

Daily life 441

Chapter 441 Binding The Ba She (2)

Seeing the piece of its shell in front of him, Yang Qing couldn't help but hope that Wei Ying had its corpse stashed somewhere. He wouldn't even mind trading the bulk of the treasures he received on his ceremony for a shot at getting the meat from her. The bluevine turtle had excellent camouflage abilities and could only be found in two places; the churning sea, and the blue-origin ocean.

Despite his gluttonous nature, Yang Qing wouldn't risk heading out to those places, not unless he was in the middle or late stages of the domain realm, and had a saint-grade treasure to protect himself, but until then, he would avoid those two places.

"Mmh ..." she answered which drew a childish joyous look from Yang Qing.

"I only have a piece of its shell, that I won at an auction, sadly.." she said with an apologetic smile seemingly seeing through Yang Qing's intention with his question.

"Oh...." Yang Qing instantly deflated as he languidly placed his right palm facing upwards.

Universal light bee

A multitude of light coalesced in his palms and weaved together to form a bee that seemed like it was made of celestial light. The bee gazed around as if it was familiarizing itself with its new surroundings. It then started grooming itself as it cleaned its eyes, thorax, abdomen, and finally wings.

Every time it did so, it would release a rainbow-like glow from its body. From its movements, one could even mistake it for a real bee from its lifelike reactions.

"You have really interesting spells. I heard you picked an incomplete purple grade art, is this from that art?" asked Wei Ying as her eyes sparked at the celestial-looking bee that pumped its thorax when it detected her gaze, which drew a chuckle from her.

"Yes, I did...When it comes to attacking power it's average as it falls short of even some gold-grade arts, but when it comes to versatility and adaptability in its uses, there are very few I found that come close to it.

It's a boundless art, that keeps unraveling more and more. I love it.." Yang Qing gingerly said, as he poked the bee and sent it on its way toward the clone at the ground.

The bee was an alarm bell. It was a cultivation spell built for detecting the minute of changes to the surroundings.

With the earlier speculations, Yang Qing felt more measures were needed to alert them. The bee could serve as a sentry for any changes within and outside the battlefield, as it sustained itself using the energy the clone was drawing from the ground.

Wei Ying cast one last look at the bee as she sighed before she placed the last monarch-grade treasure at the last rune.

The turtle dragon that was incorporeal before instantly blazed with a green-blue light that went all around its body before it finally condensed in its shell, which turned lifelike.

"Senior Wei Ying isn't a top-tier blue-grade formation master for nothing.." Yang Qing said in admiration as he stretched his palm outward to touch the shell. The shell shimmered like it was made of a gelatinous substance with dense runes flickering on it.

"If you want modifications done, you can always come to your big sister here... I'll make sure to give you a friendly rate. I had you have a sizeable treasure on you.." Wei Ying said with an innocent smile that made Yang Qing's face twitch.

Money grubbers all of them

Thought Yang Qing as outwardly he gave out an obsequious smile while flattering Wei Ying on how he would be her first call.

However, the flattery was cut short when both judges turned in the same direction.

The energy brewing from the Ba She suddenly paused.

Without even being told, Yang Qing instantly pumped his spiritual qi into the central run that had the log in it, while he used his free hand to form another seal which he poured into the log, and resulted in a white flame coating the shell.

As for the three judges, in a sudden flash, they appeared behind the turtle dragon, and in good timing too, because the instant they reappeared, 10 blood spears were launched from the Ba She.

The spears were of normal size and length, except each of the 10 released enough power to decimate an entire kingdom, and they were blood red, the blood continuously dripping from them, and had ancient runes in them that released a ferocious air.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

Explosion after explosion sounded every time the spears collided with the shell of the turtle dragon that had enlarged to shield Dai Chen, Zhang Qingee, and Mo Liwei, from the aftermath of the collision.

The shell released a blue-green membrane as it flashed with dozens of runes, trying to contain the force of the spear attack.

Sizzling sounds were produced from every collision, with the blood from the spears eating away at the shield.

Wei Ying gritted her teeth as she pushed the array to the maximum while Yang Qing unreservedly pumped out his spiritual qi and yang white flames as fast as he could.

They all had grim expressions as they could feel their organs shift and their blood churn just from the explosion that was produced by the collision.

The barrage of the ten spear attacks seemed like they had lasted a lifetime despite them taking up just two seconds.

"Is this still an attack from someone in the sixth stage?" Yang Qing wondered as he looked at the shield that was quickly repairing itself with a blue-green veil, at the areas that had received the most damage.

The results were a bit hard to swallow since the core material used on it was a piece of shell from an eighth-stage palace realm spirit beast. Even though it didn't mean it had the strength of the turtle, it still had aspects of it that could be used by a seasoned formation master to create an overwhelming defense.

He quickly pushed the thoughts to the back of his mind, when he saw five more spears forming as they hovered above the Ba She's head like a crown.

They instantly honed in on them, bringing much more destruction and power than the other ten.

Wei Ying waved seal after seal, as the runes above her constantly flashed and rotated increasing their power output to sturdy the shell.

Bang!

Their ears started ringing, and they felt their bones quaking, from the collision force.

The shell creaked and squirmed, almost like it was about to give out, letting through the carnage spears of death, but it held on, and as the white yang flames cleansed the shield of the blood spears' corrosive power.

Now!

Wei Ying yelled as a complex rune appeared on her hands, which she channeled to the center of the rune.

The turtle dragon as if in response instantly elongated its body and barreled to the Ba She like a force of nature.

The Ba She that had just conjured five more spears, instantly released them when it saw the charging turtle dragon.

The turtle dragon let out a roar as it released a radiant cyan beam that was coated in white flames. The beam tore through one spear, and it used the gap created to push its head through toward the Ba She aiming to bite it while the other four were blocked by its shell.

Before the turtle dragon head could reach the Ba She, it quickly condensed one more spear, but just as it was launching it, a silver streak smacked into the blood spear, veering it off course.

The blood spear missed the dragon by an inch, and the silver streak turned into a blur as it moved back behind the shell of the turtle dragon.

Mo Liwie instantly reappeared whizzing with a bloody wound on his arms that was corroding. The thing that seemed to be keeping the corrosion at bay was the grey coating on some of the feathers that had remained.

"That spear isn't simple.." he said. A white-green flame instantly appeared on his arm, burning the corrosive blood away while healing him.

The turtle dragon took the opportunity created by Mo Liwie and managed to bite the Ba She which had opened its own mouth to contend with the turtle dragon.

However, the turtle dragon suddenly elongated its head when it was about to make contact and rounded the Ba She, coiling around its neck, and used the force of rounding it, to drag it to the ground, aiming to forcibly uncoil it.

Boom!

Another explosion sounded when the Ba She was pulled with tremendous force to the ground.

The turtle dragon used its two limbs to forcibly hold it in place as it writhed, while the rest of the dragon's body started coiling around the Ba She, which instinctively released corrosive purple-red mist and ice shards to prevent the turtle dragon from coiling around its body.

A white flame that coated the turtle dragon's body, melted the mist away and slowly ate away at the ice crystals which were also constantly being disintegrated by cyan round lights released from the different parts of the dragon's body.

Slowly but surely, the dragon started binding the Ba She in place which gave an opportunity for Mo Liwei and the rest to join the fight and hasten the process.

Chapter 442 Vortex Vine Seal

The Ba She writhed, twisted, and turned, all in a bid to get rid of the turtle dragon that was more snake-like than dragon with how it coiled around the Ba She.

Ferocious screams were released from the Ba She as it spewed out corrosive dark red blood from its mouth in a bid to melt the dragon, and then immediately followed up with other means.

It tried rolling itself on the ground, which created more tremors on the ground. The force of those rolls was so tremendous that it left ringing in the ears of Yang Qing and the rest.

When that didn't seem to work, it released purple-black miasma from its nose and from the gap between its red gem-like scales.

