currently exuded the air of a hero treading forward on an unexplored path, the kind of look he had seen on Chief Song Chuanli. It was of someone who had an unwavering belief and clarity of his path in life and was willing to do anything to follow it wherever it may lead.

"Maybe Grandpa with his passion for the body refining realm may one day sublimate his cultivation to the domain realm in one fell swoop."

Yang Qing realized even if he had a higher cultivation base, there were areas he paled in comparison to his grandfather. His thoughts soon got cut off by Yang Fen's next words.

"Qing'er while I have no grounds to base this on since there's so little information about it, I think the peerless jade physique has different levels to it and those levels have certain requirements to unlock them."

Chapter 238 Yang Qing's Palace Realm

Yang Qing stood rooted in shock at his grandfather's statement.

"What do you mean there are different levels? I haven't heard anything about it, and what about the other stages like gold body and diamond body do they have levels too?" Yang Qing eagerly asked.

While he didn't have the same level of fanaticism his grandfather and the rest had toward the body-refining realm, he did have a great interest toward the mysteries of cultivation which was why he loved buying strange-looking trinkets, studying lost arts and incomplete techniques.

Diving into that mystery always fascinated him.

....

"I don't have any basis for it but just call it an old man's gut feeling. We don't yet know the prerequisites of forming a peerless jade body physique, there's so much about this physique that is veiled in mystery.

What triggers it? Is it like the natural inborn physique that someone is born with and is only triggered after one reaches the diamond body stage or does every single person have the ability to cultivate one it's just that the mechanism change from person to person?

There's so much we don't know about it but what we do know is the peerless jade body has an unfathomable profoundness to it that affects someone for the rest of his life.

Isn't it partly because of it that you were able to form purple-grade pillars in the foundation establishment realm?" Yang Fen asked.

"Mmh," Yang Qing nodded in agreement.

To form his purple grade pillars, the peerless jade body played a part along with reaching the perfect qi circulation realm also known as the '13th level' of the qi refinement realm.

"But the thing is, even a diamond body can gain a purple-grade pillar, as you may have noticed from some of your colleagues.

If the peerless jade body physique just helped someone only gain purple-grade pillars, don't you think it would be too lackluster considering how difficult it is to achieve one?" Yang Fen asked though it didn't look like he was waiting for a response.

"On base value, if you compared the peerless jade physique to other natural inborn physiques, it always feels a little lacking.

Let's take your case as an example, you have the Yin-Yang jade bone physique which gives you immunity to almost over 10,000 poisons, increased qi storage capacity above those of your peers, and a high vitality and sensitivity to life essence in terms of yin and Yang.

Doesn't this make you nothing more than a glorified strong tree," Yang Fen calmly said as he stroked his beard.

"This old man, is he taking hidden jabs at me," Yang Qing thought as his face twisted in pain at essentially being called a tree.

"As a matter of fact there is one tree with the exact same qualities as you, I think it's the noble amethyst jasper, isn't that right Elder Gui?" Yang Fen said as he directed the question to one of the elders at his back.

"Mmh that is right, there's also the summer glow willow that has the same features, the light rain thimbleweed, the flaming whisper Alder, the.."

"Can you get on with it please," Yang Qing angrily interrupted as he felt Elder Gui would go on forever giving him hit after hit to his self-esteem.

"I can't believe I'm no different than a plant."

Yang Qing even started having regrets about why he even followed up on the peerless jade physique. He could never unhear what he had just heard. Every time he looked at himself from now on, he would inadvertently picture himself as a tree, especially with his green hair.

Yang Fen and the rest smiled in embarrassment when they realized their words were a little bit harsh.

"Where was I, yes right, natural physiques and the peerless jade body physique. If you only took helping someone to achieve a purple grade pillar as the only benefit then the peerless jade physique isn't worth the effort since even a natural-born physique can do that too. That girl, what has her name? little Mao Yunru, she had a purple grade pillar too right?" asked Yang Fen.

