

Daily life 241

Chapter 241 Last Day As A Superior Core Court Judge[Bonus]

Yang Qing walked into the house and found Yang Gen with a pallid-looking face as he stared fearfully at his grandfather like he was some sort of monster. It was only when he saw Yang Qing walk in did he seem to have some sort of life to him.

"Yang Qing did you hear?" Yang Gen shakily asked.

Based on his fearful appearance, Yang Qing could already guess his grandfather had already filled in his brother about the body rebirth potion which didn't seem like it went over too well.

"Isn't Gen a little too fearful? Mmmh maybe Grandpa gave him a lazy explanation, conveniently leaving out the key details," Yang Qing surmised upon seeing his brother's increasingly pale face.

"I heard," Yang Qing answered as he nodded in agreement.

"But I don't think it's that bad Gen, there may be some merits to it," Yang Qing added.

Yang Gen's jaws were wide open along with his eyes. He couldn't believe what he heard.

"Qing are you okay?" Gen worriedly asked as he hurriedly stood up only to be sat back down by his mother.

"Grandpa thank you for before, and the elders too, thank you for your guidance, it has helped me a lot," Yang Qing said as he offered a deep bow to the elderly company which came as a shock to his mom, brother, and sister-in-law.

Almost an hour ago he had been grumbling with his brother about avoiding their grandfather like he was a plague but here he was showing sincere gratitude. They all had mildly shocked looks on their faces,

especially Yang Gen who increasingly felt that their grandfather may have done something to Yang Qing or that the Yang Qing before him was an impostor.

"I take it you had an interesting experience?" Grandpa Yang Fen asked with shiny stars of curiosity showing up in his eyes along with the other elders as they all looked eagerly toward Yang Qing.

"Mmh," Yang Qing nodded as he filled them in on his experience including the jade tree and everything he saw around it.

"Grandpa, Do you think that tree could be a reflection of my physique?" Yang Qing asked.

He may have a higher cultivation base than his grandfather but when it came to the body refining realm he knew he couldn't hold a candlelight to him or the other elders. His grandfather may notice something in the things he mentioned that he may overlook.

"Mmh, it's hard to say Qing'er since this is essentially uncharted territory and we also know very little about the peerless jade physique to begin with. But based on your description I think it may very well like be your physique or even if it isn't completely atleast part of it, is.

Maybe it's using your cultivation art as a way to communicate and represent itself to you, but all this is conjecture but it's a great start," Grandpa Yang Fen said in excitement with the other elders joining in.

"Ha'er forgive my poor manners I will have to cut the dinner short and rush back to the Medicine Valley to check on a few things that may be of some help to Qing'er," Grandpa Fen said as he cupped his fists in apology.

"No it's okay father, I'm glad you were able to make it and I'm thankful for all you have done and continue to do for my children," Yang Qing's mom, Mai Ha said as she gave a graceful bow.

"Qing'er I'll have someone send over all of the research and findings we have on the subject along with our thoughts and guesses, maybe it will help you in figuring out a way to dig further into the jade tree.

Also if you don't mind could I share what you have just told me, with some of our colleagues at the valley?" Grandpa Fen hesitantly asked. He knew it was a form of taboo to reveal certain things about your cultivation even within a family, so he was a bit worried about making such a request.

"It's okay Grandpa, I don't mind," Yang Qing offhandedly replied. He wasn't worried about such a thing. If he was to make any headway into that jade tree, he would need as many helping hands as he could get and if he got more merit points and other awards from the Order because of it, all the better.

Immediately after Yang Qing's nonchalant response, Yang Fen and the rest of the elders immediately bolted from the area like their lives depended on it.

"How can they run so fast?" Yang Qing wondered in shock as he could feel their increasing speed within his palace sense.

The rest of the dinner proceeded as normal though Yang Gen still had this lost look to him throughout. It was only after Yang Qing carefully filled him in on the details did a look of relief finally appear on his face, especially when he heard the body rebirth potion still can't work on core formation experts yet or that the current side effects haven't all been identified yet.

He felt like he had gotten a new lease in life but he still decided that it was safer for him to try and reach the palace realm sooner so he could feel safer. Yang Qing offered to help him as much as he could including letting him stay in the nest of the celestial nesting weaver which had a chance of sensitizing him to a type of Dao which was one of the key features of the nest. He happily took Yang Qing up on the offer though it would have to wait until Yi Jie was done and Yang Gen was just at the fifth stage of the core formation realm. For higher odds of dao enlightenment, he would have to at least be in the seventh stage before he could harvest any benefits from the nest.

Afterward, they both decided that Yang Gen would be the one to inform their father of the news since they had no doubt that the moment the body rebirth potion started working on those in the core formation realm, their father would undoubtedly be the first tester of the potion. Better to give the old man a heads-up so he could get his affairs in order.

Yang Qing later exchanged a few words with the Zou siblings especially about the upcoming exams in a few days' time before he finally took his leave to his abode to rest up and prepare himself for the following day's events.

"Finally, I'm just a day away from being an outer palace court judge," Yang Qing thought as he smiled to himself atop Ellie's back.

Chapter 242 Another Peerless Jade Physique

"Sure, make yourself at home, why don't you?" Yang Qing snidely remarked once he came back to his abode with Ellie in tow.

He found Feng Xin, Luo Meili, Mao Yunru, Su Jinjing, Zheng Hu, Haishi, and Bolin sharing a meal on his front porch dining comfortably like it was their backyard with feet up, though the latter two seemed a little more reserved and were only having what looked to be snow ginseng tea.

"I could pack it all up and leave you know," said Feng Xin with a mocking threatening look as he pointed toward the spread that was on the dining table.

There was an assortment of a few snacks here and there; there were spring rolls, pan-fried dumplings, and different kinds of pancakes along with a pot of snow ginseng tea.

Yang Qing ignored him and picked a plate that he generously filled with everything that was there which caused a little vein throb on Feng Xin's forehead.

"Are you nervous about tomorrow?" asked Mao Yunru as she took a sip of her ginseng tea. Her hair was hanging loosely and she had on a simple sleeveless white dress and a grey light silk scarf draped over her shoulder.

Yang Qing's gaze lingered on her briefly before he tried to expertly pretend he wasn't staring.

"If I'm being perfectly honest, the ceremony itself doesn't scare me but it's what happens after that, that scares me the most," Yang Qing said as he let out a tired sigh.

He still had not forgotten about the potential penalties he would face should he delay in handing back the saint-grade treasures he was given for the ceremony i.e. the blue universe enclave robe, the veiled destiny domain crystal, and the necklace made from 500,000-year-old green silkworm.

Just imagining the penalties he would incur by delaying the return for even a minute, made his innards tied up in knots. However, even that fear was not enough to affect his appetite as he wolfed down those spring rolls.

Yang Qing shared the information on the charges he would incur, which drew laughter from those around except for Haishi and Bolin who were stuck in the awkward position of whether to laugh like the rest or not, which was made even harder due to the recent revelations. During the past few days, they got a brief glimpse of the fearsome strength of the Order.

The revelation of its strength hit Bolin harder than it did Haishi since the latter was mostly an airhead recluse who hadn't seen much of the world and kept to herself most of the time. Her experience at Feng Xin's hands was the greatest danger she had ever experienced in her whole life, which was why despite knowing Yang Qing was Feng Xin's boss, in her eyes, she was more afraid of Feng Xin than Yang Qing since she the experience created by Feng Xin left an unforgettable impression on her. That overwhelming defeat the other spirit beasts suffered and how close she was to death left a deep mark on her.

Other than that, she had not been involved in many fights so it was hard for her to imagine what levels such as the palace realm meant, her mind could only register what she saw and experienced. However the same couldn't be said about Bolin. Even if he wasn't officially a subordinate of the green flash viper, one of the false kings of the eighth zone of the green fog region, they were still close friends and as such, he helped the green flash viper in his rise to the rank of a false king. He had experienced countless battles over the years with both humans and spirit beasts of different power levels though most capped in the core formation realm. That battle exposure helped him gain an intimate understanding of how terrifying the Order was.

What false kings?

The false kings who ruled over the eighth zone would be worth a fart when compared to the Order and not even the Order, just a few nobodies from the beast-taming hall were enough to trample over all the inhabitants of the eighth zone a thousand times over, and then there was Luo Meili. Bolin would inadvertently gulp in fear every time his eyes would dart in her direction. He had thought nothing would ever come close to terrifying him like his experience with the gold-scaled alligator when he was just an up-and-coming tadpole, but his experience with Luo Meili over the past few days had subverted that experience and introduced a new level of fear he never thought possible. When his thoughts reached this far, he couldn't help but look toward Yang Qing with pitiful begging eyes.