The purple miasma seemed to have the same corrosive effects as the dark red blood it had produced, except it now had more features to it, such as poison, and eating away at the surrounding spiritual qi.

The yang-white flames on the turtle dragon instantly grew in intensity as they mushroomed aiming to swallow the miasma being produced.

The plant clone of Yang Qing from below instantly stopped releasing green cloud dust as blue flowers appeared on different parts of its body.

The flowers closed and opened releasing a faint blue mist.

With how the battle was progressing, based on the pressing needs, Yang Qing decided to change the autonomous spell below from a healing one to one that replenished their qi, while also boosting the effects of the yang white flames.

The blue mist replenished the qi they had been expending while it seemed to also amplify the effects of the white flames as they burned with an even more intense radiance.

The blue mist was a welcomed help as it seemed like the turtle dragon was almost thrown off from the sheer power and attacks the Ba She was repetitively releasing.

In the midst of it, it even tried to quickly reform two blood spears above its head and a third miniature one in its mouth, but they were quickly snuffed out at the source by Zhang Qingge, Dai Chen, and Mo Liwei, who had various injuries on their bodies because they now had to work without Yang Qing's healing and purification ability.

However, they had sturdy bodies that could handle the attacks the Ba She was rampantly releasing in desperation.

The Ba She kept trying to reform the blood spears, which the trio were quick to nip in the bud.

The spears didn't look like they were easy to form and required a certain level of care and preparation to form. This was why the Ba She took quite some time at the start before it released them, but now out of desperation it kept trying to wantonly release them without a modicum of care and preparation and it seemed to have come at a cost. For one their power was greatly diminished compared to the early ones and the other, the Ba She seemed like it was paying a penalty for rapidly forming them.

Some of its scales had greyed out and were peeling off.

Mo Liwei and the rest kept the spears in check, while more of its scales wilted off as a result. However, even with their power diminished, it still required considerable effort from the trio to keep them at bay. Their injuries kept growing as a result of it, however, with the blue mist slowly pervading the area, they at least didn't have to worry about expending their qi.

Meanwhile, within the turtle dragon shell, Wei Ying and Yang Qi were undergoing a battle of their own.

Yang Qing's hands were trembling because of the exertion he was put through in providing spiritual qi to the turtle dragon while also releasing the white yang flames. Luckily for him, he had the universal pearl to help share the burden in terms of qi expenditure on the array, however, it was rapidly shrinking, and its size was about the size of a pea.

When the universal pearl got drained, he wasn't sure how much he could hold on. As it stood he had already drained half his spiritual qi and half of that had been drained the moment they started engaging the Ba She in close-quarter combat. He could only hope Wei Ying would have already executed whatever it was that she was cooking up.

There was a small disc on her hand constantly revolving with around with glowing glyphs. She continuously manipulated it with her hand seals, like she was deciphering a code from it.

Whatever she was doing didn't seem easy with her nosebleeding and her hands shaking, but even then she never averted her calm gaze from the disc as she kept drawing azure cyan seals on it.

Two minutes flashed by and pandemonium seemed like it had descended on the place, with the five judges and the massive Ba She locked in a full frontal confrontation, with an air of desperation pervading the area.

The Ba She grew more desperate in its attacks, as it seemed to have detected the situation was starting to turn unfavorable for it. It still couldn't pry the turtle dragon off no matter how hard it rolled and how much miasma it released, the turtle dragon desperately latched on like a tick on a cow, while the three judges constantly attacked it or interrupted some of its attacks.

A desperate and ferocious glint flashed in its eyes seemingly resolving itself for something. In the next moment about five thousand of its scales dimmed out which resulted in it grimacing in pain as ruptured blackened veins took the place of those scales.

A piercing scarlet right that smelled of decay was instantly released from its mouth as it twisted its head targeting the shell of the turtle dragon.

The transition from the greyed scales to the release of the scarlet streak was so short and so fast, that the three judges reacted when it had already been released and was making its way to the where Wei Ying and Yang Qing were.

Mo Liwei had already expended himself in the fight and could no longer penetrate the void as he did earlier, so his reaction though fast had returned to what it was earlier, despite that he was the first to react as he collided with the red streak head on.

Something that fast, and large, he couldn't afford to deflect it like he did before. He also noticed the Ba She seemed to have allowed part of its body to have a tight contact with the turtle dragon, and that part was coincidentally where Yang Qing and Wei Ying were.

If he tried to pull the same move he did earlier by deflecting it, he had no doubt the Ba She would drag the shell to the path of the attack, even if it was caught in the crosshairs. The only option to dissolve this , was to face the attack head on.

Bang!

The moment he made contact, Mo Liwei who already had other injuries , felt like his body had been barrelled by a hundred mountains with sharpened edges.

His blood churned as his throat welled up in blood, all his organs were rocked from their positions, while his hands ruptured almost instantly as it spread to his shoulders, while his orifices soon followed in bleeding out.

Just when he felt he was at the end of his tether, he suddenly felt the burden on him lighten as two other forces stepped in.

Dai Chen and Zhang Qingge, who were a step slower, also reacted and stepped in time, before Mo Liwei was sliced through by the attack. They too immediately got wounds upon intervening, but with their

combined effort they managed to halt the blood-red streak and managed to deflect it upwards after an intense struggle.

The clash barely lasted three seconds, but they were left struggling to hold even a breath with their robes in tatters, as they grimly looked at the Ba She that looked like it was gearing itself for another.

Luckily, their intervention managed to buy Wei Ying time as she exclaimed in victorious joy as the disc in her hand split into eight wooden swords that had a green glow on them and glittering blue runes.

Vortex vine seal

A blue-green vine appeared between the eight wooden swords, tying them together.

Wei Ying took one of the wooden swords and disappeared from the shell only to reappear at the tail end of the turtle dragon.

A blue glow instantly appeared on its tail, which seemed to lock the Ba She's wriggling tail in place. Wei Ying instantly stabbed it the moment it was locked, and the green sword lit up as it transformed into a knot which then anchored the tail of the Ba She firmly in place.

No matter how much it tried to move it, it was like its tail had been paralyzed.

Blue rune markings appeared from the end of the tail and proceeded for almost four hundred meters, and stopped.

Everywhere the rune markings appeared, movement of the Ba She halted.

Chapter 443 Language Of The Mythical Creatures

The Ba She's pupils which were the size of a human head, visibly trembled when it detected it had lost all sensation of the tail and the slightly accompanying region.

The shock and fear that came from that realization made it act with even more desperation as it twisted and turned its body in a bid to overturn the turtle dragon and even take a bite out of it.

However, with a part of its body paralyzed, the strength it could release coupled with the coordination of its body was at a dissonance.

The sudden loss of its tail, coupled with the shock it brought, affected its fighting abilities, as it was no more than a hysterical beast that was about to lose all reason.

Wei Ying quickly grabbed the next cyan wooden array sword and moved further up the body of the turtle dragon.

Though even if she was moving up, she was still within the lower region.

Just like before, a blue rune appeared on the turtle dragon, which pulled in a part of the Ba She's body and immobilized it just like before.

Wei Ying formed a quick seal and stabbed the sword, which melted and turned into a vine knot anchoring that part of the Ba She to the ground.

Immediately after numerous glyphs appeared on the body of the Ba She just like earlier paralyzing it, except this time the range of the glyphs seemed to have doubled. It hit the 1200-meter mark before it finally stopped.

The Ba She went hysterical on realizing it had yet lost sensation to more parts of its body. It writhed and turned with so much force that it started bleeding as it tore its flesh from the force of the commotion.

Dai Chen, Zhang Qingge, and Mo Liwei stepped in, and flooded it with attacks to negate its movements, especially closer to the region Wei Ying was headed to.

Thanks to their help she was able to smoothly stab in another wooden sword, increasing the area of paralysis.

The fourth one soon followed, then the fifth, by the time it reached the fifth, half of the body of the Ba She had already been paralyzed, and a blue vine note that had countless glyphs in it, appeared on its skin.