"Mmh, she did," Yang Qing answered

"I think her physique was the purple mist cloud body, I don't know much about it but I think it gives her a natural attunement to the water Dao in addition to granting her immunity to illusion spells and those are just her base attributes, what about when she digs deeper into her physique?

There's also the golden revolutions cicada body that can produce clones with independent thinking and different talent to the user,

The Moonstone Dreamweaver physique that allows the user to pull anyone into a dream realm despite the distance and attack them,

Or the asp of the bounteous star physique that enables the user to form multiple dantians in their body in the form of stars, while also granting them a body that is as hard as any ascendant-grade defensive artifact.

If you were to compare any one of these physiques to yours, yours falls a bit short.

In my eyes, the peerless jade physique doesn't and shouldn't lose out to any of them and should even be greater. But if we were to look at things at face value, then clearly the peerless jade physique seems weaker.

This is why I believe the peerless jade physique must have other levels to it, and the current attributes you have now are the preliminary attributes and you haven't even begun to touch the depths of it, which is why I think the body rebirth potion would do you some good.

It can help you analyze your body with fresher eyes and you may notice things you didn't before. Those at the Medicine Valley helped us because of those reasons, it turns out they long had these suspicions themselves.

The Order truly isn't short of monstrous people," Yang Fen said as he smiled in gratification.

Yang Qing stood in complete silence with closed eyes as he slowly digested his grandfather's words. Ignoring the jabs, he had to admit his grandfather made some valid points.

When he broke through to the peerless jade body physique he did try to study it for a bit then when he broke through to the qi refinement he didn't study it as much and just concentrated on its passive attributes such as sensitivity to Yin Yang energy and balance.

Then the more he progressed the less he gave it any thought, especially when he broke through to the core formation realm. But now that he thought about it, the passive effects of his physique kept getting more and more pronounced the higher up his cultivation base grew. At some point, he had thought his physique became irrelevant and overshadowed by his cultivation base but it has always been there slowly guiding him and assisting him.

Yang Qing slowly started circulating his cultivation technique. He cultivated the Universal duality indulgent of the myriad worlds. This technique was intimately suited to him since it attuned the user to their surrounding more specifically the natural aspect of it. For someone with Yin Yang jade bones, the technique was perfectly suited for him which was why Yang Qing chose it even though it was an incomplete purple grade art.

A gentle misty glow was produced from Yang Qing's body as he circulated his cultivation art. That glow had a dense life aura to it that caused the grass and the trees around to grow at an alarming speed. Even then birds, insects, reptiles, and other creatures that were around were drawn toward Yang Qing like he had some powerful tonic that invited them towards him.

Yang Fen and the rest on seeing Yang Qing's state slowly left him and went into the house.

"You really are the pride of the Yang family, Qing'er. This old man hopes to see what heights you will reach," Yang Fen slowly muttered to himself as he turned back and cast a gentle gaze Yang Qing's way. The other elders also turned with looks of gratification and then resumed their walks back to the house leaving Yang Qing alone outside in the courtyard standing as a dense warm sublime glow that had a multitude of colors revolved around him.

The grass had already grown to his knees in terms of length as they gently swayed almost as if celebrating something, there were a few sparrows perched over Yang Qing's shoulders chirping, however, the chirp seemed to attune itself to the swaying of the grass and the wavy glow surrounding Yang Qing.

Ellie flew a few hundred meters away as she kept a close watch on the surroundings to prevent Yang Qing from being interrupted. As the strongest creature around other than Yang Qing, watching over him during his state was left automatically to her.

Inside Yang Qing's body was a large stretch of land that run as far as the eye could see. The land was filled with short green grass that had a gentle glow to them. In the middle of that land there was only one tree and it resembled the green flame tree that grew in Yang Qing's backyard. Beyond the land, there was a large deep blue ocean that seemed like it had surrounded the land on all sides, and above in the clear sky there was a moon and a sun. The sun was above the land while the moon was above the ocean.