"Don't worry, you'll only have to stay with Luo Meili until you can cultivate around the hundred moon cleansing hawthorne for 45 minutes without passing out," said Yang Qing as he took another bite of his spring roll.

"By the way, how long can he last Meili?" Yang Qing asked, addressing the gentle-looking mature beauty with dark green hair that was tied together with smoothly polished bones.

"It's just at the early phase, so he only lasts for about ten minutes or so but in the coming days, I'll try to help him reach the fifteen-minute mark," Luo Meili said as she cast an endearing gaze toward Bolin who shivered heavily at the look he got.

Yang Qing could only sigh at this. Even though he sympathized with Bolin, the training regimen had to continue and Luo Meili was the best person to do it since she had the best skills in that regard.

During their welcome ceremony, Yang Qing had given a wisdom pearl from a half-step palace realm spirit beast to Haishi, while Bolin was given the hundred moon cleansing hawthorne flower that had only 20 moons activated. Bolin's body was at an imbalance since he had focused only on the poisoning aspect of his bloodline and ignored the healing aspect. Had Bolin continued on the same path, by the time he reached the peak of the core formation realm, his body would have already started corroding from the inside due to his overwhelming poisonous attributes that would have grown beyond his body's ability to contain it.

Rainbow mist toads despite being famous for their lethal poison, were not entirely pure-based poisonous creatures. They existed as two-state creatures that could either be a healing tonic or a deadly poison. Bolin had neglected his healing aspect which was why Yang Qing had him cultivate every day for three hours next to an incomplete hundred moon cleansing hawthorne to help trigger his healing side while also curbing the overwhelming poisonous qi that had filled his body.

During the early phases, it would be a torturous experience since Bolin most likely felt like his innards were being melted due to the purifying effect that the hundred-moon cleansing Hawthorne had on poison and other miasma-related objects.

Yang Qing was even surprised Bolin was able to survive ten minutes next to it and he couldn't help but look at the palm-sized toad with a look of admiration. The fact that it could endure ten minutes was a testament to its willpower. The training seemed to already have some effects since the green color on its rainbow-coated skin was much darker than before, though it was still very faint, but the fact it had

gotten denser was proof Bolin was making progress. While he may have not improved his cultivation base, it seemed much calmer and stabler than before.

But when it came to Haishi, he couldn't help but worry about her. From the brief interaction he had with her, he felt she was clearly lacking in this regard, which was why he only gave her a wisdom pearl belonging to a half-step palace realm flying mist water python. If he gave her one belonging to a palace realm spirit beast like he did the starlight crab, he had fears that she would have suffered a severe backlash from it.

"Mmmh, well I don't need to do anything about her willpower. Those at the hall must have already noticed the same thing with much more clarity than I did and created a training plan for her accordingly. But for added measure, I think Feng Xin 'sparring' with her won't be a bad idea," Yang Qing thought as his gaze fell on Haishi.

"By the way Feng Xin, there was something my grandfather told me today which might be of use to you, though I don't know how much help it will be for you without a palace base realm to work with, but it can't hurt to try," Yang Qing suddenly said drawing curious looks from those around more so Feng Xin.

Feng Xin, just like Yang Qing also had a peerless jade body even though he ended up with a gold core. He had the ice soul jade bone physique which gave him immunity to yin-related techniques and poisons in addition he also had an abnormally powerful soul that had a matching level of sensitivity to his surroundings. Feng Xin's background was strange since even he doesn't know how he got the peerless jade physique. He was an orphan, and during his earlier years as a kid, he lived in the dead body of some spirit beast. It's unknown how he even managed to survive when he was a few months old but as he grew, he fed on that spirit beast and lived there till he was ten, then things happened and he eventually found himself at the doors of the Order two years later with a peerless jade body.

As for the identity of the spirit beast, even Feng Xin himself doesn't know since he ate part of it, while the other remaining part weirdly disintegrated when Feng Xin gained the peerless jade body physique. In the Order, Feng Xin had shown an unnatural gift for cultivation but the man was too obsessed with food which was why he ended up with a gold core because he always gave cultivation the bare minimum of his time. Yang Qing had no doubt that Feng Xin would have been a palace realm cultivator by now had he applied himself instead of being at the peak of the 10th stage of the core formation realm.

"Even if it eats away my leisure time, I'll have to get this lazy glutton to reach the palace realm within three months," thought Yang Qing as he flashed a gentle smile toward Feng Xin.

Chapter 243 Comparison Drawn To Natural Physiques

Feng Xin was mildly surprised by Yang Qing's smile that came out of the blue but he decided to ignore it as he listened to Yang Qing's own experience when he tried to sense his Yin-Yang jade bones.

When Yang Qing finished his explanation, Feng Xin closed his eyes as he tried to try and sense his ice soul jade bones using his core as a conduit to it. However, no matter how hard he tried, he couldn't see anything, all he felt was the same feeling and sensation he got when he was in silent meditation, absolute blankness, and tranquility from the circulation of his cultivation art.

"I can't sense anything Qing," Feng Xin said after he spent close to ten minutes and still got nowhere.

"Mmmh, maybe my grandfather was right, there may be certain requirements that one needs to reach to understand their peerless jade physique and maybe reaching the palace realm and forming an outer palace is one of those prerequisites, albeit just barely, since I was evicted a few moments after I laid my eyes on the jade tree," Yang Qing said as he scrunched up his brows deep in thought.

"Mao Mao, Meili do the two of you ever see a physical manifestation of your physiques or something close to it?" asked Yang Qing.

There was little information about the peerless jade physique despite it being around for the longest time or there was some information but that information was closely guarded by the organizations that had them. As he was basically in uncharted territory here, he thought it prudent to use Mao Yunru's and Luo Meili's experience with their own natural physiques as a point of reference for the peerless jade physique.

Mao Yunru had the Purple mist cloud body which gave her a natural immunity to the illusion spells and arts that were close to her in power and a natural affinity for the water Dao, while Luo Meili had the Mandala prana green nebulae jellyfish physique.

Yang Qing didn't know much about Luo Meili's physique other than it was extremely powerful that various seals had to be placed on it so her body wouldn't explode, also passively the physique helped Luo Meili in detecting the minute of changes to the environment or a living organism. However for her to make the best use of that ability, she needed to supplement that detection with knowledge otherwise it would be more of blind intuition than anything else.

This aspect of hers was what made her the best trainer, especially when it came to spirit beasts who all had different bodies, internal structures, and responses especially when it came to cultivation. She could detect what training regimen had the best results and which did not, and a supplemented knowledge helped in the knowing of why.

It was for this reason that she had already been set aside to be a chief trainer at the institute when she reached the palace realm. The only reason she was assigned to Yang Qing was to help her build her experience by being an inquisitor and also because of Yang Qing himself. Because of Yang Qing's Yin-Yang jade physique coupled with his cultivation art, 'The universal duality indulgent of the myriad worlds', he ended up with a universal qi which had effects on both a person's soul and body and because of its universal attribute it could work on all cultivator's with different attributes without causing a backlash. The only exception were corpse cultivators, ghost cultivators, or those with dense slaughter qi that has been stained with anguish and resentment. For those kinds of cultivators, Yang Qing's Qi would burn their bodies.

But when it came to Luo Meili, Yang Qing used his universal qi to strengthen her body and soul which would be of benefit to her when it came to assimilating with her physique. This was why even after she becomes a chief trainer at the institute, she would still be attached to Yang Qing as an inquisitor, albeit on a part-time basis.

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"Mmh in my case, it's not so much as I can see my physique, it's kind of like.... how should I put it?.... it's like how your body can tell when you're hungry, tired, or thirsty, and then when you eat, rest, or drink, it knows when it's satiated. It's the same thing with my physique, every time I cultivate, something from my physique appears by itself like breathing. I don't know if that helps," Mao Yunru said with a slightly embarrassed expression which only grew further when she saw Yang Qing's eyes turn big along with Feng Xin, Zheng Hu, and Su Jinjing.

"Thanks, Mao Mao, it helped a lot," Yang Qing said as he coughed a little.

How could the greatest gossip hoarder be this horrible with explanations? Doesn't she have enough experience to articulate better from all the stories she has gobbled up over the years?

Thought Yang Qing, though outwardly he showed a look of deep gratitude which Mao Yunru didn't seem to buy at all as she softly pouted.

"As for me, all I see is a massive jellyfish filled with all kinds of chains sealing it in a green nebulous sky. I can see it any time I want to, though it does come with some risk as you well know.

Also, every time I break through, that jellyfish releases a green smoke that combines with my breakthrough, whether it's my foundation pillars or my core. Every major breakthrough has been accompanied by the smoke. I can tell it's not harmful, as a matter of fact, it even reinforces my cultivation level and helps me achieve smoother breakthroughs," said Luo Meili.