It was only after the sixth one had been placed did the smooth journey they had been making come to an abrupt end.

After the sixth wooden sword had been stabbed, the Ba She went dazed and stopped moving for a brief second.

It was then that a red rune almost similar to the one that had appeared in the blood-red spears appeared in its eyes, and then the opal that had disappeared under the multitude of red scales finally appeared.

It instantly melted upon making an appearance, 3/4 of the red scales left on its upper body all flickered with an intense crimson light that fed into the melted opal.

A thorn-like rune instantly appeared on the Ba She's body from its head as it quickly made its way downwards.

Dai Chen and the rest, even though they didn't know what the red thorn's purpose was, decided rather than find out, it was best to intercept.

They attacked it to try and stop it in its tracks, but every time their attacks fell, the thorn would disappear deeper into the Ba She's flesh, then reappear a second later, away from the attack slowly making its way to the blue glyphs that were in its lower half.

Yang Qing increased his output of the white flames while he reduced the amount of spiritual qi he released to try and stop the red thorn. While the white yang flames seemed to have an effect, it was only slightly.

Yang Qing was already spent so even the effects of his spells had dropped slightly, and he could abandon all caution and pour everything into the yang-white flames since he still needed to support the turtle dragon which was their main attacking force.

Well, I only need to delay the thorn long enough for senior Wei Ying to pierce the sixth sword, with that three-quarters of its body will be paralyzed, even if the seventh fails, dealing with a quarter will be easily manageable even with all of us at our last qi reserves, and we still have that..

Yang Qing's gaze turned briefly to a dark object above them that made it seem like the sun during a solar eclipse.

It floated there unassumingly. But that unassuming object was a top-tier ascendant-grade treasure they had used to seal the space and even contained the force of their attacks within the territory of the Ice Emerlad Sect.

It was fashioned over a tiny part of the kun peng in its kun form. It had the ability to seal space and also act as a barrier.

If worst comes to worst they could use their medallion and unlock its full abilities and use it on the Ba She, however, that was a last resort because their medallions would be temporarily rendered useless for using them to forcibly activate a top-tier ascendant grade treasure. Which would then mean, they would lose the life-saving trump card embedded in it.

Other than its integral functions tied to the courtroom, the medallion also served as a defensive treasure. It could block one full-blown attack from a quasi-soul formation expert. The user didn't even have to activate it or use their own qi to trigger it, making it one of the best life-saving treasures they could have, but if they used it to activate the ascendant-grade artifact, the medallion would lose the energy required to trigger its life-saving defense. I think you should take a look at

"Things are not yet dire, there is no need to worry about it now and should focus on what i can do at the moment.." Yang Qing thought as he pushed those pessimistic thoughts to the back of his mind.

Yang Qing's white yang flames managed to delay the red thorns long enough for Wei Ying to stab the sixth wooden sword into the Ba She.

Just like before, the Ba She was first anchored to the ground, and then the bluevine glyphs appeared on its body, rapidly traveling towards its upper half.

However unlike before the glyphs only managed to travel for about 600 meters before they halted in their tracks.

The red thorns branched out to form a barricade, then the worm-like black glyphs appeared on them, triggering the thorns to move forward toward the bluevine glyphs.

Upon making contact, the bluevine glyphs started getting corroded by the black glyphs. One glyph after another started crumbling down replaced by the red thorn.

"How?!" Wei Ying had an incredulous look on her face when she saw her handiwork being broken through so easily.

The vortex vine seal was a blue-grade formation she had created with the help of some of the gold-grade formation masters from the formation hall.

Thanks to their assistance, the formation was one of the biggest trump cards she had in her arsenal. By itself, the formation array could be considered to be at the low tier, but its grade was not stagnant and could be elevated considering what core treasure she used to anchor the array.

The array was built with the workings of the bluevine turtle in mind. That spirit beast was mercurial in nature. It was reserved, kept to itself and one might even think it docile, however it had another side to it. It could be considered an assassin of the ocean.

It had top-tier camouflaging abilities, and along with that, it had one of the most terrifying binding abilities. It sneaks around and binds its target, sealing not only their movement but their qi and paralyzing them, leaving the target essentially undefended.

Its binding was swift, unlike how Wei Ying's was going. If a real bluevine turtle had been here, it would have bound the Ba She in the time it took to blink an eye, and it would have swallowed it just as fast.

With Wei Ying using a piece of a shell from the bluevine turtle, elevated the vortex seal power to the top tier of blue-grade formation since the core material was from an eighth-grade bluevine turtle, and

because Wei Ying had fashioned the array from the abilities of a bluevine turtle it made drawing power from its shell seamless.

Thanks to that she could exert the formation to produce the power of a middle-stage palace realm cultivator, which was why she had been able to bind the Ba She so fast, but the retaliation of the Ba She surprised her. The fact that it could forcibly erase the binding, meant its might had essentially stepped into the late stages of the palace realm.

The blue glyphs were eaten away by the red thorn, and the 600 meter ground they had gained, had been eaten away to the 400 meter mark.

Wwu Ying on seeing this, hurriedly took out a blue milky white pearl that was in the shape of an egg. It had crystal wavy lines that had a mystical charm to it.

Wei Ying had a pained look on her face as she crashed the pearl into particles which she then used like ink with her index finger as a quill and started scribbling something onto the last sword.

Whatever she was doing seemed to be taking a toll on her. She had just written seven characters, but writing each of those seven characters made veins from her forehead down to her hand throb. By the time she wrote her second character, the flesh on her index finger burst open. The blood that was produced from it was immediately swallowed by the blade like it was a ravenous mouth.

Despite the pain that she seemed she was on , she continued until she wrote the last character.

The moment it was finished the sword hummed as a wave of spiritual qi that had mystical charm to it funnelled into the sword lighting up the seven characters.

Wei Ying used whatever strength she had left in her arm to launch the sword towards the spot occupied by sixth sword.

As if triggering a chain reaction, the other five sword anchors resonated with it as they released a piercing blue light. The glyphs combined and reformed into five of the inscrutable characters Wei Ying had drawn on the seventh sword.

A mythical bestial cry was produced from those formed characters. Even without knowing what beast that cry came from, all who heard it intrinsically knew what that cry meant.

[DEVOUR][INSATIABLE HUNGER]

The cry made it seem like whatever beast it came from could devour the whole world and all of its lifeform and still remain unsatisfied.

"Senior sister Wei Ying has even mastered the language of the Taotie?!" Yang Qing wondered in shock.

Chapter 444 Descent Of The Death Star Ruin, Silver Void Nexus And The Quaser Breaker Of The Purple Firmament

Mythical creatures could be considered to be children of the Dao which gave them absurd power to the point they could bend the world around them through the power of their tongues.

Mastering their language, equated to mastering a part of their abilities related to which tongue you had mastered.

Learning the language was hard enough even just at the beginner level was as hard as mastering a gold-grade cultivation art to the emergent level, and then came another problem, executing the art.

For the language to reach its full potential, one needed a body that was endowed like a mythical creature. If their body was in any way lacking, they invited risks when executing the art, such as being consumed by the art when learning it or when executing, and if they had enough tenacity to push through without having a mythical creature's body, they still suffered a tremendous backlash on their bodies to release it.

The backlash could be temporary, while in other cases it could be severe and permanent, depending on how much power you drew from the language.

Wei Ying was pale white, with collapsing capillaries all over her body. Using the art had drained her blood essence, which considering as trade-off for executing the art was pretty tame.

Yang Qing had no doubt she offset the backlash with the pearl she used earlier, which if his guess was right, was a wisdom pearl of a constellation whale, and from the undulations released from it, it was one that at the very least was at the later stages of the palace realm.

"Senior Wei Ying sure has some good stuff.." Yang Qing enviously thought before he froze when he saw a bloodshot Wei Ying come his way as she muttered something over and over.