Yang Qing's silhouette could be seen seated above the green flame tree in a lotus position. This scene was Yang Qing's palace realm

Chapter 239 Jade Tree

Yang Qing's silhouette had a dual glow to it. Half of his body was earth yellow while the other half was blue-white. He had a calm yet peaceful glow to him that made him seem ethereal and one with the surroundings around him.

The grass and the ocean would sway with every breath he exhaled and the moon and the sun would rotate with every breath he inhaled. Every blade of grass before him was the equivalent of an early-stage monarch-grade treasure.

Everything around him was the manifestation of his palace realm. When a cultivator broke through to the palace realm from the core formation realm, their core would be melted down by the tribulation lightning and would be reformed into an environment that had the cultivator's own Dao as its foundational outline.

Those who could be considered as quasi palace realm cultivators were those whose dao seed had already taken root in their core and all they needed was to trigger the tribulation lightning to melt their core down so it could be fed to the Dao seed that would later sublimate into an environment that was the embodiment of that Dao seed.

Breaking through to the palace realm could be considered the one breakthrough realm with the least risk involved even when compared to the foundation establishment realm which has been known to have a few fatalities along with the core formation realm.

As long as you had a stable Dao seed, you were almost guaranteed a breakthrough to the palace realm, which is why the palace realm has some of the youngest recorded experts around, with the current record holder being an 11-year-old palace realm expert from the Flowing Valley sect, which is one of the two holy lands in the Southern continent.

That cultivator broke through almost ten years ago and the news created a storm when it broke out. However, it is rumored that the young palace realm cultivator had a special physique that made it easy for him to step into the palace realm at such a young age.

After the breakthrough, he was named as one of the sect's legacy leaf saints which was the highest rank one could hold as a disciple and those who held such a rank would be groomed as the next candidates for the sect master position and other higher ranking positions such as the supreme elder.

The Order has had a few young palace realm cultivators over the years, with the youngest recorded palace realm cultivator being 14 years old. The holder of that record was Zhu Li, the creator of five purple-grade cultivation arts. He was also the younger brother to Dean Zhu Lao who created the top tier gold grade technique, the Shadow void steps.

Other than Zhu Li, there have been a few others who were close to his age when they broke through for example Zhang Qingge who broke through when she was 17 years old and also had a record of fighting an early-stage palace realm cultivator from the Order to a draw for almost half an hour before she finally had to concede, when she was still in the core formation realm.

As long as you gained insight into some type of Dao and internalized to be part of you, you'd gain the qualifications to be a palace realm cultivator.

However, despite the ease of breaking through to the palace realm, most cultivators choose to take their time to be sure of the type of Dao they want to focus on because once they take that step it can never be undone and it will affect them moving forward, especially when trying to overcome the tribulation of the domain realm that has the highest fatality record across all realms.

Cultivators thus spend a lot of time trying to study different Daos if they have the talent for it, to try and find which Dao suits them best and which will in turn help them later in their cultivation route, especially when forming a Dao heart, which is one of the prerequisites for breaking through to the domain realm.

The palace realm could thus be considered a gateway and a bridge to higher realms. Therefore despite how easy it was to break through, considerable effort and thought are needed at this stage as it affects how far one will reach in the later realms.

The basis of the realm is to familiarise and deepen one's own understanding of the Dao and internalize it. Within their internal space, there will be an abstract manifestation of their understanding which will be in the form of an environment, For example in Yang Qing's case that manifestation appeared in the form of a large land filled with grass, an ocean, and a sun and a moon.

His palace realm was still in its rudimentary stages at the moment since he was only in the first stage of the palace realm. At present, there was only one type of plant in the area which was grass and the ocean had no vibrancy to it, while the sun and the moon above had minimal effects on their surroundings. As Yang Qing's understanding of Dao deepened, a Dao charm would be produced which would add more variety to the area in terms of different plants and herbs even animals at some point, and the area will have the semblance of a real functional ecosystem.