"Thanks, Meili, this actually helps a lot," Yang Qing said with clear excitement in his tone, unlike his earlier expression in reaction to Mao Yunru's explanation.

Luo Meili's explanation of her experience gave further credence to his guess that his physique had somehow melded with his cultivation over the years, he just didn't notice it at the time. However, there were still some clear differences since he kept feeling his Yin Yang jade bones grow with his base, no matter how minute his growth, the effect would still be there. The other one was Luo Meili could freely gain access to her physique, while Yang Qing only had that one single experience in the day and when he tried it again it failed and he also felt even if he tried it a month later it would still end in failure.

He had no credible reason for that feeling other than intuition and for cultivators at their level, intuition was never just a simple guess, it was usually tied to the grand Dao. It's just that it was veiled from the cultivator, who could only access glimpses of it which came in the form of intuition at times.

Chapter 244 [Bonus]Day Arrives

"I wonder if natural physiques have levels of assimilation and ease of familiarity." Yang Qing wondered as he thought about the different explanations given by Mao Yunru and Luo Meili.

He suspected maybe the reason why Mao Yunru struggled with her explanation was because her physique had melded deeply into her and asking her for her feeling was like asking someone why they breathed in and out and not out and in.

"Well it's not like I can figure all this out in one day, I'll let Grandpa and the rest continue with it," thought Yang Qing as he decided to push the matter to the back of his mind until he had some leisure time.

His coming week would be packed with a lot of things, from induction training, a visit to the requiem, supervising the upcoming entrance examination test, the discussion he was to hold with Meng Chao and Zhang Qingge concerning Jiang Fu and the founder of the crystal palm jade sect, there was also Ma Yuan's investigation into his missing wife and daughter, the investigation into the scion of one of the founders of the Golden bamboo pavilion along with the Red Maple Empire to see if they had any cover-ups and also the report he was to make to the spirit council so a branch of the Order could be created in the ungoverned territory of the Spiritual Temperance Sect, where a member of the Dark Helminth Ghost sect had tried to ambush him during his evaluations.

Just thinking about all the mountain of things that were waiting on him made him feel fatigued deep into his soul and he hadn't even begun on the cases he would get the moment he stepped into his courtroom.

He decided to bury his woes into his food and leave all those troubles to the future Yang Qing. Procrastination and cheating one's mind were beautiful things at times.

"Tomorrow can worry about itself," Yang Qing thought as his mood turned jolly. He even took out a zither from somewhere and butchered a few songs with overwhelming glee.

His guests stayed till three in the morning before they left but not before giving him their good wishes. After his ceremony, Yang Qing planned to invite them over along with other friends who were not from the Order, like the king of the White Baobab Kingdom, and a few others he had made over the years in his post.

For once he wasn't worried at all about the cost of hosting a party for all those people since he would be swimming in spirit stones and treasures tomorrow. It was the one good thing to come out of the ceremony, the treasures he would be getting from all the 'fat guests'.

Yang Qing snickered a bit at the thought of it. He couldn't help but daydream about the kinds of gifts he would get.

"Mmh, maybe I can even afford the early fines for the robe. Just a few hundred thousand high-grade spirit stones, it's nothing much," Yang Qing arrogantly said pretending to be a nouveau riche young master.

"What are you feeling so smug about?"

"My upcoming wealth, maybe I might have enough to get you a good gift in celebration of your upcoming breakthrough," Yang Qing said as he addressed the young man standing next to him pouring himself a cup of the snow ginseng tea. It was Yi Jie. Yang Qing had already sensed him when he came out of the nest of celestial nesting weaver.

Even though Yi Jie hadn't broken through yet, Yang Qing could feel a dense charm of Dao on him, and his cultivation had been reinforced and strengthened to the tip. He felt like a lonely moon overlooking the lake that had a sheathed saber at the bottom. All this was a reflection of the cultivation art Yi Jie cultivated, 'The silent phases of the moon saber draw', a top-tier gold grade art that placed a huge emphasis on extreme swiftness, to the point there would be no ripple in sound or light. Few people within the Order were able to meet its strict requirements and Yi Jie was one of them.

Based on Yang Qing's estimate, if Yi Jie so wished, he could break through right then and there.

"You'll be leaving for the Wise arc mountain, I guess?" asked Yang Qing.

"Mmh," Yi Jie nodded in reply

"How long?"

"Five months or less,"

"Good,"

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The Wise arc mountain was a special location set aside for breakthrough by the Order. The whole mountain was a natural treasure tied to the origin of the world and it had the ability to isolate someone as though they were in a separate space and dimension. The effect was so strong to the point it affected even tribulations by preventing overlapping tribulations.

If two cultivators were in the same realm and one of them triggered a breakthrough tribulation with the other cultivator closeby, that tribulation would affect the other cultivator into triggering their own tribulation on the spot, whether they wanted to or not, resulting in a compounded tribulation that could threaten the lives of both of these cultivators.

However, a compounded tribulation could be a blessing or a curse. On one hand, it could get so powerful that both cultivators perish beneath it, or both survive but fail their breakthrough, or one survives with a failed breakthrough while the other dies, but should one or both of them survive and successfully complete the breakthrough, they end up with their sturdiest of foundations, in addition to getting an upgrade to their cultivation realm, whether it's a pillar, core or palace realm and so forth. If a cultivator was suited to form an orange grade pillar, should they survive and successfully breakthrough a compounded tribulation they would end up with a blue grade pillar, and if the cultivator had blue grade pillars and were breaking through to the core formation realm, after surviving the tribulation they would end up with a gold grade core, even someone with gold pillars could end up with a purple grade core if they survived it.

However, the purple core would only work if two people with top-tier gold-grade pillars triggered their tribulations at the same time. The resultant tribulation was enough to kill a peak core formation expert, which was why rarely would anyone try to achieve a purple-grade core through this method.

Therefore to avoid the risks of compounded tribulations, the Order set aside a location for breakthroughs. All top-tier organizations had similar locations.

Yang Qing and Yi Jie sat in complete silent eating and drinking. Yang Qing had taken out his vermilion wine at some point and shared it with him. It was only when the sun was almost up did Yi Jie finally leave.

"See you in three months," said Yang Qing as he got into his courtyard to change into his ceremonial robes.

"Thanks, I'll leave something for you here before I leave," Yi Jie said as he walked away.

"The day is finally here, I hope there are no unexpected surprises. Soft life Yang Qing, you just have to survive this upcoming week and you will be one step closer to your dream," Yang Qing silently chanted to himself as he clenched his fists.

Chapter 245 Talking With The Spirits

Yang Qing carefully put on his universal enclave robe and the accompanying veiled destiny domain crystal and the necklace made from the 500,000-year-old green silkworm.

Despite being covered in Saint-grade artifacts from top to bottom, he was anything but assured. All he saw from them were cursed objects that had the capability to ruin him in mere moments and subject him to the depths of poverty he never thought possible.

However, those foreboding thoughts were soon pushed to the back of his mind as he focused on assimilating the Saint-grade treasures so they could attune themselves to his body.

Yang Qing took out a small wooden token that had the image of a swirling wave that was carved on the wings of some obscure creature that Yang Qing couldn't make heads or tails of what it was. But he could tell it looked humanoid and was slender in stature.

After getting the robe, and the other Saint grade artifacts, later during the day he was called back by assistant director Jun Pei to pick up the token. The reason he wasn't given before was that the token usually resided in the heart crystal mountain, the place the Spirit Council was located.

The token would help him in controlling the Saint grade artifacts and help them 'work together' for him.

Saint-grade treasures and artifacts were no different from a living organism since they had developed spirits of their own, and as such, being able to use them, especially when you were weaker than them, would prove to be a tough task not unless the artifacts or treasures themselves approve of you or the owner of said treasures or artifacts ordered them to assist the other party. In addition, Saint grade treasures and or artifacts always fought for supremacy against each other, so using two or more at the same time would prove difficult since they would always try to hinder each other.

The three Saint-grade artifacts Yang Qing had on hand had two problems, one was the vying for supremacy part and the other was the three Saint-grade artifacts had no owner so forcing their obedience to help Yang Qing was out of the question. External means would have to be employed so he could use them.

The only way he could use them was through circulating the five harmonious technique that would merge those artifacts into one mind and also there was a will imprinted on the token that would help smoothen the process.

The Order has held countless ceremonies over the years using the three artifacts, they have thus refined the process to make it as seamless as possible.

Yang Qing slowly circulated the five harmonious technique which created a small glyph that merged with the token. The swirling water wave on the token turned life-like as an intense whooshing sound was produced from it, with its blue color getting darker.

A huge wave of the densest qi was produced from that wave which merged with the glyph. The glyph turned into a small golden string that tied the blue universe enclave robe to both the veiled destiny domain crystal and the necklace from the 500,000-year-old green silkworm and lastly to Yang Qing's glabella.