"That damn snake hag will repay it all, even if I have to wring her dry to the last drop.."

She stood over the central rune with a blue glyph lit up on her bleeding emaciated fingertip.

[qxceiegam]

She muttered a strange incantation that instantly triggered a reaction from the whole turtle dragon down to the seal below.

The red thorn that had been gaining ground and had pushed the glyphs down to the 300-meter mark was halted by a massive wave of blue light that pushed it back 200 meters, then the red thorn retaliated in return.

A blitz of blue and red light hit the body of the Ba She before it finally settled on the 400-meter mark. However, even at a statement between the glyphs, that wasn't the end of it.

The five characters along with the seventh sword, had started consuming and assimilating the part of the body of the Ba She they had bound, and they converted it into pure energy that was fed to the turtle dragon, which grew in strength by the moment.

"Violence is the only language a spirit beast understands. Let's behead her.." Wei Ying viciously said.

Her vicious look coupled with her emaciated beat-up appearance, made her seem like the villain compared to the snake.

Scary

The four judges chose to look away from her deranged look as they geared up for what would likely be their final attack.

The turtle dragon pumped up with qi siphoned from the Ba She roared with renewed vigor and strength, and a hint of bloodthirstiness, no doubt it had more to do with Wei Ying, than it did with the blood, flesh, and qi it had gotten from the Ba She.

A violent brawl took place as the turtle dragon used its arms that had been pinning the Ba She down to claw at it, tearing its scales and flesh apart below the Ba She's neck.

Miasma-filled blood poured from it as it squirmed and twisted trying to break its head free that had been gripped in place by the elongated neck and head of the turtle dragon.

No matter how it moved, it couldn't defend the attacks, however, the blood-red thorns in its body forcibly stitched back its wounds and healed them.

With half its body immobilized, and its attack power sacrificed to whatever the red thorn was, it could only passively take the beating from the turtle dragon. I think you should take a look at

Death star ruin

Silver void nexus

Quasar breaker of the purple firmament

The three judges seized the opportunity Wei Ying had created.

Dai Chen was to the right of the Ba She, Mo Liwei was to the left, and Zhang Qingge was above it.

They had all poured their last reserve and trump cards for this final attack.

The world changed behind each of them.

Behind Dai Chen, the skies had darkened, filled with an air of desolation and grandness. There was a weak starlight in the midst of that darkness, that looked like it could go out any moment. However, that dimming starlight carried a radiating power of disintegration. All would crumble beneath its light.

On Mo Liwei, he was a silver glimmer, with a silhouette of a majestic bird surrounding him which had entire pathways of the void engraved on its beak. With that beak, it could pierce everything and anything within a flash.

Zhang Qingge colored the skies purple behind her. A purple cosmic whirlpool and in that whirlpool there was a luminous object that carried a catastrophic power that would render everything asunder.

The Ba She on detecting the terrifying attacks about to befall it, tried one last ditch effort to escape, but alas it was too late.

The attacks were the full-power trump cards of some of the greatest talents of the Order, there was no way the Ba She, who was half paralyzed, panicked, and without vigor, be able to evade their attacks.

The attacks arrived in unison; disintegrating, eviscerating, and piercing through the Ba She aiming to decapitate it.

The Ba She shrieked in pain, but even that was drowned out in the catastrophic attack, the only thing that seemed to be surviving was the red thorn that was desperately trying to keep its head in place.

The three attacks had left but an inch of flesh at the center, which was desperately trying to tie the head to the rest of its body with the help of the mysterious red thorn.

Aaaaaaargh!!!!

Wei Ying let out a roar as she poured everything she had into pulling the head of the Ba She with the turtle dragon's limbs.

Her infectious roar infected the rest as they let it out themselves pushing their bodies to the extremes for that one final push.

Bit by bit the flesh was being torn apart by the four forces till finally..

Snap

A head the size of a small mountain rolled upwards with a flabbergasted look filled with fear from the massive beast that had the reflection of its killers. Tinier than even one of its scales, but released a power that terrified it to its very soul.

The last scene before life escaped those eyes, was that of sandy, cracked, poisoned crater crater-filled ruin.

A place that once brimmed with life, but was no more, the same as it, now.

Chapter 445 Laugh Of Sorrow

An almost volcanic-like explosion of dust was created the moment the Ba She's head made contact with the ground, which served as evidence of how massive the beast was.

At the ground, blood continuously leaked from its dismembered head, and the rest of its body, forming a blood river that drenched the ground below it, releasing miasma.

The level of miasma was low in comparison to the amount it released when it was fighting for dear life, trying to escape the clutches of the turtle dragon.

Meanwhile, the combined attack of the three judges i.e. Mo Liwei, Zhang Qingge, and Dai Chen, had yet to fully subside.

Its remnants still sent shockwaves throughout the land and the skies, showing the calamity had yet to end.

Earlier and even as the fight went on, there were still some bystanders, though shaken, still had their nerves on them to continue spectating, and even entertain thoughts of fishing in troubled waters.

The world was a large place and it was filled with all sorts of characters, and among them, there was no shortage of those who would seek to capitalize on the moment, no matter the risk, but the moment the combined attack of the three judges dropped, any notion of interference, capitalization was immediately erased.

That attack, even though they were not there, gave them an intimate knowledge of what it felt like to be embraced by death. Just the air it released, spoke of unimaginable destruction, and when it fell even though they were miles away, they had fears they would get swallowed up in it.

This sentiment wasn't only shared by the onlookers, but also by the organizations that bordered the territory of the Ice Emerald Sect.

Those in charge of those regions had quickly deployed the protective arrays in preparations for the aftermath of the attack in case it was powerful enough to even affect them.

Luckily for them, only faint tremors managed to reach that far, however, what they didn't know was, had the ascendant-grade treasure above the Ice Emerald Sect not been there, then the shockwaves of the attack, would have been more than just tremors, and their protection arrays would have been put to the test on their abilities.

As the dust cleared, a haggard team of five could be seen whizzing and gasping for breathe.

Their faces had dried blood stains, their bodies had mild tremors that even translated to the weapons they held, while the turtle dragon that had been the deciding factor in all this, was already fading away into mots of green light, and what was left behind was a log that had numerous runes and glyphs inscribed on it, along with the symbol of a turtle dragon at the center.

"That sure was one tough snake.." Wei Ying said in between gasping for breath.

Of the five, she was the one who had expended the most, especially towards the end when she took primary in both offense and defense, creating an opportunity to fell the Ba She once and for all, and the result of it was her bleeding from all orifices of her body, her body looked emaciated and starved of everything.

She looked more corpse than a human, and the cheeky beauty from before couldn't be seen. However, the rest of the judges didn't look good either.

Mo Liwei was hunched over with veins all over his face, with a pained look on him as he looked that he was just about seconds away from passing out. He seemed like he had managed to keep himself afloat thanks to the shoulder support Dai Chen was giving him, who was another mangled mess himself. The flesh in his arms had been split in dozens of lacerations that revealed bone, and the lacerations extended to his torso. None of his upper body was left unbloodied, as for Zhang Qingge, her right arm was bent awkwardly with spasms all over her body.

The only person who looked okay was Yang Qing, but he was as pale as snow from all the spiritual qi he had expended.

"The abilities she had, didn't seem that of a sixth-stage palace realm cultivator, and how did she turn into a Ba She?" Mo Liwei weakly said as he put away his spear.

"Especially that red thorn.." interjected Wei Ying, who still struggled to come to terms that her binding array had been broken through despite being powered by material from a late-stage spirit beast.

"It's a pity, I would have loved to analyze that red thorn to better improve the vortex vine seal array.." she added as she eyed the corpse of the Ba She.

The red thorn from earlier had already disappeared, and its color had changed. It was dull grey and looked like a desiccating corpse. It had lost that dangerous alluring red gleam look from its red scales.