The palace realm had three minor realms namely; the outer palace, the inner palace, and the core palace. Every improvement was a representation of a qualitative jump in their understanding of their Dao, which would in turn be reflected in their inner space.

Because he had a purple core, Yang Qing had been looking forward to reaching the core palace stage the most, because he was told something else would form the moment he reached that stage due to his purple core, which would be a boost to his chances of attempting to break through to the domain realm.

He has always been curious about what it was but none of the instructors told him anything since they said the experience was unique to the owner, he would only find out when the moment came.

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Presently, Yang Qing was trying to sense every area within his palace realm to the minute of details. Since the passive effects of his Yin Yang jade bone physique were still growing along with his cultivation base, he had a feeling the physique had most likely imprinted itself to his palace realm in some way. If it did, then he would not need the body rebirth potion his grandfather and the medicine valley had created and could use his palace realm as a conduit to sense his physique.

"I hope this works," Yang Qing muttered as he slowly circulated his cultivation art while immersing himself deep into every area of his palace realm. Nothing was overlooked as Yang Qing looked to wholly insert his will into everything that had manifested in his palace realm, down to even the tiniest of cuticles on a single blade of grass.

Unbeknownst to him, his silhouette started to produce a pulse-like light green glow that would alternate to an ocean blue color at measured intervals. This change didn't stop there, a subtle transformation started happening in his palace realm as the sun and moon started blinking with a gentle glow. With every blink, they'd affect the sky above them and their surroundings. On the sun's side, it looked like dawn was arriving and on the moon's side, it seemed like nighttime was soon approaching, which even caused small gentle rising tides in the ocean.

An hour almost passed by with Yang Qing stuck in the same position as he was when his grandfather left, however unlike before they left, there was now a small circle beneath his feet. Half of it was green with a golden glow and the other half was dark blue with a white glow. Slowly the golden glow and the white glow started overwhelming the green-colored and the dark blue-colored circle respectively, till the circle turned half white and half gold yellow with dots of blue and green mixed at the center of the circle.

Inside Yang Qing's palace realm the sky was split in the middle with one half being night and the other being day. Yang Qing's body mirrored the same change in the sky.

Within his mind, as he submerged himself into his palace realm, he saw millions of small lines traversing all over the ground running in different directions at a speed that was at times slow and at times blindingly fast, and he was but a drop freely flowing along those lines without any form of direction or autonomy.

Yang Qing almost gave up halfway in, when he didn't detect anything within those lines as he was guided along, but he persevered on and that perseverance finally bore fruit when all of the lines seemed to converge together as they led into a crystal clear lake that had a small tree growing in the middle of it.

The tree was smooth like it had been made of green jade and it had leaves of different colors, sizes, and types almost like every type of leaf on the planet was on that small 2-meter tree. The tree was also enveloped by a mist that had faint shining lights of different colors. Yang Qing wasn't sure, but he could faintly hear a voice coming from within that mist and it was in an unfathomable language that he

couldn't quite understand. A part of him wasn't even sure what he was faintly hearing could be classified as language.

"Are those Dao markings?" Yang Qing wondered in shock as he saw inscrutable glyphs appear on some of the leaves on that tree. Just as he was about to move closer he felt something forcible eject him from the area and when he came to, he saw himself in the middle of his parents' compound.

Chapter 240 Improvement In Cultivation Realm

"What was that tree? Was it the Yin Yang jade physique or was it something related to the Universal duality indulgent of the myriad worlds art?" Yang Qing silently wondered as he held his chin in contemplation.

Purple grade cultivation art was different from the other different grades of cultivation art because of one distinct quality, which was that they had spirituality in them. Some of the purple-grade arts would choose those who could cultivate it, except the creator of course. So at times, a genius endowed with world-shaking talent would fail to cultivate a purple-grade art whereas a cultivator with lackluster abilities may get that luck as long as they had the luck to gain the favorability of that purple-grade technique.

