

Daily life 501

Chapter 501 Blank memory (2)

Weirdly enough for some reason, he never felt guilty about it. He wasn't sure if maybe it was because his grandfather worked here so in a way it was the same as him working here because, in his mind, his grandfather owed him, and is still repaying his debts by taking his place at the Valley or some other reason that Yang Qing may not be aware of yet.

However, as of now, some part of him was very worried, especially, when he saw the look the valley master was giving him. He knew her personality so well, she was one of the craftiest and pettiest people he knew.

Half of the things he did, were under her tutelage and now as her most devoted student, he had a feeling it wasn't beneath her to use his current state as a bargaining chip.

"You know little Qing.."

"Here it comes...Ren Shu, help.." Yang Qing threw a sideglance to Ren Shu, who instantly got the message. They both knew her and had bonded, so Ren Shu instantly understood, and as a well-respected individual with morals and a sense of duty and care for those under him, he responded in kind.

"Sorry, Yang Qing, you're on your own. I'll give you some tea leaves later.."

"Tsk, I knew it.."

Valley Master looked at the duo with a look of amusement, like she could read what their secret messages were before she turned her attention to Yang Qing.

"Well, don't worry I won't use this little incident to get you into the valley just yet. If I did it like that, it would be too easy and predictable, I'd rather bide my time, my young student.." she said with an ominous smile as she took a seat next to them.

Yang Qing didn't have to soak in the trepidation that came from that statement, as Valley Master Fan Ru immediately switched demeanors and turned serious. It was uncharacteristic of her as the only times she was that serious was when she was at a critical point in her research, or when she met a thorny case she couldn't deal with.

Yang Qing took an inadvertent gulp as he took a seat next to her.

I hope it isn't bad. I never thought a day would come when i would wish that it was Grandpa who was behind it...

"Yang Qing there's a few questions I'd like to ask, first is this, do you know what this is?" the round bead that was in Yang Qing's hands days prior appeared in her hands as she handed it to Yang Qing.

Yang Qing had a baffled look as he pressed the bead between his hands. It was warm to the touch, and he felt like he was holding an entire sky, especially with lively stars, and the sun and moon floating around it, made it seem so.

"I don't know what this is, but.. I feel oddly connected to it like I have some relation with it. What is it? Is it some treasure of the Origin Universe Resonant Light Sect?" asked Yang Qing, as he could feel certain aspects of the bead had some properties of his cultivation art, the Universal indulgent of the myriad worlds.

"Oh, seems like you managed to learn a few things, was it the old grove tree who told you?"

"It was.."

"I bet seeing you must have triggered some memories.." she said as she chuckled.

"No, this isn't their treasure. We found this on you a few days ago, and from our guess, you were the one who created it to seal the object inside.."

"Me?" Yang Qing's brows rose as he found that hard to believe. He had no cultivation spell that could create the bead in his hands, and he could also feel the faint power released by it was something beyond his abilities to produce.

He almost wanted to ask if she was just teasing him, but when he saw her slightly serious expression, he held back those words as he carefully scrutinized the bead.

The more he looked at it, the more he felt a sense of closeness to it like it had been a part of his body.

"But how could I have created this, I don't remember doing it, and isn't this something beyond the means of a palace realm cultivator, especially, a weak one like me who is still only in the first stage?"

What he felt and what he saw contrasted with each other. Intrinsically he felt the bead had a deep relation and connection with him, but there was what he knew. He knew his abilities all too well and he didn't have some secret technique or trump card that would let him pull off creating that bead, and there was the fact that he didn't even know what spell that bead was.

All he could tell about it was what he saw which was a sun, a moon, and a road of stars of different colors combining together to restrict something, which was likely the white golden fern before him.

"Could it be the thing green cocoon left me?"

The green pearl in his palace sense was about the only link that could maybe explain the bead since it had managed to save him from being restrained by what was likely a soul formation expert. He didn't know what other wondrous uses it had.

However, his look immediately changed when he closed his eyes to sense his palace realm manifestation.

The moon and the sun seemed duller than usual even if the light they produced was still bright, Yang Qing could tell it was weaker. The ocean looked lethargic in its ebbs and flows, unlike how active it always was, and the green flame tree at the center was burning with a weak green flame, while the pearl green cocoon had left was nothing but a green wisp that would be blown away by the wind.