Yang Qing was shocked at how dense that qi was, it felt like it could fill a whole ocean and even have some leftovers, and the nature of it, Yang Qing couldn't quite place it but it felt familiar to him.....

"Isn't this?" Yang Qing muttered, but he immediately freed his head of all distracting thoughts when he felt his mind get dragged into a massive dome-shaped hallway.

The hallway was filled with mosaic glasses that had the image of all kinds of auspicious beasts like; a dragon, a phoenix, a black tortoise, a white tiger, a vermilion bird, a Luan, a qilin, kunpeng, a golden roc, a giant Ao tortoise with a huge mountain on its shell among other beasts that would cause a huge shockwave in the world were they to be spotted.

Within the hallway there were 8 statues that had dressed as Daoists however their facial features were obscured, however, Yang Qing noticed one of them looked like he had crystal blue wings and was also a

bit different from the rest of the statues. Yang Qing wasn't sure why, but he felt that statue was more life-like as if it could burst with life any moment.

His wondering thoughts however were pulled back when three figures appeared in the center of the hallway. One was a wizened old man with blue robes who looked to have the whole universe in his eyes. You could see the movement of the stars, the change of seasons, and time within his eyes.

Yang Qing took a nervous gulp when he saw him.

Next to the old man was a creature in a grey hooded robe that had all sorts of rotating glyphs. Yang Qing had to stop staring when he felt his sense of self disappear every time he tried to stare at what lay underneath the hood.

The last of the three was a green cocoon that was the size of a palm. Despite its size Yang Qing detected the densest aura of vitality and regeneration from it, It was enough to match that of a forest that had covered a whole rank 1 empire.

Yang Qing had no doubt if Ma Yuan stayed next to the cocoon for a month, even without his cultivation realm his lifespan would definitely rival that of a peak stage palace realm expert which was 25,000 years.

"Not bad," said the wizened elder as he stroked his beard while scrutinizing Yang Qing.

Beneath that gaze, Yang Qing felt like all his secrets were laid bare.

"Mmh, the Order's standards are getting better and better. Young man if you keep up, I see a good future ahead," said the hooded figure. Even though Yang Qing understood clearly what the figure said, he felt like the figure didn't use words to communicate and his brain interpreted whatever form of communication the creature used, into words.

"This means soft life Yang Qing may be born finally after years of tireless efforts," thought Yang Qing in glee as he mulled over the words of the hooded figure.

It didn't take too much for him to guess the identities of the three newcomers. They were the spirits of the Saint-grade artifacts. He had no idea where the dome-shaped hallway came from but if he had to guess, it was more than likely from the wooden token he had.

The wizened elderly man before him with the universe for eyes was likely the spirit of the blue universe enclave robe, while the hooded figure was no doubt the spirit of the veiled destiny domain crystal which had skills in karmic spells. The fact that it said Yang Qing had a good future ahead meant Yang Qing may very well live his dream in the future.

"Thank you very much seniors for your generous appraisal of this junior. I know I'm lacking in many areas, but I will make sure to live up to your expectations," Yang Qing said as he cupped his fists to them.

"Mmh, " the elderly spirit of the blue universe enclave robe nodded in acknowledgment.

"A good worker indeed," said the spirit of the veiled destiny domain crystal in appreciation.

Yang Qing who was all smiles almost fell over during his bow to the both of them.

"Whaaat?!" said Yang Qing who was unable to contain himself after what he just heard.

"Forgive me, seniors, I am beside myself at being in your radiant presence," Yang Qing said with an embarrassed smile.

"Senior, I don't know how I should address you?" Yang Qing politely asked as he forwarded the question to the spirit of the veiled destiny domain crystal.

"Well, we haven't used any names in the past 200,000 years. Mmmh you can just call us what Fei always calls us. I'm Veiled Destiny, this is Blue Universe and she is Green Cocoon," said Veiled Destiny as he pointed to the spirit of the blue universe enclave robe and the spirit of the necklace made from 500,000-year-old green silkworm respectively.

"200,000 years?! Who's Fei?" Yang Qing wondered as the person in question seemed to have a deep relationship with the three Saint grade treasures seeing how whoever they were could give them ridiculous names and they looked to be fine with it.

As for 200,000 years, he wasn't surprised since treasures and artifacts, as long as no irreparable damage happened to their main bodies, they were virtually eternal.

"Excuse me senior Veiled Destiny, when you said I have a good future ahead did you mean that I would be a good worker or did you mean something different?" Yang Qing cautiously asked.

The 'good worker' comment had sent him on edge even more than the fines he would incur should he delay returning the Saint grade artifacts back to the internal logistics department.

"I wonder about that?" said Veiled Destiny in a playful tone which was the first time Yang Qing detected any emotion from it.

"Mmh, life..aura..not...known...yet...time...maybe... curious."

The last member of the group finally spoke up, when Yang Qing was contemplating how to get more out of Veiled Destiny.

"This is rare, Green cocoon who hasn't spoken up for the past 400 years, finally has?" said Blue Universe with clear surprise in his tone.

"She may have taken interest in him because of his nature, though that part is unclear even for me," said Veiled Destiny.

Yang Qing stood there puzzled at what the green silkworm said. Its voice was that of a young child who had just begun teaching herself to speak.

"Is she a new spirit," wondered Yang Qing. The incoherent speech pattern was a common thing to newly formed spirits.

"She is several times older than all of us, if I was to use human terms, I would call her our great great great great great grandmother.

Her speech pattern is because she is lazy and she doesn't speak much. She could go for thousands and thousands of years without talking. Over the past 50,000 years, she hasn't said more than 400 words," said Blue Universe seemingly reading Yang Qing's thoughts who was currently shell-shocked at such a revelation.

"But isn't she 500,000 years old and you have been around for at least 200,000 years I?" Asked Yang Qing.

"The 500,000-year-old thing was just a cheeky ruse done by Fei to avoid troublesome situations. Green cocoon has taken naps that were at least that long. But I'm afraid I can't tell you more kid," said Blue Universe with a gentle smile.

Yang Qing couldn't help but warily stare at the unassuming green cocoon in front of him.

"What is she?" He wondered

Chapter 246 Promotion Ceremony (1)

Yang Qing stared deeply at the palm-sized silkworm, however, Green Cocoon didn't say another word again leaving Yang Qing awkwardly standing around wondering what to do next since even the spirit of both the Blue Universe enclave robe and the veiled destiny domain crystal went silent.

Luckily for Yang Qing, that awkward moment didn't last long as there was a sudden movement from one of the Daoist statues. It was from the statue Yang Qing felt was a little too life-like, and was also more slender than the rest and had insect-like wings on its back that had strange light blue scripts on it.

The statue waved one of its palms and a white platinum silver string was produced from its palm as it headed in the direction of the three Saint grade treasures and Yang Qing.

When the string was in the middle of the hallway it split into four and headed toward the blue universe enclave robe, the veiled destiny domain crystal, and the green cocoon.

"Is there a need for this? it's not like we would go back on our word and harm the young one," said Blue Universe in exasperation as he addressed that one statue.

"How long are we left with?" asked Veiled Destiny.

"By my count, we have 34,568 years left," said Blue Universe after he paused briefly to do a little mental calculation.

"Almost 400,000 years have passed by so fast. Have you thought about what you will do after?" asked Veiled Destiny.

Yang Qing detected a hint of melancholy coming from its tone as it asked that question.

"Probably go bet with Fei again, I almost won last time despite him clearly cheating," said Blue Universe as he clenched his fists with his eyes flashing with battle intent.

"It wouldn't hurt to get back at him, especially with that smug smile and foul mouth of his. I can't believe he spent a whole 9,000 years bragging," Veiled Destiny said in lamentation.

"Count.me.in.hateful.child," Green cocoon who had been silent all this while finally spoke up again.

"Good, it's a deal. After we finish the terms of the bet, we will challenge that bastard again. Just you wait, Fei," said Blue Universe with clear excitement in his tone.

Yang Qing who was trying to piece their conversation together was caught off guard when the slender Daoist statue with crystal wings on its back, suddenly spoke.

"I'll see you three in 34,568 years and don't be sore losers when the time comes. I've even been practicing my zither skills for the celebration I will hold after," said the statue.

The tone was gentle, ethereal with a hint of mystique to it. Yang Qing was even shocked to see Dao mist being produced as the statue spoke as if the words it was speaking had fundamental world truths to them.

He increasingly got curious about who this Fei character was. The statue gave no clue at all since he had never seen anyone who looked like that at the Order. About the only clue he had, was the dense qi he felt when the glyph produced from the Five Harmonies cultivation art combined with the wooden token he had.