The only intimidating thing it had left was its monstrous size, that was half of what it was, with the other half already disappeared the moment the turtle dragon turned into mots of light.

"This fight has made me realize how scary the instructors are, and here I thought I'd get my revenge on them.." Yang Qing depressingly said as a bitter chuckle escaped his lips.

"That's what I was thinking too.. as powerful as she was, the founder was still lacking by no small margin in comparison to them, even to the junior instructors who were at the fourth stage of the palace realm and had much more presence in comparison.

They are monsters.." Zhang Qingge said as she shivered from something she remembered.

"That they are.." the four said with shivers of their own before they all laughed.

Though in that laugh one could detect a heaviness within it, especially when it came to Yang Qing, who despite laughing, his eyes flashed with sorrow and guilt as his hands shook, and it wasn't due to overdrawing himself or fatigue.

His eyes flicked with a multitude of emotions as it stared at the desolate ground below him, that was now bereft of life.

As he looked at the wasteland, all he could see were the faces and the lives that had been there earlier. A few hours ago, this place was filled with life, with cultivators laughing, fighting, studying, relaxing, and talking, all with something to look forward to, unaware that hours later they would all be gone.

When the time was up and Yang Qing attacked, he not only executed the guilty but the innocent who decided to stay, suffered the same fate.

With things settled, amidst their laughter, he could hear their sounds, and with the massively acute memory of cultivators, he could remember every single detail about them without even trying and meaning to.

He had never felt nauseous his whole life despite the dubious things he and Feng Xin had eaten over the years, but for the first time here and now, he felt his stomach churn and an acidic taste in his mouth.

"How will Ma Yuan handle it.." he wondered as he briefly looked at his hands with a complicated look.

The other judges had the same somberness too. Despite not being the ones to have done the deed, they voted on it, and the heaviness weighed on them too.

Dai Chen and Zhang Qingge who were still laughing cast side glances toward Yang Qing who had a laugh on his face that expertly hid the sorrow and the guilt within.

They both sighed deep within their hearts.

Chapter 446 Red Abyssal Thorn Tree

"Should we get going?" Wei Ying suggested as she took out a few pulls to help restore her qi.

The rest mirrored her actions as they each consumed different objects to replenish their qi.

The fight had drained them to almost their last reserves, better to restore a bit of it now rather than delay it even with the fight finished.

It was one of the things emphasized in their adaptation classes by Dean Chu Zhen who from his own personal experience when he was trapped in the Myriad Beast Sect's wasteland for all those years, had learned intimately how important it was to have even the tiniest bit of qi. It could be the difference between life and death, in a dicey moment, and if you were stuck in an area where you couldn't replenish it naturally, better to have dozens of supplementary means to do it.

This was why every graduate who took his classes, always had hundreds of pills, potions, and natural treasures on them, and in case they couldn't access them fast and were in desperate need, the dean had even created a few utility spells and techniques that enabled them to store a bit of it on their bodies. They could release it with just a thought.

After hearing of Dean Chu Zhen's harrowing ordeal because he became an instructor of the Order, the students understood his over-preparedness on certain things, and because they had his story as a cautionary tale, almost every single student who took the adaptation and cultivation classes had qi replenishing measures embedded on their body somewhere.

Yang Qing even with his abundant qi reserves was one of those people, and the judges next to him were all the same. They each had those measures on their body to act as an emergency trump card, should they need it.

"Can you give me a second first to say goodbye.." Yang Qing said as he pointed to a withered branch that was barely hanging on.

As he was about to agree to Wei Ying's suggestion he heard the branch weakly call out to him.

It was the Wisteria tree, a husk of its former self. All the beauty, splendor, and mystical qualities it had earlier had vanished and all that was left behind was a single withered branch about the size of half his arm, withered and looked to be just about on its last legs.

The judges nodded, but just as Yang Qing was about to head there, his pupils froze, and a millisecond later so did the rest of the judges.

Acting in one mind with zero hesitation, the five judges instantly formed similar seals that launched to the ascendant grade treasure above them.

Five golden lights disappeared into it, and the treasure instantly let out a dark light accompanied by a pressure that not only surrounded the entirety of the Ice Emerald Sect's territory but it even spread outwards to the surrounding territories.

A few palace realm experts who were still lurking about kilometers away got caught up in the dark radiant light of the treasure and its pressure, of which the ancestor of the Twin River Empire was one of them.

All of them, irrespective of their cultivation base, were frozen on the spot. They could feel the overbearing weight of the universe fall upon them, instantly pinning their bodies to the ground as a primal fear welled in them. They could not move; not their limbs, their qi, or even bat an eye, all they could do was wait helplessly for what was to befall them.

They didn't have time to regret it as a massive explosion that felt like it brought the might of the heavens flooded the area.

At that moment, they knew what it felt like to be truly afraid and to feel insignificant as an ant, despite them being palace realm experts; cultivators powerful enough to lord it over millions and millions of people.

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At that moment, when Yang Qing was about to go to the dying Wisteria tree, he felt the object left by Green Cocoon flicker with a heavier intensity than it did before. That reaction was also exhibited by the universal bee he had created earlier as it let out a radiant intense glow signalling that something dangerous was afoot.

The other judges all seemed to have their own means because they too detected something that instantly prompted them to activate their medallions to unlock the seal and full abilities of the ascendant-grade treasure.

Beneath, the greyed-out pupil of the Ba She had produced a small red flicker that was the source of their alarm and reaction.

Within an instant, the light turned into a pea-sized rune that transformed the whole body of the Ba She both the decapitated head and the other half of its body, into a single red seed that exploded bringing with it a terrifying power of destruction.

The space around it was torn, and the clouds above it were colored red, as it sought to drown everything from the skies above, and the ground below to extinction.

Yang Qing, and the rest from the moment that red flicker appeared, alarm bells went off in their minds, and without hesitation, they triggered the ascendant grade treasure that created a massive black ball, with starlights flowing around it.

When the red seed exploded, the force it created was instantly covered by the black ball that was aiming to contain it so it couldn't reach Yang Qing and the rest who were outside of it.

However, despite the intervention of the blackball, a tiny part of the energy from the red rune explosion managed to pass through which barrelled through the bodies of the five judges and pushed them back a few hundred meters from the blast site.

They all hacked and coughed up blood immediately with deep lacerations all over their bodies.

They didn't have time to attend to their injuries as they saw something even more terrifying happen before them.

The black ball was losing. There were red cracks appearing all around it, which extended to even the treasure itself. It was just inches away from being destroyed, and from the energy that was leaking out, the explosion didn't look like it had subsided.

If the defenses got breached, Yang Qing and the rest would no doubt, perish.

They didn't even have time to process where that red rune came from, who triggered it, and how it had enough energy to overwhelm a top-tier ascendant-grade treasure in full capacity, which was basically the same as a late-stage domain expert.

All they could now was try with all their might to ensure they didn't die here.

"Convocation golden radiant feather"

They all formed a similar seal that triggered five golden feathers to appear from within the black ball. The five feathers from a radiant translucent membrane that covered the ball with golden runes floating around it.

The black ball that was just at the cusp of being broken through looked like it had been given a new lease on life thanks to the membrane which not only strengthened it but also restored it.

The dozens of cracks started getting restored albeit at a slow pace, and with the radiant membrane sharing the burden, the explosion happening within it looked like it was well on its way to being successfully contained.

At least it looked that way to Yang Qing and the rest. However, Yang Qing had a shout in his mind filled with deep dread telling him

"RUN!!!"

But alas, the warning arrived too late.

Crack!

A cracking sound like that of a bird breaking its shell sounded, and it seemed to transcend space and the void.

Everything and everyone within a 50,000-kilometer radius all heard the same cracking sound. That cracking sound seemed to echo down to their very souls.

Chapter 447 Bell Rings Atop The Misty Mountains

Yang Qing and the four judges who distinctively heard that sound, found their bodies trembling, as the black ball before them shattered instantly, while the five feathers dimmed out and phased out of existence.