"What happened?!" he muttered in shock.

"So you don't remember creating it?"

"I don't, I really don't! All I remember was heading toward a patient, a seventeen-year-old early-stage foundation cultivator, who had qi depletion from his medical treatment.

I went over to help him, then.... then... huh ..what happened after that? why can't I remember?" Yang Qing shook his head sideways as he tried to recall but he couldn't no matter how much he tried.

"Calm down, let's take things slowly..." The Valley Master's soothing voice was like a bucket of water that doused Yang Qing's frantic thoughts, bringing a sense of calmness to him.

"Why don't I remember anything? And Deputy Master Ren Shu, earlier you said I was out for three days?" asked Yang Qing as he remembered the words his grandfather had said earlier.

"You were.." Ren Shu softly answered.

"Don't get flustered. Whatever happened three days ago wasn't necessarily a bad thing, and when we get down to it, it even helped as it has alerted the Order to something.."

Chapter 502 Joining the clues

"Alerted the Order?"

Yang Qing grew increasingly confused by the second. None of what he was told made any sense to him. He passed out without knowing, he thought it was only for a few minutes but it turned out he had been out for three days, then there was a bead in front of him said to have been formed personally by him.

However, the profundities involved in creating said bead were beyond his current understanding.

How could he create something, he didn't have the abilities or know how to create? The power behind he could feel the waves were mildly stronger than what was released from the ascendant grade kun

scale they had been given for their Ice Emerald Sect mission, though as per Yang Qing's feelings, he felt it was slightly weaker than the saint grade treasure he had been given by Vice President Tao Wen.

He still found it hard to believe he created such a thing. However, the most confusing part was the connection he felt with the beads upended what he knew because even though he thought it was within his abilities to create something like that, the bead felt like it was a part of him.

And now, he was told he had alerted the Order to something, it was a bit too much to swallow.

Though for now what worried him the most, was the blank state of his memory.? For cultivators of his level that is one of the most frightening news one could get.

Whether you were unconscious for a second, for three days, or for a month, the amount of terror that would strike at you after realizing it had happened, would be the same.

The further up one grew as a cultivator, the more their body and soul changed. They were gradually being transformed. The diseases they used to get as mortals were no longer there, their bodies had more power to do things previously thought impossible like slicing through a small mountain or swimming in a pool of lava with no injuries to their bodies.

They had perfect control of their whole body, mind and soul, so things like having memory gaps, accidentally falling asleep or unconscious for even a second, down to even a sudden bodily change like sneezing, were big alarms to them, especially to those with higher cultivation bases, like Yang Qing who was in the palace realm.

Such changes meant your defenses had been breached, and something that could breach your defense could kill you just as easily. For them, a second was enough time to cause a fatal damage to someone, which was why Yang Qing was unnerved when he was told he had been sleeping for three days straight.

He wasn't the one who initiated it and he couldn't even remember why or how it happened. It was like his body had not been his own, which was a scary thought to him.

What if something like that happened again when he was out there, wouldn't he be easy prey for anybody who passes him by?

"I can't figure anything by obsessively worrying about it. Looking at their unworried looks it seems they have some idea...could it be?"

His gaze fell once more on the bead. The sun and the moon present on them seemed to match the one in his palace realm when he looked at them closely.

Intrinsically they seemed to be from the same mold, with the one from the bead being of a higher quality, but the foundation of it, Yang Qing could tell matched his palace realm.

His gaze then turned to his grandfather who had a look of worry on his face.

"The fact that he is here instead of my parents should mean it was done by design, and there is only one reason he would be called in.."

"Qing'er..."

"Don't worry Grandpa, I'm okay now.." he said with a smile.

"Good.." Yang Fen cheerfully said.

"Valley master you were saying something about alerting the Order? I take it, it has to do with the fern locked in there.." Yang Qing said as he pointed to the shrunken fern restricted within the bead.

"Yes, it has to do with the fern. The main body has been made from the parts of a golden thread tree, which needs no explanation, and along with it was a cut vine from a saint-grade sanguine heart vine, after further analysis with a few from the spirit council, we found a few more things.

It had been coated with ash from fire ivory poplar and the blood from a wandering light swan was used, along with it were all kinds of arrays that looked to have been done by a versatile gold grade formation master..."