That monstrous qi bared a bit of similarity with the clay platform he gave Dean Zhu Lao for his welcome-back party.

"Maybe after things have settled, I'll go see the Dean and check if he has made any progress," Yang Qing thought.

As Yang Qing was trying to find out the identity of the Fei person, he felt his mind buzz like it had been struck by lightning and a second later he felt an otherworldly sensation around him.

His body felt like it had been reformed and was a hundred times stronger. His thoughts were clearer, smoother, and faster. His vision had changed as he could see weird scrips floating around him. The mosaic glasses filled with auspicious beasts seemed like they had become alive.

"What's this?" Yang Qing wondered in shock as he felt the overwhelming power that coursed throughout his body. He felt like he could destroy 10,000 of his old self in the blink of an eye.

Just as Yang Qing was about to get swallowed over by the feeling of the monstrous power, he forcibly calmed himself down by circulating his cultivation art, the Universal duality indulgent of the myriad worlds. The art aimed at promoting both the body and soul, ensuring their growth was at equilibrium.

Yang Qing felt like cool water had been poured on his whole body, calming the power in his body. Even if he could still sense its immensity, the slave-like feeling he had gotten moments ago when he got exposed to it was slowly disappearing though even if he had managed to maintain his sanity, he felt like he was standing on a very tight rope, and it wouldn't take too much effort for him to tip over.

Just as he was wondering what to do, he felt the monstrous ocean-like qi fill him up and doused the overwhelming power within him, putting it at bay while also granting Yang Qing autonomous control over it.

Yang Qing finally felt like he could freely guide the power rather than fighting for dominance with it, which he would have surely lost had the earlier state of teetering on a thin rope, been maintained.

" Well done child. You're among the few people who have handled that transition smoothly," Blue Universe said in admiration.

Yang Qing's pupils shrunk when his gaze fell on the three Saint-grade artifacts.

The earlier experience had left him quickly overwhelmed so he didn't have the time to pay attention to anything else, but now when his gaze fell on the three treasures, his jaws hang loosely at the sight before him.

Blue Universe wasn't just a genial wizened old man anymore but was a never-ending blue universe filled with countless stars and planets, as for Veiled Destiny it was no longer a hooded figure but billions of golden-colored strings that had covered a whole world while the green cocoon could be considered the tamest since all Yang Qing could see was a never-ending green sky that could cover a whole planet and nourish it.

"Thank Veiled Destiny for your current vision, who knows, maybe you might gain some unexpected harvests.

Yang Qing let's have ourselves a good ceremony. We will do all we can to ensure your safety through it all," said Blue Universe as his voice turned distant.

Yang Qing could feel like he was being ejected from the dome hallway. When he came to, he found himself in the middle of his room and barely even five minutes had passed by.

"Was that a real dimension with its own time parameters?" wondered Yang Qing as he tried to sense the changes in his body.

He could now feel an intimate control over the three Saint-grade artifacts like they were an extension of his limbs.

"So this is what a domain realm expert feels like?" Yang Qing muttered as he sensed the strength coursing through his body.

The veiled destiny domain crystal among its effects, one of them was elevating some of his senses to that of a domain expert. Yang Qing wasn't sure to which level he was elevated at, but he could feel the monstrous gap between his palace realm strength and his current abilities. The difference was like a tiny pebble and an empire-sized mountain. The experience was humbling, especially considering all he had at the moment was just the senses of a domain expert and lacked the core features such as a domain filled with Dao runes.

Yang Qing couldn't help but chuckle bitterly when he remembered how smug he had felt when he broke through to the palace realm thinking he was at the top of the world. This experience had doused whatever arrogance he had left.

Yang Qing straightened his robes out of habit before he left his courtyard.

"Is it me or does this robe make me look even more dashing than I usually am?" Yang Qing smugly thought as he swaggered outside.

"It's just you."

Blue Universe's voice echoed in his mind immediately after which made him almost trip over.

"Senior is there a need for that?" asked Yang Qing in aggrievement.

After not getting any response he lethargically made his way out of his abode where he found Song Guozhi from the standard regulatory committee waiting for him, but he wasn't alone. Beside him was a middle-aged man with long flowing black hair that had been tied into a topknot with a dragon-coiled headband. He had just the same serious look Song Guozhi had. Yang Qing wondered if it was a trait all members of the Standard Regulatory Committee shared.

"It seems the assimilation went on smoothly," said the middle-aged man.

"Judge Yang Qing, this is the assistant head of our department, master Liang Wen," Song Guozhi dutifully said as he politely pointed to the middle-aged man beside him.

"Junior Yang Qing greets assistant head, Liang Wen," Yang Qing said as he cupped his fists in greeting.

"Nice to meet you Yang Qing, truly a name that matches the person. Your fame isn't undeserved. Time isn't with us we need to move."

Just before Yang Qing could process what Assistant Head Liang Wen meant with his statement, he felt his vision change as he was sucked into the domain of assistant head Liang Wen.

"Old Lei you fiend, just how far have you spread my name? Do all these people just sit around and gossip all day? I knew it, the domain realm is the true soft life," roared Yang Qing in his mind as he was being whisked away to the Star blooming mist valley.

Chapter 247 Promotion Ceremony (2)

It didn't take long before Yang Qing, Assistant Head Liang Wen and Song Guozhi reached the Star blooming mist valley.

The venue was already booming with people and the air of festivity along with rife anticipation had already filled the air.

The glowing mist that was filled with Dao charm seemed much more abundant than it was the previous day.

Yang Qing managed to spot a few familiar figures among the crowds of people present since at the moment it was only those from the Order who were present. The invited guests would arrive two hours later.

Of those present, Yang Qing spotted Ling Meimei the hall master of the formation hall who was currently being shadowed by other members of her department as she issued rapid instructions. Dean Zhu Lao was also next to her which based on his docile appearance didn't look like it was out of choice. Yang Qing couldn't help but chuckle at this.

Along with the formation hall, there were members of other departments; there was the craftsmanship division where he spotted Chief Song Chuanli among their ranks, there was the internal logistics division which was keeping track of everything that was being used since the moment the ceremony ended, the place would return to its natural bare state, the members of the eagle guard division were also there, and their numbers were also the largest.

The eagle guard division handled security around the headquarters, the branches, the institute, and other various facilities of the Order such as the Glowing Respite Valley. The division wasn't made up of the most talented recruits and it was usually composed of those who barely managed to survive getting admitted to the institute and finished their training. Their results were not the best either, however, that was only in comparison to the monsters the Order recruited. Those who managed to survive in such a place, even if they didn't stand out and were mostly at the bottom of the group, could still be considered elites if they were pitted against other factions that were not the Order.

After their graduation, members of the eagle guard division would enter specialization training in which every member would be trained skills in a particular subject depending on their affinities to that area. For example, there would be those trained in poison detection, others in detection and handling of certain types of curses, others trained in attacks using a particular weapon, others in defense using specific means i.e. formation, barrier seals, or even through the use of a weapon. The Order's aim was to maximize whatever talents they had and thoroughly hone them in a particular area. They were masters of a particular section within a section, which made them tough opponents when you faced them as a group or as a well-matched one-on-one opponent.

Yang Qing also managed to spot a few members of the Shadow Hawk division lurking about. A ceremony like this was the best ground for the intelligence department to update their information and gather more intel on the different organizations around the Southern continent.

Yang Qing looked around some more as he was soaking everything in. It was at this moment that he finally felt it; he was finally an outer palace court judge.

When this day ended he would be in a different station. Everything leading to this moment felt so surreal. He felt a tad bit emotional, especially after remembering how much of a shock it was to him after he stepped into the courts of the Order as an outer core judge. He was practically beaming at the time, thinking he had scored the easiest and the safest job of his life, only to get a rude awakening by getting slammed with cases upon cases.

From that point on things just seemed to spiral out of control. He began a losing battle with the Order, which made him lose the one good thing left of his despair-filled days, which was his income. He has suffered so many penalties and fines over the years, then there was the money-sucking abode, along with the abyss celestial nesting weaver that made sure he would never have any single spirit stone lying around at the end of the month. Merit points were his only saving grace, otherwise, he was not sure how he would have survived.

He found a nemesis and source of his internal demons in Lei Weiyuan, who has been a constant thorn in his side. Just when he thought finally he would be leaving the core courts behind three months ago, once again the Old demon reared his fangs and tortured him to the last day.

But finally, here he was. His nose felt a little hot and it took all he had not to shed a few tears.

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"Hi, Wen,"

"Yang Qing that robe looks quite good on you,"

Yang Qing was pulled from his emotional nostalgic rubdown by a greeting from Dean Zhu Lao who had managed to sneak away from his wife. But with the way his eyes kept darting in her direction cautiously, it didn't look like he had long.