Even though the art Yang Qing cultivated was incomplete it still had the spirituality of a purple-grade art which was why he couldn't help but suspect that the jade tree he saw deep within his palace realm was a byproduct of his cultivation art. The ejection feeling he had just experienced was something he experienced a lot during his preliminary phases when he was attempting to cultivate the Universal duality indulgent of the myriad worlds art.

Other than the eviction there were also the numerous leaves on the tree that looked like they belonged to different plants. That depiction could be symbolic to the myriad worlds part of his technique. However, the one part that made him think the jade tree wasn't completely tied to his cultivation art was the sense of intimacy and familiarity he felt with the tree like it was a part of him.

Yang Qing closed his eyes and tried to insert his will into his palace realm so he could retrace the jade tree again but his will got blocked the moment he tried it and didn't get far. He wasn't even able to trace the outlines back to the tree. The route leading to it seemed like it had been shielded off.

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"Was Grandpa right about there being requirements?" Yang Qing wondered with furrowed brows.

Going on the assumption the jade tree was tied to his Yin Yang jade bones then based on his grandfather's statement, the reason he was being rejected was because he didn't yet fulfill the criteria of being there let alone approaching it.

"And what was with that voice?" Yang Qing could still vividly remember the sound that came from the mist was in a language he had never heard of before.

"Mmh!!!"

Yang Qing's frown became even larger. He tried to utter the words that he heard but it was like they were stuck in his throat and wouldn't come out. It didn't stop there, he kept feeling the memory he had of the words didn't exist in his memory like they existed in a separate space like how information was stored in jade talismans and he was just accessing it but the real content was stored elsewhere.

"Now this is a pleasant surprise, my realm has already increased to the peak of the first stage of the palace realm," Yang Qing excitedly mused.

His mind was too preoccupied with the sudden discovery that he had overlooked his cultivation base. It was only when he had decided to postpone the matter of the jade tree to another time, did he get the chance to discover the increase in his cultivation base.

It has already been eleven months since he stepped into the palace realm. It took him five months to break through and safely consolidate his cultivation base while also familiarizing himself with his realm. His breakthrough had been among the fastest and it was as smooth as it could have been which was why he thought himself clever that he could pretend it took him eight months to do so since normal breakthrough and the consolidation afterward would take 9-12 months. However, his perfect breakthrough sold him out and Lei Weiyan was able to see through him and was therefore added three more months of work to cover the three months he had lied about.

Even though 11 months had passed by and Yang Qing was assiduous in his cultivation, he still thought it would take him another three or four months before he touched the peak of the first stage of the palace realm. Since the palace realm focused on deepening one's own understanding of the dao, improvement was slow measured compared to the realms below it.

The sudden improvement came as a welcomed surprise to Yang Qing since he felt with his cultivation base already at the peak of the first stage it wouldn't take him more than a month or two before he broke through to the second stage of the palace realm.

In his palace realm, there was already a shallow river that had formed at the boundary in the land to the north of his palace realm as it fed into the ocean next to it. It was light blue in color and had a hint of clear crystal-like shine to it. It was shallow and had a five-meter width but Yang Qing was ecstatic with its presence since he detected a hint of liveliness to it that was different from the grass, the ocean, or the sun and moon above him.

"I really owe Grandpa for this," Yang Qing muttered with a dry chuckle as he headed back to the house. If it wasn't for his grandfather, he didn't know how long it would have taken him to veer his head in the direction of his physique. While he was mildly traumatized by his methods, Yang Qing knew he owed his current achievements in part to his grandfather and the Yang family as a whole. The concoction that they used on him so he could break through to the peerless jade body, he didn't know what exactly was in it, but he knew it was pretty precious and that was without even putting into account the glyphs that were used to seal his senses. To date, he still wasn't sure how the Yang family was able to afford it all.

"Thanks, Ellie," Yang Qing said as he was leaving. He tossed a few fish Ellie's way, who screeched in excitement as she gobbled them all up in one single fell swoop.

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