Yang Qing's eyes almost popped when he heard all the things being mentioned by Valley Master Fan Ru.

Ren Shu at the side looked just as perplexed while his grandfather Yang Fen had contrasting emotions. He had a look of greed and enticement as he drooled over the bead.

Yang Qing shook his head sideways in exasperation when he saw this. It would be a lie if he said he expected his grandfather would react any differently to the revelation.

While they would be worried about the implications of such a machination, he on the other hand would more likely be wondering if he incorporated it into a body refining regimen and what kind of changes would it bring about.

For such a powerful combination, the results were likely to be great, and he wasn't the only one who would think that way, the other elders from the Yang clan would be up there with him along with his brother, who liked to pretend he didn't enjoy their experiments, but he did.

"The use of such quality materials, surely the one who created it should have left something to warn them in case of tampering right, how come the fern is still intact?" asked Yang Qing.

"Where did the fern come from?" he added.

"Where does your memory stop?" asked Ren Shu.

"At the foundation establishment seventeen year old boy from the silver rhino sect. Don't tell me it came from him?! but there was nothing special about him or could there have been?" he asked in doubt

His experience from the Ice Emerald Sect had made him question everything he saw, then there was also the advice from Meng Chao before, to be careful with cultivators.

"I had him sent to the special inquisitors and Feng Lei didn't find anything strange with the boy, his master, or his sect.."

"Then why would someone plant something of this level in him? Wait, don't tell me..." Yang Qing's eyes widened as they fell on Valley Master Fan Ru and Ren Shu.

Chapter 503 Four Peak Grade Professions

"Your guess is right, it was planted with the Order in mind. The karma of the bandits who attacked them had been completely erased by someone, and when we sent inquisitors to trace whatever was left of the bandit group, they didn't find anything it was like they had disappeared, despite them having over 100 members.

Not one of them was left, and there was not a single clue to follow, even from the region where the master and disciple duo from the Silver Rhino sect were attacked.

Though considering the level of skill involved in creating the fern, those who did it, should have been more than capable of covering their tracks considering they were able to sneak such a thing into the Valley without any of the sensory measures placed reacting to it.." said Ren Shu as his face turned frosty.

The Medical Valley was one of the most integral places to the Order and could be considered one of its hearts, and it was also one of the few integral places within the Order that was open to outsiders, as such it was filled with all sorts of protection mechanisms, from arrays to treasured artifacts to hidden sentinels that involved cultivators with special physiques or spirit beasts and spiritual plants all aimed at guaranteeing the security of the valley.

Of course, the level of security was not the same throughout the valley, some were more stringent than others especially key core regions of the valley, but in general, the Medical Valley was well protected, and it was ensured every measure could at the very least provide protection and containment against something that was at the level of the domain realm.

Of those the measures put in place, the bulk were meant to prevent infiltration, however, the fern had clearly escaped that net, which as one of the standing leading figures of the Valley, Ren Shu felt he was culpable and he wasn't the only one who felt that way.

Yang Qing could detect a flash of suppressed fury within the eyes of the valley master. Luckily the fern was detected in time, which was only by sheer luck, because if Yang Qing had not been there, and

coincidentally triggered and sealed it. None of them would have ever known something like that had made its way into the Order.

"What's the use of the fern?" asked Yang Qing.

Even after realizing that the Order was likely the reason the fern had been planted in the seventeen-year-old youth, he couldn't detect anything frightening from the fern. It seemed utterly benign.

"It's dormant but that little thing has the ability to kill a soul formation expert.." Fan Ru grimly said which prompted Yang Qing to almost drop the bead in fear.

"What?!"

Valley master Fan Ru sighed as she picked up the bead from Yang Qing who was all too glad to let go of the hot potato.

If it could kill a soul formation expert, what about a puny little palace realm expert like himself?

"Am I cursed?" he wondered in fright.

In just one week he had faced things that were above his level to handle or comprehend. He almost got slaughtered by a tree that looked like it had come from the abyss, and said tree had the abilities of a soul formation expert.

Barely a few days have passed, and there was yet another one. I think you should take a look at

"How am I even alive?" he thought.

"When I first laid eyes on it, I knew it was a peculiar nasty piece of work, it was only when I got to the council that I knew by how much.