In the place of the blackball now stood a red thorn tree that glimmered with a crystalline beauty surrounded with darkness and heavy stench of death, blood, and torment.

The tree despite being only 10 meters in height, seemed like it could extend to the heavens if it wanted, and the oceans and every other area around the continent if it so wished.

It stood there silently, radiating a gentle red glow, but it was that red tree that had one of its branches piercing through the blackfin ascendant-grade treasure. A loud mournful wail sounded as the blackfin despite releasing enough energy to obliterate the Ice Emerald Sect a million times over, and Yang Qing and the rest with it, couldn't block a single unassuming piercing attack from a frail-looking branch that brought with it the scent of death and apocalypse.

The branch smoothly and easily pierced through the treasure with black glyphs consuming the ascendant grade treasure out of existence. The only evidence that it had even been there was the mournful wail of desperation that still echoed even within the deepest recess of space and the terrifying energy it had released before its demise.

"MOVE! MOVE! MOVE! MOOOOOOOOOOOVE!!" Yang Qing roared at himself for his body to move but it couldn't.

He could barely breathe let alone move, all he could do was helplessly watch that red thorn tree gently extend one of its branches ready to rip their lives.

He roared, but his body had abandoned him, even his thoughts looked like they were well on their way, as his mind was slowly being corroded by an ancient-sounding alluring voice.

"Stop fighting..it will be okay..just close your eyes and all this will be over. Don't fight back. It's okay.."

Yang Qing felt his internal resistance whittle away, as a sense of slumber washed over his body, telling him he would have the best sleep he would ever have if he just closed his eyes.

His thoughts got sluggish, his vision got blurrier. His eyes had been focused on one place and it was Mo Liwei's location.

From the trajectory of the branch, Mo Liwei would be the first to be hit. The reason for Yang Qing's earlier desperation was Mo Liwei had placed himself there intentionally. If and when the branch connected, it would be all over for him.

Yang Qing couldn't let him die when this whole case was his responsibility. He urged his body to move, but try as he may, his body refused to budge an inch. Despite only being a few centimeters apart, that separation may as well have been the distance between the planet and the sun.

Thanks to the alluring voice, Yang Qing felt his spirit and resistance weaken.

"Is this it?" he thought, too weak to even feel despair as he hazily stared at Mo Liwei who seemed to be struggling to stay awake just as he was.

The other judges whether it was Dai Chen, Zhang Qingge, or Wei Ying, all seemed to face a similar struggle. They were moments away from closing their eyes.

But just as they were about to take their last blink, a complex rune in the shape of a bell appeared in their mind, and rung.

The bell's ring instantly cleared their mind from the foggy state they were in, however, their bodies were still locked but the dreadful fear they had when the tree appeared.

Yang Qing roared, trying to rouse up whatever power he had to move, even if only just for a step. In his crazed desperation, unbeknownst to him, the green pearl in his palace realm produced a sigh and then moved to the green flame tree at the center of his palace realm and merged with it.

Yang Qing instantly felt like some shackle had been broken for an instant and his movements restored. He was cloaked in green flames, and instantly made it to where Mo Liwei was, and at the nick of time.

He managed to drag him aside just as the branch was about to make contact. His left forearm got pierced through as a result. Yang Qing instantly exploded his arm, when he saw the black glyphs spreading from the wound.

Despite losing an arm, and whatever qi he had left, and most of his energy with it, Yang Qing had a relieved smile on his face, even when the red abyssal thorn tree had launched more branches on them and he was now too weak to even do anything.

Whatever burst of strength he had gained, seemed like it had all been expended.

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Spirit Mountain

Deep within the territory of the Order, an area restricted even to their own members was a place shrouded with mist filled with mystical lights throughout the year.

To the unassuming eye, the mist wouldn't be any different than normal mist, but to those in the late stages of the domain realm, they could feel the profoundness of the origin dao within that mist.

A cultivator at the qi refinement realm could break through to the palace realm within three days if he/she cultivated there, provided they could last even a millisecond within that mist as even someone at the peak stage of the palace realm would explode within seconds from being exposed to it.

The area was filled with mountains and within the peak of one mountain, there was a large ancient golden grey bell that had the vicissitudes of time to it. It had the symbols of the four mythical beasts engraved on it; the white tiger, the azure dragon, the black turtle, and lastly, the phoenix.

The bell suddenly let out a radiant glow as it produced a gentle sound that seemed to draw the beauty of the heavens.

The moment it sounded three people with pure white robes instantly appeared and a mystical air about them, appeared before the bell that was towering over them like another mountain.

Of the three people, two were familiar. One of them was a handsome young man, whose eyebrows were as sharp as swords and the other was an elderly lady with a stern expression on her face. The former was Su Bai, while the latter was Zhou Huang, both members of the high council of the Spirit Council, who had appeared during Yang Qing's promotion ceremony.

As for the third one, it was an elderly man with a kind-looking face, while his eyes, had a jade tree in the place where he should have pupils.

"Fellow Daoist voyager, who is it?" the elderly man asked.

The bell shimmered and a middle-aged man with grey traveller robes and scarf appeared. He had black flowing hair, and a had a free unrestrained temperament to him.

"Five children, all in the palace realm, judges, each unique at that too. One with a dao bone, another with a peerless jade physique, two with a mythical bloodline, and another with a special physique related to the turtle dragon.

They seem to be trapped within a special domain created by a soul formation master with the ability to corrode the mind, which is how I was triggered.."

"Can you pull them out?" asked Zhou Huang.

"The tree there is insidious, I can but it will cost the kids something .."

"Buy me five seconds then... I'll go.." said the kindly-looking elderly man.

"No need for that, brother Zhu Qiu, let me instead. Having the chief inquisitor act is a little bit of an overkill, no?" said a young-looking man with scholarly air about him, snow-white hair, and eyes that looked like they had recorded tens of thousands of years.

"And a vice president acting, isn't?" said the kindly elderly man with a smile on his face.

"Considering the urgency, I have to. There's my spiritual imprint on a treasure I gave to them despite your speed, Igniting my imprint will be faster.." the scholarly man said as he raised his index finger and a wondrous dao light and rune appeared on it causing the mist around them to swirl.

Chapter 448 Vice President Tao Wen Appears

The skies above the mist trembled and turned with unstoppable momentum at the flick of the scholarly man's finger.

He faced a particular direction like his gaze could pierce through space and void.

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Ruins of the Ice Emerald Sect

Yang Qing and the rest used whatever strength they had left to move their heads and smile at each other as a form of reassurance and comfort that at least they wouldn't be dying alone. They would have each other for company.

Yang Qing was oddly surprised by his sense of calmness with death almost upon him and unavoidable.

He had spent all his life trying to avoid it, drove himself half mad thinking all sorts of ways he could die, and painfully at that, which led him to the doors of the Order and later to the courtrooms as a judge, which ensured he would be under the protection of the sturdy walls of the Order, and he would never meet any danger with powerful seniors above him to hold up the skies should it fall.

But things always have a way of going in their own direction no matter how one plans. In Yang Qing's case, his job as a judge did keep him out of the front lines most of the time, Of course in exchange he was worked to death, and when he was at the institute he became intimately familiar with the sensation of death every day thanks to the driven efforts of the instructors there.

But all in all, he was generally safe, and the times he was out of the headquarters on field duty such as promotions, it was relatively uneventful. This most recent one was the most activity he had seen, with the attack from a member of the Dark Ghost Helminth sect. Still, even then it wasn't exactly a risk to him since the attacker was in the core formation realm and the preparations he had made were for a core formation expert.

Thanks to that, Yang Qing was able to deal with it swiftly. That summed up his life as a judge in the core formation courts.