"Thank you, Dean Zhu Lao," said Yang Qing as he offered a warm smile and cupped his fists in greeting.

Assistant head Liang Wen and Song Guozhi also exchanged their greetings with Dean Zhu Lao.

"How is the experience?" asked Dean Zhu Lao as his eyes glittered while scanning the three saint-grade treasures Yang Qing had on.

"I can't quite put it into words, but I can say it's a humbling experience," said Yang Qing with a bitter smile.

The more he attuned himself to the senses of a domain expert the clearer it became to him on the gap between an early-stage palace realm expert and a domain expert. At this moment he could only hope the senses he had was for a late-stage domain expert because if it was an early-stage domain expert, then that would mean at his cultivation realm he would be less than an ant against any domain expert in the middle stages up to the peak of the realm.

"Well, it is understandable you would feel that way but don't let it dishearten you. You've only just begun your journey, just take it day by day," said Dean Zhu Lao as he bent a little to scrutinize the sleeves of the blue universe enclave robe with a deep fascinated expression appearing on his face.

Yang Qing started to feel a bit better after Dean Zhu Lao's statement but his next words threw him back into that familiar pit of despair.

"Too bad you only get the senses of a third-stage domain expert, though at least it's of one with a saint domain," said Dean Zhu Lao.

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"What a waste. This robe should be used as a curriculum subject at the institute instead of letting him waste away in the mountain of the internal logistics department.

I wonder what the spirit mountain is thinking by locking him in there," said Dean Zhu Lao with regret showing in his tone.

"Blue Universe are you sure you don't want to join the institute? As long as you say yes, I'm pretty sure I can find a way for the spirit council to agree to it," added Dean Zhu Lao.

"I much prefer the rest in the mountain rather than being constantly ogled and quizzed by an overly curious brat. I can't believe that nature of yours is still there," said Blue Universe.

Even though his spirit hadn't been manifested physically like in the arced dome hallway Yang Qing had been in, he could still freely transmit his voice without making an appearance.

"What do you mean by that senior? I am only in awe of your breadth of character and wisdom. There are not many people I can say can best me in terms of knowledge but in front of you, Veiled Destiny and Green Cocoon, I have to admit that I am nothing more than a junior who has only learned to crawl," said Dean Zhu Lao. He bowed when he said that and even somehow managed to radiate the aura of a humble youth seeking guidance from a renowned scholar.

"How many years has he been training his bootlicking skills? I hate to admit it, but I'm miles apart from Dean Zhu Lao," thought Yang Qing as he sighed in both admiration and inferiority at his lacking skills.

Yang Qing, Assistant Head Liang Wen, and Song Guozhi became unwitting bystanders for the next three minutes as Dean Zhu Lao fawned over the spirits of the three saint-grade treasures. He went back and forth to try and get them to join the Institute but he failed in the end when he received an innocent smile from his wife, Ling Meimei who had arrived at his back during his three-minute theatrics.

Even though he failed, Yang Qing couldn't help but look at the Dean who was currently walking like a humble slave behind his wife, in a new light.

From their brief interaction, he detected that the two saint-grade artifacts i.e. Blue Universe and Veiled Destiny, clearly held Dean Zhu Lao in high regard based on how freely they communicated. The spirit of the two artifacts seemed like they treated the Dean as a peer despite the Dean being a peak domain realm expert and the two spirits being the equivalent of a soul formation expert with their saint grade rank.

This thought was further solidified when even the enigmatic and mercurial Green Cocoon chimed in a few words though it was mostly calling Dean Zhu Lao shameless, thick-skinned, and interesting which Yang Qing wasn't sure if it was a mistake on the Green Cocoon's part since she didn't speak much. However, the fact that she bothered to talk to Dean Zhu Lao despite only speaking about 300 words in over 10,000 years, showed that she too held the Dean in some regard.

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"That kid still hasn't changed," said Blue Universe. One could detect unlike before there was a hint of admiration in his tone like that of a teacher who had seen a student exceed all their expectations.

"You detected it too?" asked Veiled Destiny.

"How could I not, when I was the one who spoke about it? I didn't expect he would actually follow up on my rumblings. I'm not even sure if it exists,"

"It...does....Fei..proof....this...kid....might...be...but.....missing.....one...thing...interesting...shameless...though," said Green Cocoon.

"So that bastard has it, no wonder,"

"Knowing what you know now, are you going to reconsider the challenge you made to him?" asked Veiled Destiny teasingly.

"RECONSIDER?!! Why?!! Just because he had a primordial domain? You look down on me too much, Veiled Destiny.

With our background, is that something we need to fear? Besides, last time if it wasn't for him cheating we would have won. Actually, it makes me feel a tad bit better, even with that special domain going on for him, he still needed to cheat so he could win...hahahaha.....maybe I should practice my zither skills too and a good song to go with it....mmmh maybe I could enlist kid Zhu Lao's help. He does seem exceptionally gifted in this regard," said Blue Universe.

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Yang Qing could hear their communication but he could make neither heads nor tails of what they were talking about. But before he could question them on some of the things they were discussing, assistant head Liang Wen had already dragged him to the platform so he could synchronize his medallion to the central array that had been placed in the Star blooming mist valley.

Time seemed to fly quickly after that because before he knew it, almost two hours had already passed by and the guests were already being welcomed into the valley.

Chapter 248 Promotion Ceremony (3)

More members from different departments of the Order showed up, especially with the arrival of the guests, in particular the members of the external affairs subsection of the Standard Regulatory Committee.

They were working in tandem with some of the senior students from the Institute to welcome the guests from rank 5 organizations.

Yang Qing was only given the role of welcoming those from rank 4 organizations and above because of the sheer number of rank 5 organizations.

If he was given the sole role of welcoming all the guests he would not have been able to keep track of all of them, even with the heightened memory of a palace realm expert. Therefore the lowest organizations which had the highest numbers, were left to the external affairs department along with the students of the Institute.

Though even with such a lineup, the number of rank 5 organizations that were invited were limited. There were over a million rank 5 organizations around the Southern Continent and the Order could only offer the invite to a tenth of that number, which was about a hundred thousand. The organizations that made it into the hundred thousand list were those whose quota members achieved stellar results at the Institute throughout the three years leading up to the day of graduation.

Those from the Institute would share their results along with their in-depth explanation of their assessment to all the rank 5 organizations, so everything would be above board while also selling out those that had poor performances. A chance at invitation at the Star blooming mist valley was to serve as motivation for these organizations to send their most talented members, so they could stand a chance of getting an invitation.

Even though those at the early stages of the core formation realm and below could not handle the full effects of the ancestral dragon spirit vein that lay beneath the Star blooming mist valley, thus they had

to be protected by the inlaid formation arrays, being exposed to the dense pure qi it produced still had enormous benefits to them.

It was not unheard of for cultivators to achieve enlightenment during those ceremonies or have minor breakthroughs. However, they were strictly forbidden from achieving major breakthroughs that would trigger a lightning tribulation. Those that were just at the cusp of achieving major breakthroughs were usually denied entry.

However, despite all these, those from rank 5 organizations fought for the opportunity to come to the Star blooming mist valley. It wasn't only them, as rank 4, rank 3, rank 2, and even some rank 1 organizations, also found the opportunity too valuable to pass by because most of them would never get the chance to experience the wonders of an ancestral dragon spirit vein, If not for the Order's invite. Only holy lands and the oldest and strongest of rank 1 organizations and some hidden organizations were known to have them.

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Yang Qing managed to spot a few more familiar faces as time passed by. Feng Xin and the other inquisitors under him had arrived and were also assisting him in welcoming the guests. The only ones who were absent from his group were Haishi, Bolin, and Yi Jie. The former two were still unaccustomed to the ways of the Order and also human cultivators and thus were allowed a day's rest, as for the latter, he had already gone to the tribulation mountain to break through.

His other friends had also arrived like Mao Yunru, Huilang, and the rest who greeted Yang Qing briefly before they entertained other guests.

An hour went by and the sparsely populated valley was already teeming with people strewn across all the provided platforms, exchanging laughs and conversation like long-lost friends who had just met each other after thousands of years. To some, that was really the case, especially with the long seclusions that powerful cultivators occasionally take.

Over at the highest platform where Yang Qing would be standing for his coronation already had a few higher-ups of the Order present. The space there was reserved for only the top-tier members of the Order since in addition to displaying their might, they would also be the first form of protection for Yang Qing in case anything went wrong. They, therefore, had to be close to Yang Qing as much as possible to avoid any unexpected circumstances. They could not take any chances even if Yang Qing still had the three Saint-grade artifacts to fall back on.