This little thing is the culmination of four different schools, and it was done by those close to or at the peak of their levels.

There was a formation master who based on the numerous arrays implanted in it, and how seamlessly they merged with one another, was at the very least a peak gold-grade formation master, with knowledge in symbiotic arrays, isolation arrays, killing arrays, curses, chaining arrays and so forth.

Then there was a herbologist probably at the purple grade because that is the only way they can handle material from two different saint-grade spiritual plants without damaging them, then an alchemist likely at the same level for combining the materials together, and lastly a weapon artificer to finish it all up.

Who should at the very least be a peak gold grade weapon artificer..."

Yang Qing felt like his mind exploded when he heard that, even his grandfather who seemed nonchalant about everything else except the bead, had his look change to one of shock.

"From what we have deduced, the fern's purpose was likely to inhabit someone or something from the Order and lie silently in wait, until it was triggered.

This fern seems to be one part of another, and we don't know how many. There is a resonant linking array on it, which means there are likely others already planted around the valley or well on their way, and we can't tell for how long this has been happening.

This particular fern has a profound curse attack embedded in it. If there are others, we are not sure if the attack type will be similar to this one, or if the materials being used are the same. Though we feel strongly the materials used are likely to be similar, even if the array patterns would be different, especially, when it comes to the golden thread tree and the saint-grade heart vine.

The golden thread tree can isolate traces including even karma so finding out will be difficult, especially if it's working concurrently with the heart vine, which will help the fern blend seamlessly with the host it parasitizes be it human or artifact, but because of you, we have a way.." said valley master Fan Ru.

"Me? How? Valley Master, I don't even know how any of these happened?"

"You know your body better than anyone and instantly tell if something is off. You already have a guess, don't you?"

Yang Qing paused solemnly before he said, "You suspect my physique had something to do with it?"

"It's more than suspect at this point. We are certain of it. Your physique triggered it and what happened after was likely antecedent atavism..."

Chapter 504 The trigger (1)

"Antecedent atavism? but I don't have a generational bloodline for it to happen, or even a natural one for that matter?" said Yang Qing in confusion.

The institute had given them plenty of courses into physiques. The more they knew the better they could do their jobs and even protect themselves. So they had dissected many of them over the years at the Institute, and in many cases, they even got first-hand experiences during their duels with convicts from the Requiem.

During the course of their study, he had come across 'antecedent atavism' which colloquially meant borrowing from your ancestors.

It was a unique feature that appeared to those who inherited their physiques, for example, the spirit jade turtle Li family. One of their members had a chance of antecedent atavism happening to them.

Antecedent atavism could be considered a fail-safe measure, a last-resort form of protection that would be triggered if the person was in danger. If triggered, the bloodline would call upon the abilities of its originator.

In the Li family's case in case an Antecedent atavism was triggered, they would draw on the abilities locked in their bloodline of the spirit jade turtle that had formed a contract with their ancestor.

Even though the Li family shared a bloodline with it, they did not have all the abilities of the spirit jade turtle because their bodies fundamentally differed from it and thus were incapable of supporting all its abilities.

Even among them, the abilities they got were not similar, and it was something commonly observed among families with inherited physiques. The family members would exhibit different abilities despite sharing the same bloodline, and the difference in abilities was usually tied to the bodies they were born with.

However, antecedent atavism changed all that because, during the duration of its activation, that particular person would gain the body and full abilities of their bloodline. In the case of the spirit jade Li family, they would gain the body of a spirit jade turtle and have access to all abilities the spirit jade turtle they were contracted with, and if their bodies could support it, even its full power, the power it had when it formed the contract.

Triggering it was out of the user's control, what was known was it would only do so in extreme danger, and as per the records the Order had, most could trigger the antecedent atavism once in their whole lives and it was almost always involuntary, and the highest recorded number for triggered times in one person was three times, but even then, the duration was over a hundred years apart each time.

The antecedent atavism would always occur only in those with a high-purity bloodline.

However, over the years there have been recorded anomalies in the phenomena. In rare cases the atavism wouldn't need dangerous circumstances to trigger it, in those cases, it was usually some treasure or object with close relation to the person's bloodline that would trigger a reaction from them. This particular scenario could not be replicated, so it was assumed there had to be an additional condition to it that wasn't currently known.