Then he got to the palace courts, the place he worked so hard to reach, all in the hopes of achieving his dreams of working less. Things seemed to be going the right way when he started. He had diligent inquisitors to help him, the cases were clear cut, he got a bump in salary and that juicy discretionary fund in his lap, and to top it off he had a month of doing nothing when he was asked to set and supervise the exams for new applicants.

Yang Qing thought to himself, this is it, this is what I've been dreaming of until Ma Yuan's case happened and he was hit with a sect demotion that had the potential to be sect destruction. It was only his second month in.

In the course of his job, he has executed his fair share of cultivators, he had made his peace with that, but a complete sect annihilation was something else. He had to resolve himself to slaughter thousands within a single moment, and within those thousands, there would be innocents, unlike the cultivators he had executed over the years.

He did not have the cushion of a moral high ground to lean on. Up to the point he actually executed the sentence, some part of him held on to hope that he would only have to deal with the guilty parties and that the innocents would take the olive branch he offered and spare him the weight of their lives in his conscience.

When they didn't, he felt dizzy and an extreme heaviness in his chest. He wasn't sure if it was because of the pressure, but he felt he had gone deaf, dumb, and blind for a brief second before his senses came back, and when they did, he swallowed up whatever he was feeling and didn't hesitate.

The feelings only came back after the Ba She was dead, and just as he was allowing himself to process everything, a sudden attack came, and within seconds, they who had thought themselves victors in the bout, and successful in the conduct of their duties, were about to die, and for Yang Qing, in the face of it, he had a serenity to it, that he didn't think was possible.

"Is this the tree's doing? Or has constantly battling old demon Lei and the cogwheel of the Order made me tougher and more mature?"

I won't have to work tomorrow I guess... that babirusa meat, what a shame I didn't get to eat it. That bastard Feng Xin will enjoy it himself..then there are the 1,000 ingredients, I've only sampled 37 of it!! No No, Yang Qing, think positively.

I won't have to be bleed dry for that nasty bird that eats away at my income, and its pompous attitude after like I'm its human servant.

No more scheming, and the incessant worry of getting caught..well about that, I actually enjoy pulling one over the old demon Lei and the Order.

I'll actually miss it. The Order was more fun than I expected... If there is a second chance, I wouldn't mind going back there again.."

A blissful smile appeared on his face as he welcomed the torrent of thorn branches, ready to be run through and possibly eaten by the tree. With its eerie color and the smell of blood and death that surrounded it, Yang Qing was certain their death wouldn't be simple, and if his guess was right, that tree may have been one of the core factors in the Ice Emerald Sect's ability to assimilate and refine cultivators into fruits.

Yang Qing could only assume that a similar fate awaited them.

"I wonder if I'll be a tasty fruit..please, please let me be a disgusting one.." he silently prayed.

The attack descended.

"Huh!!!" Yang Qing who had expected to be desiccating and enduring the most painful death imaginable was shocked to see an illusory figure appear before him, standing elegantly keeping all the thorns at bay with a single flick of his finger.

"Vice President Tao Wen?!" Yang Qing muttered in disbelief as he looked at the illusory figure before him.

He had snow-white hair, a young handsome look, and a calmness to him as he stood there with one hand behind his back as his other hand held onto a horn.

The other four judges were equally as surprised as Yang Qing, they had been expecting their death.

They couldn't believe Vice President Tao Wen was actually there, especially after experiencing the powerful beguiling effects of the red abyssal thorn tree, their doubt was expected.

However, the doubt was soon erased when they felt they had regained the mobility of their bodies, while breathing even became easier, through a wave of the illusory figure's sleeves.

"Seems like you five got yourselves into a little bit of trouble. Who knew you would be unlucky enough to stumble onto a soul formation expert during your case? You sure are eager workers unlike what I've heard.." Vice President Tao Wen's illusory figure said with a leisurely tone and smile. Completely unbothered by the dense thorns, the thorn tree produced the moment he showed up and intercepted its attacks.

Millions of thorns appeared on it giving it a scarier look as they were dark red in color, and the stench of death they let out was enough to bloat out the sun, and fill all the surroundings with a chillness that accompanied the dead. The area turned to the netherworld with the appearance of those thorns.

Yang Qing and the rest felt like they had been submerged in a different world.

As Yang Qing saw all these, all he could think to himself was

"How the hell did my stories reach the Vice President too? Aren't they supposed to be sagely elusive figures with better things to do? Is the whole Order a gossip monger machine? How many things about me are floating around there?" Yang Qing worriedly thought.

Despite the antics he caused in the fight for his and his colleagues' wellbeing, he still cared about his face. He couldn't help but worry that the rumors floating about would damage the sagely expert demeanor he had worked so hard to cultivate from the moment he walked through the doors of the Order.

Chapter 449 Too Cautious

"No, No! I need to do something about this! I can no longer ignore it. Who knows how bad and exaggerated they can get if left unaddressed?

But first, I need to find out who has been spreading it this far to the point it can reach even the elusive vice presidents. At the rate it's going, even the president and the chancellor and the other mysterious figures will know of me, in a bad way...

It can't be Old Lei, he isn't that much of a talker and his reach isn't that far, but other than him who could it be? he is the only top figure I annoy.." Yang Qing wondered with gears turning in his mind completely ignoring what was happening around him.

He had even forgotten he had lost an arm and only remembered when he tried to stroke his chin in a contemplative pose, which prompted him to regrow it back. His cultivation art, the Universal Duality Indulgent Of The Myriad Worlds was something he got from the Hall Master of the Medicine Valley, one of the top most figures of the Order, and a purple-grade alchemist and healer.

His breadth of wisdom and connections were as vast as the stars. He had gifted Yang Qing that incomplete purple-grade art in the hopes of roping him to the Medicine Valley but also because it complemented Yang Qing's yin-yang jade bones perfectly.

In terms of attack power, it fell a little bit short of its rank as a purple-grade art, but when it came to versatility it was unmatched, especially the restorative aspects of it. Yang Qing could regrow any parts of his body effortlessly without a downgrade of his ability, and the more he familiarized himself with it, the greater the ability would be, to the point he could reform his body from a single drop of blood.

He wouldn't need expensive materials and techniques, or a gold-grade alchemist and healer to reform his body, he could do it with a single thought.

This was one of the reasons he took a fancy to the technique. For an extreme self-preservation coward like him, there was no better technique.

With his arm reformed, he went to work to decipher the identity of the gossip monger looking to ruin his reputation within the Order.

Despite a single thorn releasing enough power to destroy him to bits with a single graze, Yang Qing wasn't bothered. This was why he joined the Order. With tall trees like Vice President Tao Wen, providing shade, why would a tiny grass like him bother about anything else? He would just bask in the shade, and protection provided by the tree while he grew in comfort, even shamelessly stealing a few nutrients from the tree.

The other judges were the same. With the appearance of Vice Presiden Tao Wen, they looked visibly relieved, as they went about healing their wounds, and even discussing the thorn tree like it was a research object they were about to be quizzed on.

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"Would the fellow Daoist care to make an appearance?"

"Mmmh I guess they are shy.." Vice President Tao Wen added as he stroked the harbinger's horn he had handed to Yang Qing. Yang Qing didn't even know how it had appeared in his hands. After being exposed to the means of a soul formation expert, he knew why such powerhouses were feared.

Vice President Tao Wen gently stoked the horn and released celestial glowing ring-like seals from it with every touch. The horn immediately transformed from its grey look to a pure white look with cloud markings that had lightning flashes and thunder rumblings.

Those flashes and rumblings immediately appeared on the skies above them, as the horn released an excited hum when it was being held by the vice president.

"Descend.."

Despite the gentle nature in which he uttered those words, a calamitous taboo lightning instantly descended from the skies above and instantly drowned the area around the red abyssal thorn tree.

A blinding blue lightning fell in the area as it rumbled almost everywhere sending shockwaves to everything around.

A red dome instantly appeared and blocked the rain of lighting. The dome looked like it had been made of thin skin, with veins all around. It was filled with black worm glyphs that released black smoke aiming to corrode the lightning, however they seemed to fall a little bit shot of it.