Therefore, all who sat there were at least at the soul beginner level of the soul formation realm, though Yang Qing was utterly clueless about the exact level of any member of the Order that was recognized to be a soul formation expert. He wasn't sure whether they were at the soul beginner, soul adept, soul master, or soul supreme which is rumored to be the peak of cultivation within the continent. Yang Qing always had doubts about it though, especially when he put into consideration the holy lands.

Only five people had arrived and of those who had arrived, he only recognized three of them. One of them was Jun Pei the assistant director of the internal logistics department. Yang Qing wasn't sure if she was here to protect him or to make sure the three saint-grade artifacts he was loaned were not damaged. Other than her, there was Wu Ling, the Vice Chancellor of the Institute and former member of the Spirit Council before he took up his new post.

He was currently speaking to a cultivator who looked like a ten-year-old boy that had purple hair and an iris that had no pupils and only had a cluster of stars. Despite little to no interaction with that child-looking cultivator, every judge within the Order knew who he was because the oath they took before they took up their post was supervised by him. His name was Shi Jia and he was the Chief Justice, the highest rank of all judges. His position in some regards was equal to that of the three vice presidents of the Order who were just as elusive as the president and the chancellor, as they rarely made any appearances. To date, Yang Qing has never seen a single one of them.

As for the remaining two, one was a young lady who seemed to be in her mid-thirties. She had smooth flowing white hair that had a glowing luster to it that would put the moon to shame with its radiance. Her skin looked like it had been crafted with the finest and smoothest jade. She had on a pure white robe and was bare feet. Yang Qing never knew feet could be so mesmerizing until today. It took all his willpower to tear his eyes from them and when he did he was met with a charming smile from that lady. Even though it was the most charming smile he had ever gotten, all his senses were screaming in fear even Veiled Destiny had to hurriedly warn him to avert his gaze and the Green Cocoon necklace had rapid glows indicating thick murderous intent was directed toward him.

Yang Qing quickly turned with his back covered in sweat, as he decided to wholly concentrate on welcoming the guest.

Who is she? He wondered.

As for the final member, it was a middle-aged man who looked like he had just woken up and come to the venue. His robes were creased, and his dark grey hair was tied into a half-man bun by what looked

to be the bark strip of a tree. However, despite how unkempt he looked, he had an otherworldly charm to him that did not lose out to the bare feet young lady next to him, who was the picture of absolute perfection.

Though Yang Qing had no idea who that person was, the robes he had worn gave an indication of which department he was from. He had a deep red robe that had a talon insignia on it, which was an indication he was from the special inquisition department.

This was a select group of inquisitors whose talents in extraction and destruction, were above none. Just like the guards at Requiem, the threshold of joining the Special Inquisition was also high because of how dangerous their jobs were. They handled the investigation and decimation of those labeled as 'dangerous elements' around the continent. Dark organizations such as the Scarlet blood ghost hands, or the Dark Helminth Ghost sect, remnants of the crimson wave sect, could be considered as dangerous elements which was why Dong Yanlin, the member caught in Yang Qing's first case during the week was directly sent to them immediately after confirming he was a member of the Scarlet blood ghost hands syndicate.

In addition to them, the Special Inquisition department also hunted down former Order employees who were found to be in clear betrayal of their oaths and duties. In some regards one could even say the most dangerous element and the prime reason the Special Inquisition was even created, was because of those former employees. With the high standards of recruitment and training, those who qualified to survive within the Order were the best of the best therefore if even one of them betrayed the Order, they could be considered one of the most dangerous elements against it even more than the enemies the Order has made along the way, and the Special Inquisitors were usually trained with that in mind, how to defeat your colleague should such a time come.

Chapter 249 Promotion Ceremony (4)

"Could he be the director or the assistant director of the Special Inquisitors?" wondered Yang Qing.

The presence of the slovenly dressed special inquisitor gave him an added sense of relief since they were basically combat specialists who were skilled in reacting to the most insidious of attacks.

The groups they targeted for investigation or destruction were ruthless and had all sorts of taboo techniques in place to ensure their secrecy. Dong Yanlin was a prime example of this. Even though he was at the core formation realm, Yang Qing detected a fearsome curse embedded in his soul that would have likely injured him had he tried to probe Dong Yanlin's soul or asked certain questions.

Having a top member of a group that was used to dealing with these kinds of attacks, was a huge welcome for Yang Qing. Anyone who would dare make an attempt on his life would less than likely use direct means but will instead rely on some underhanded means.

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Yang Qing had to refocus when the number of guests arriving grew in stature. Before he had only been dealing with rank 4 organizations but now the rank 3 and rank 2 organizations had already started making an appearance. He couldn't afford to look distracted when greeting them.

He quickly put on the most professional smile he could muster as he greeted each and every one of them while making a little small talk here and there. His years of bootlicking had finally come into handy. Song Guozhi who stood next to him had an approving look on his face due to how well Yang Qing was handling the whole thing.

Assistant head Liang Wen was also with him, however, he was in charge of dealing with the members of rank 2 organizations along with some of the senior members of the External Affairs department.

Every minute that passed by, the wider and more sincere Yang Qing's smile became. His attitude shifted at some point when he substituted the faces of the guests that had arrived with the face of a gift box. To him, they were now prized elixirs, spirit stones, precious artifacts, or rare items such as cultivation arts. He was about to leave his hand-to-mouth lifestyle behind, all thanks to them.

How could he not be happy? when thanks to them, he could splurge as much as he wanted on his meals, he could buy more strange trinkets and add to his collection, he could upgrade both his abode and the nest of the celestial nesting weaver. The things he could do were endless.

A few members of the merchant organization who had come to exchange a few greetings even flinched a bit because of his gaze. While he had a warm welcoming smile on his face, how could these seasoned old foxes not have a sense when greed was mixed into the smile? They knew that move all too well, which inadvertently may have worked well in Yang Qing's favor since those groups would more than likely add a few more things to their gifts in an attempt to sow positive karma with Yang Qing through his greed.

As for Yang Qing, he was all too glad for it, especially with the noose of potential fines hanging over his head, the more gifts he got the better. With all parties on the same page, their whole interaction became even closer to the point they even started hugging each other which left Song Guozhi wondering,

"Was the information I gave him about the incoming guests really that good?"

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Yang Qing continued on merrily in his 'duties' as he welcomed the guests with even deeper enthusiasm, that he even ended up using all the information Song Guozhi had given him that extended to the ancestral lineage of the guests who were coming by. Yang Qing expertly used that information so he could bring himself closer to the guests with the goal that they would be so touched and be more generous when the time came.

His plan seemed to have worked too as some guests were deeply touched when they saw that a palace court judge from the Order knew so much about them. It made them feel important while for others it created a deep sense of dread within them at how much Yang Qing knew about which was a reflection of what the Order knew about them. They too, would likely end up giving more out of fear.

However, all good things do come to an end at some point, and the same happened to Yang Qing. When Yang Qing was busy exchanging a few pleasantries with the clan head of a new rank 3 family, his gaze had an imperceptible flicker as he sensed something a hundred meters away from him.

"Is that....?" Yang Qing covertly switched his gaze to that area as he expertly continued his conversation with the rank 3, clan head. He exchanged a few words with him and then moved on to the next person all the while sparing a glance at the area where he had just detected his Dao mark.

A few moments ago he felt his palace realm resonate with something, and when he focused a bit on the area he felt that resolution from, he realized it was from his Dao markings. Since breaking through to the palace realm was predicated on being familiar with a type of Dao so one could form a Dao seed, when one broke through to the palace realm that matured Dao seed would seep into every single part of the cultivator's body including their qi which in turn meant their attacks and any manifestation of their cultivation will have their Dao mark showing. It was like their fingerprint, and Yang Qing just detected his, among the guests mixed about a hundred meters away from him.

Finding someone with his Dao mark came as a surprise to him since the only people who could have it were those he had attacked or sparred against or had items that had been made by him personally. He didn't detect any of his inquisitors within the area so he quickly ruled out that it was on someone he had sparred with or someone that had his personal items on them.

When it came to fights, he has only been a palace realm expert for 11 months and in that time the only time he got into a fight was when he fought with the three palace realm experts in Purple City of the Red Maple Empire. As far as he knew they had not been released yet and were still being held at the Yellow Plains County, where Yang Qing had them sent on the account that they'd draw unwanted attention to him when one of them was the son of the founder of Golden Bamboo Pavilion, who was a renowned domain expert described to have a special physique that made him a skilled combatant.

Yang Qing left that hot potato with the branch chief of Yellow Plains County who was also a domain expert while he completed his evaluations. In addition, he had also filed an investigation request with Lei Weiyan for that founder's son. With all that in place, he found it hard that they would have been let go, and even if they did, he would have been one of the primary people to be informed.

"Who is it?" Yang Qing wondered as he mentally went through the list of likely candidates.

Just as he was ruminating through the likelihoods, his pupils froze for a brief second when someone came into view from the corner of his eye.