Another anomaly was, that there have been few occasions where it has been triggered on those with thin bloodlines, but for those recorded, only a handful survived with the rest dying while the atavism was in progress or immediately after because their bodies could not handle the strain of it.

Therefore it was commonly believed the purer your bloodline, the higher the chances of triggering antecedent atavism, and the higher your chances of surviving it.

But as far as Yang Qing knew antecedent atavism only applied to inherited physiques since the antecedent atavism was basically a bloodline protective talisman passed from their ancestor to his/ her descendants. Their bloodline could be considered alive as it had the will of the creature it came from which was why it could be triggered.

But the peerless jade physique was different. It wasn't alive nor was it inherited from someone. What was presently known about it was that there was never a duplicate peerless jade physique so each one was unique and singular to the person, and the means of acquiring one could not be replicated either.

What all peerless jade physiques did share in common was they all gained immunity to something the moment they gained it, and those immunities could be similar among different types.

For example, both Yang Qing and Feng Xin were immune to all sorts of poison that affected the body and the mind. While for Kang Huilang, his peerless jade physique gave him immunity against the effects of slaughter baleful qi along with murderous qi. His body negated their effects completely.

They had other unique features to them, but antecedent atavism wasn't one of them, at least thus far Yang Qing hadn't heard of it.

But when his gaze fell on his grandfather, he remembered the words he left with him that day and the experience he had soon after.

"That jade tree.." he muttered to himself.

To date, for Yang Qing, gaining the peerless jade physique was the hardest hurdle he had ever had to cross. Forming the perfect circulation in the qi refinement realm, forming purple grade pillars in the foundation establishment realm, creating a purple grade core in the core formation realm, or even breaking through to the palace realm, none of them were as hard and as life-threatening as it was to him when he was breaking through to the peerless jade physique.

Looking at it that way, the abilities he gained from the physique paled seemed to pale in comparison to the difficulty and cost it took to gain it, which led credence to what his grandfather said, ' There had to be locks to the physique that needed special keys to unlock them'. Yang Qing chose to ignore the part where he was called a glorified tree in the latter parts of the conversation.

"While I haven't been paying much attention to what Daoist Fen and the others have been working on, we have long hypothesized that there was more to the peerless jade physique than meets the eye, however, our research on the matter, was basically on a speculative standpoint and never quite fully committed to it like your grandfather and the rest.

Just like most even if we thought there had to be something more to it, at the end of the day, we were biased in the time we could afford it since no matter how special it was, it was still something one acquired when one cultivated in the lowest cultivation realm.

Ignoring the simple fact once one reaches the gold body, it's no longer just a realm but a physique, the same as those who were born with theirs. If inborn physiques never lose relevance even in the later stages of one's cultivation, neither should cultivated ones, especially a peerless jade physique.

We are truly lucky that we have you Daoist Fen, and any resources and help you need just ask.." Valley Master Fan Ru solemnly said.

However, her look turned from solemn to one of confusion when she saw the awkward look Yang Fen and Ren Shu were exchanging.

"What is it?" she asked, directing the question to Ren Shu who cleared his throat a little with a look that said he didn't want to answer.

However facing the Valley Master's vicious glare, he had no option but to do so.

"Well, I thought their research direction was interesting, especially if it can help Yang Qing, so, we already give them all the support and resources they require.." he awkwardly said as he secretly eyed his wife's reaction.

"Oh, you can't even give your wife some face huh, 'acting valley master.."

Valley Master Fan Ru intentionally dragged out the last part of her sentence with an ominous aura being released from her body.

"Now where was I...antecedent atavism, while I don't know much about peerless jade physiques as I should.."

The valley master's gaze fell on Ren Shu who smiled ruefully in response.

Chapter 505 The trigger (2)

"The reaction you had is something that I have seen in those who have activated antecedent atavism. Using abilities beyond their level, experiencing memory gaps, and passing out after.

In your case, considering you used abilities that were close to that of a soul formation expert, the effects would have been more severe than just sleeping for three days, if you did not have the object left to you by senior green cocoon to offset the cost of releasing such a technique.

However, even with the object's help, the side effects are still there, right?" asked Valley Master Fan Ru.

"Can you try to trigger your runes or produce the spring of resplendence dew.." she added.