The dome seemed to cave in beneath the might of that lightning that seemed to carry the weight and the grandness of the universe within it.

Tear marks immediately appeared on it by the dozens. When half the dome had almost collapsed, a red seal shined on the thorn tree as the thorns and branches and the tree coalesced together to form a red blood sword with a red pearl that looked like it contained a world within it, and that world was the underworld from the ocean of blood and skeletons contained within it.

The sword let out a sharp slaughtering cry as it sliced apart the lightning.

"A sword cultivator, interesting..too bad they're unwilling to show themselves and are just using a spiritual apparition.." muttered the Vice President as he pointed his index finger forward and waved it downward like it was a sword.

An ocean-sized sword qi filled with an ethereal and abstruse light, and destructive power sufficient to split the continent in half descended on the red sword with terrifying momentum.

Every sword within a 100,000-kilometer radius that had its spirit activated, all let out a cry of submission the moment the sword qi appeared, while sword cultivators felt the urge to genuflect themselves to that sword qi. It didn't matter whether they were in the qi refinement or in the domain realm, they all had the same reaction.

Boom!!

A terrifying, catastrophic explosion appeared when the ocean-sized Qi and the red weapon clashed.

The horn let out a celestial glow forming a barrier that isolated the clash from the five judges.

"So this is a soul formation expert.." muttered Yang Qing in awe at the fearsome power being radiated from the clash.

The world around them changed, as the heavens shook, the space got torn apart, and the clash echoed all around.

A red light sliced and diced apart the sword qi aiming to drown it, but eventually, it got too much for it, and it eventually got overwhelmed and swallowed by it.

"What a cautious person.." Vice President Tao Wen said in disappointment as he waved his hand and the ocean-sized qi disappeared in an instant.

At the location, the thorn tree was no more, and oddly enough despite the degree of destruction radiated from the oceanic sword qi, the ruins of the Ice Emerald Sect remained untouched which was a testament to the degree of control Vice President Tao Wen had.

" It seems the fish escaped brother Zhu Qiu.." Vice President Tao Wen said with a genial smile as he looked to his right.

Yang Qing and the rest wondered who he was talking to when the space on that side warped as a resplendent white branch with stars appeared from the warp, and a kind-looking elderly man walked from it with his hands behind his back.

Chapter 450 Hobby Of The Chief Inquisitor

"Was it destroyed like that?!" wondered Yang Qing as he constantly scrutinized the area where the red abyssal thorn tree had been.

That tree with just a moment of its appearance, had destroyed a top-tier ascendant grade treasure, paralyzed all of them with just its presence, and would have likely ripped their lives as easily as drinking water had Vice President Tao Wen not intervened, and if the effects of the saint grade treasure the 'voyager bell' not been activated, they would not have even known how they died.

But now, within a few seconds of the arrival of the Vice president, the tree was no more.

Even though he was glad to be alive, Yang Qing still had a bitter taste in his mouth, when the disparity in abilities was out there in the open.

He never thought he was some undefeatable monster, the instructors had made sure of that, but he at least thought when he broke into the palace realm, and the newfound strength he had along with the various measures the Order gave them, he felt he could go anywhere around the continent and guarantee his life.

But those brief few seconds with the red abyssal thorn tree and the intervention of Vice President Tao Wen had upended all that.

With his palace realm cultivation, he felt he was just as weak as he was when he was in the body refinement realm and had been scared half to death by the pressure that had been released by a foundation establishment cultivator, who had once come to visit their clan before they moved to the Order.

To say the experience was terrifying was an understatement. And today, Yang Qing felt exactly that. As a palace realm cultivator, he was just a stronger ant.

If he and a body refinement cultivator were targetted by a soul formation expert, they would both die the same and just as fast, and he had a feeling even someone at the domain realm could do that, but at least when it came to a domain expert, he had his medallion and the one time trigger engraved on it, that could block an attack from a peak stage domain expert just once, after that, he would be on his own.

But Yang Qing quickly pushed those pessimistic thoughts to the back of his mind, as a gleeful smile appeared on his face.

He was alive, he still had the babirusa meat and the 1000 ingredients to try, and the best part of all, he was glad that his blind faith in the abilities of the Order had been rewarded.

He couldn't help but smugly think to himself,

"What a big tree to hug.."

As his thoughts reached this point he couldn't help but turn his head to the newcomer. It was an elderly man with a kind-looking face, snow-white hair tied in a bun, and he had simple plain grey robes that had three symbols embroidered on them.

One was a red sword, the other was a sword with four ringed colors; blue, gold, black, and white, and the last sword was a grey traveller's sword.

On seeing those symbols, Yang Qing and the rest had looks of shock and awe on their faces, from the realization of who the elderly man was.

Despite having never met him, those three symbols were a dead giveaway as to his identity.

Inquisitors had the sword as a symbol of their unit, as they were considered to be the swords of the Order.

The red sword was a symbol of the special inquisitors, and the sword with four ringed colors was the symbol of the regular inquisitors. The sword's color would match the court rank they were in. It was similar to the judge's robes. While the final vagrant-looking grey sword was the symbol of the roaming inquisitors.

The fact that the kindly elderly-looking man had all three symbols on his robe, could only mean one thing, he was the chief inquisitor. He was the only one allowed to have all three symbols on his robe since he was the head of all three divisions with the assistant directors immediately below him.

Yang Qing and the rest of the judges have never met him, but their inquisitors have, during their induction ceremony. Unlike judges, the ceremony for inquisitors was private and hidden, the only people involved were the inquisitor, the higher-ups from the spirit council, and the inquisitor's hierarchy of which the chief inquisitor was one of them.

From what Yi Jie and Feng Xin had told him, only the chief inquisitor had those three symbols in his robe.

Other than the ceremony, he was as enigmatic as the vice president or the president, and in terms of power, as the head of all the inquisitors at the Order, it wouldn't be an overstatement to say his rank and power compared to the vice presidents wasn't that far off. He had the same repute as the chief

justice, the head of all judges, and in terms of combat, Yang Qing could only assume as the head of all inquisitors, a combat-oriented group, his combat abilities were definitely among the top within the Order, despite the kindly looking face he had on.

"I'm not sure if you've met, but this is Zhu Qiu, the chief inquisitor..." the apparition of Vice President Tao Wen said as he pointed toward the kind-looking elderly man.

"We greet, chief inquisitor Zhu Qiu.." the five said as they respectfully cupped their fists to the chief inquisitor.

"You really did well to hang on. The Order will be in good hands. It seems the day I retire is soon, then I can focus on gardening.." Chief Inquisitor Zhu Qiu said with a light chuckle.

"Gardening?!" the five wondered.

"He is pretty good at it.." Vice President Tao Wen said seeing their looks of confusion.

"He was one of the primary designers of the Medicine Valley and is a purple-grade herbalist. A few of the saint-grade herbs we have is thanks to him.." he added.

"Brother Tao Wen, aren't you praising me too much? I ended up ruining 50 ascendant-grade herbs before I even succeeded, and countless other resources. I was sure Fan Ru would have killed me at some point, with how wasteful I was..."

The five judges could detect a real wariness in his tone when he said Fan Ru which drew an incredulous look from Yang Qing as he knew her personally.

She was the valley master or hall master of the Medicine Valley. Her appearance was that of a beautiful woman in her late thirties. She had an easygoing personality but also an assiduous one when it came to alchemy, herbology, and healing.

She had a one-track mind when it came to those things, and she could easily lose herself in them, whenever she had a sporadic line of research to conduct, instantly abandoning all her duties as valley

master in favor of her research, leaving the deputy valley master, Ren Shu to pick up the slack and fill the void.

Yang Qing always pitied the deputy hall master for having an unreliable boss, and getting overworked, though the thought of Ren Shu getting overworked brought him comfort that he wasn't the only one getting squeezed dry by the Order.