"It must be... It's the only thing that makes sense," thought Yang Qing as his gaze briefly fell on the person responsible for his sudden clarity on his conundrum. The person responsible for this was none other than his fellow glutton, Feng Xin.

It was only when Feng Xin came into view, was he able to recollect that he had given him a few of his experimental talismans. Those talismans were imbued with his Dao markings as a measure to help cut back the time needed to trigger the talismans.

When Feng Xin came back from apprehending Peng Zhen and the rest from the Green Fog Swamp Sect, he got chased after by a palace realm expert whom he assumed was a member of the scarlet blood ghost hands, because he asked for the Ao Yin saber Feng Xin had confiscated at the site Dong Hanlon had clashed with the three elders and the Tupelo tree.

Realising the disparity in realms, Feng Xin was quick to detonate the talismans so he could create an avenue of escape, however he didn't expect the talismans to have such a short delay that he and Ellie along with two elders of the Green fog swamp were almost sucked into the attack.

From what Yang Qing could remember the branch chief of the Green mountain branch, whom Feng Xin had called for backup, did not find any body at the place Feng Xin had detonated those talismans.

"Could he be him?" Yang Qing wondered as he grew increasingly puzzled on what he should do if it was.

Members of the Scarlet blood ghost hands were skilled at infiltration and hiding in plain sight so Yang Qing wasn't all too surprised one of their members would come here and he had no doubt that there maybe others cleverly mixed in within the guests today.

Chapter 250 Promotion Ceremony (5)

"What do I do?" Yang Qing wondered as his Dao mark drew closer to him. He couldn't risk deploying his palace sense for risk of alerting that party who may likely be on high alert since stepping into the Order's grounds.

Even if the Scarlet Blood Ghost Hands were skilled at blending in, it didn't mean they didn't find it unnerving when they crawled into the belly of certain beasts, especially a beast that has been gradually hunting their members all over the continent for the past 500 years.

"Why did they risk to come here though? Even if it's to keep up appearances, isn't this a little too risky?" thought Yang Qing.

This was the real reason when he detected the Dao mark he completely overlooked the person Feng Xin had clashed with. He couldn't understand why a palace realm who definitely knew about Dao markings would come here of all places, where the person he had just clashed with a week ago, was present.

However, Yang Qing had overlooked a few things in his thought process. For one no sane person would imbue their Dao markings to a talisman for someone else to use, like the way he did for Feng Xin and it was for obvious reasons, one of them being the talisman could be unstable or when the attack art

stored within it was released there was a chance it may attack both the user and the attacker at the same time.

Had Feng Xin not triggered a bunch of talismans at the same time creating a chaos storm, his palace realm attacker may have noticed something off with those talismans if he wasn't fighting for dear life at the time. The Chaos turned out to be an advantage along with the absurde notion that had been accepted of Dao markings causing instability to talismans.

Other than that, there were other factors at play on why the supposed Scarlet blood ghost hands member would risk coming here, and one of them was depth of understanding of Dao. While a palace realm expert would know about Dao markings since they too would have their own markings, the ability of one palace realm expert to sense another palace expert's Dao markings depended on the abilities between the two in terms of cultivation base and also their understanding of Dao.

If there was disparity between the two then it would be difficult for the weaker party to detect the Dao markings of the stronger party.

Yang Qing had more than likely made an unconscious judgement that that palace realm expert was on the same level as him if not stronger, seeing how he managed to escape his triggered talismans.

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In the midst of debating what to do, Yang Qing saw Feng Xin with his silly grin waving over as he pointed at someone in the incoming guests. Yang Qing froze as his mind went blank from shock, thinking stupid Feng Xin had just given up everything with his pointing even before he had a moment to decide on what to do next.

Yang Qing unconsciously readied himself to attack which made the the guest standing next to him tremble in fear because he was close enough to feel abit of Yang Qing's leaking battle intent.

It was only when Yang Qing realized that Feng Xin was pointing toward the King of White Baobab Kingdom, did he calm down but not before sending an angry glare towards Feng Xin.

...

"Judge Yang Qing what is wrong?"

Just as Yang Qing was about to apologize to his guest for startling him, he heard Liang Wen's voice in his mind.

"I sensed battle intent coming from you," added Liang Wen when he sensed Yang Qing's confusion.

Other than welcoming guests who were from rank 2 organizations and above, he had been closely monitoring Yang Qing and it wasn't only him, a few of the senior members of the external affairs department also kept an eye on Yang Qing as they did their duties.

"I sensed someone ahead has my Dao markings on them and I suspect they are a member of the Scarlet blood ghost hands syndicate," said Yang Qing.

"Are you sure?" asked Liang Wen.

eaglesnovel`c,om "I am."

Yang Qing went on to explain his line of thought on why he felt there were high chances, his guess was right.

Liang Wen went silent for a while, to which Yang Qing didn't know if it was because he was thinking about what they should do next or because he was sharing the information with the other Order members around.

"Senior Blue Universe, senior Veiled Destiny can you help me with something?" asked Yang Qing.

He used the token he was given to assimilate them, as a conduit for a three-way of communication.

"Senior Cocoon, I'd appreciate your help too, if you can?" Yang Qing added after some hesitation.

Yang Qing's eyes lit up when he felt their spirit signatures register in his mental sea.

"What is it?" asked Veiled Destiny

"Can you sense if someone is hiding their real selves either by changing their whole body's constitution or even hiding their karma?" asked Yang Qing.

Members of the scarlet blood ghost hands had all sorts of measures of hiding themselves, one of them being isolating their karma, otherwise with the Order's means they would have long since been tracked.

If the person he suspected had a way to hide his karma even from a Saint-grade artifact such as Veiled Destiny that was skilled in that regard, it would serve to highlight that the person had a powerful background much higher than their supposed rank 3 background.

"Senior Veiled Destiny you can check the karma,

Senior Blue Universe you can check if he is using any other cultivation art to hide himself,

, and Senior Cocoon could you please tell me if you sense something off in the person, if he has a certain aura to him, like the kind you'd find in someone whose slaughtered hundreds of thousands of people."

While he had only interacted with them briefly, he did manage to develop a sense of their capabilities when he met them for the first time in that dome hallway, the synchronization that happened after, further solidified his guesses.

Veiled Destiny was the most obvious since its strong suit was literally in its description which was an intimate familiarity with the workings of Karma, when it came to Blue Universe, the fact he could block the full-blown attack of a soul master and ensure Yang Qing's safety meant he had a profound understanding of the different type of Daos, to the point he could instantly counter them, otherwise, it would be difficult to guarantee unilateral protection against all attacks as long as they were from someone who was at the soul master level and below.

As for Green Cocoon, while she was the one shrouded in the densest fog of mystery, to Yang Qing she was the one he felt intimately familiar with, which he didn't know was because of her dense life aura or was it something else. Of the three saint-grade artifacts, when it came to investigating the suspected Scarlet blood ghost hands member, he felt Green Cocoon would have better-defining results than even Veiled Destiny. The reason for that guess was because of his own experience with his Yin Yang jade bones, which made him extremely sensitive to specific types of qi that were antagonistic to the attributes of his physique. An example of such qi was either dense slaughter qi that was doused in resentment, or corpse qi. He felt Green Cocoon with such a dense vitality aura to her, was more than likely sensitive to such things as well, to an even higher degree than him since she was more powerful.

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"Fine." the three saint-grade artifacts all agreed to his request.

"Judge Yang Qing, I've discussed with a few members of the external affairs department and the Eagle Guard division on how we should proceed, and we have agreed to its better to seek Assistant Director Feng Lei's opinion on the matter since the Special Inquisitors are better suited for this sort of thing. What do you think?"

"So he is the assistant director?" muttered Yang Qing as he cast a sneaking glance in the direction of the slovenly dressed middle-aged man who had on red robes and was accompanied by an otherworldly charm.

"I don't mind Assistant Head, Liang Wen. I was planning on doing just that, but please inform him with haste because the person with my Dao markings is the third person next in line. His name is Ai Shan, I think, and he is the current sect master of the Flying feather sword sect," said Yang Qing.

Liang Wen turned his gaze to the mentioned person. It was a middle-aged man with a slightly stern expression that had his hair tied into a ponytail that had a few white streaks that added a mature charm to it. His robes were sky blue and had white cloud patterns embroidered on the sleeves and back. At his waist were two swords that were in a blue scabbard and had sword guards that were in the shape of feathers.

From the way he carried himself, one would least likely suspect him to be part of a dark organization like the Scarlet Blood Ghost Hands. He was currently instructing one of his disciples like a dutiful sect master showing him around, unaware that over 10 domain experts had placed him within their sights, three saint-grade experts, and soon, a soul formation expert skilled in hunting organizations like theirs.