Yang Qing nodded as he triggered the runes in his bone that were formed when he formed the yin-yang jade bones.

When he tried, he felt like his body was made of hot lead that evaporated all his energy and air. He felt faint, as for the runes, every time he triggered them, a golden white radiance, would appear on his skin, and any plant around would show unconcealed volatile excitement, like that of deep yearning.

However when he did so now, the light on his skin was faint, the aura of vitality that usually suffused from his body was light, and the excitement from the plants around, though it was there, it was mild.

Yang Qing barely sustained it for a few seconds before he was forced to cancel it out as beads of sweat appeared on his forehead.

Yang Qing was startled though he already felt it when he woke up and knew his body was weak, he didn't expect it to be to this extent. He could activate the runes on his bones for three months straight before he felt overdrawn, but now he could barely last a few seconds.

"Qing'er don't push yourself.." his grandfather worryingly said.

"It's okay grandpa.." he replied with an assuring smile.

He then went on to produce the spring of resplendence dew. Outside it looked the same as it always was, except those who were familiar with the one he usually produced, like the three present, could tell it was different, even if it still had a dense life aura and healing properties, moreso the person himself.

"It's lacking an anchor, and that anchor is your physique.." said Ren Shu.

"When I gave you the Universal duality indulgent of the myriad worlds cultivation art, at the time I did so because I thought you would be able to push it to greater heights because of your physique that seemed to complement it perfectly, however, now, my thoughts have changed..." said Valley Master Fan Ru as the petals and the flames in her eyes swirled around.

"I think the art is the support in this role, to bring the best out of your yin yang peerless jade physique.." she added.

"So you think the physique was triggered because the fern was a threat to my life?" asked Yang Qing.

"But I was in a life-threatening situation a few days prior and there was no reaction..." he added, as he tried a few other spells to see if they were affected just like the spring of resplendent dew. They were.

"A lot of factors may have attributed to why it wasn't triggered back then but was triggered now, though if we focus purely on the threat factor, I heard you had a saint-grade treasure back then as opposed to now, there is also the fact that the fern was triggered prematurely by you, so there must have been something in you that attracted it, which caused a chain reaction with the self-defense mechanism of your physique triggering, or it may have triggered prior to the attack which was why the fern reacted prematurely.

Actually, this was one of the reasons I wanted to talk with you. I needed a step-by-step account of everything you did from the moment you stepped into the pavilion, up until the point when your memory stopped. Leave nothing out.

Maybe we might figure out something on the trigger.."

Yang Qin paused briefly before he closed his eyes and started recounting the events from that day. He left nothing out, including the whistles of victory he did, all the little tricks he engaged on the second floor to gain the awe-filled eyes of the Medicine Valley workers there.

When he finished, all four of them had looks on their faces like they had just realized something.

"Seniors, do you think me triggering my jade runes, and circulating the universal duality art, may have been the thing that triggered everything?" asked Yang Qing.

"I think there are chances it did.." answered Ren Shu before silence ensued as each fell to their thoughts.

"We can't unravel all this in a day, we still need to search and scan the whole valley and see if there are other hidden weapons like the fern, and as for researching the peerless jade physique or if circulating your art in conjunction with your jade runes could be some key, that would have to wait until you recover, which by my estimates should be in two months.

We can revisit the issue then, while Daoist Fen and the rest continue with the research.."

"We will.." Yang Fen answered with eagerness in his tone.

"Two months huh.." Yang Qing muttered as he clenched and unclenched his fists.

"Could I still come? I'd like to still continue working on the patients, partly to keep my word, but I also need it for now.." asked Yang Qing.

"Well, what do you think?" asked Ren Shu as he directed the question to the valley master.

"We already know what we are looking for and the areas we receive those from outside have already been screened by the special inquisitors along with a few members of the spirit council and we have already placed a few saint-grade treasures for detection.

If it's only the Harmony Well pavilion and the Rivers of Healing, there shouldn't be any risk as they've been screened already and improved on.

Besides it might be good for him to improve his skills with the Universal Duality art, especially, without his physique giving him an added advantage.." said Valley Master Fan Ru after some thought.

"Okay...You heard her Yang Qing.."

"Thank you both for acquiescing to my selfish requests.." Yang Qing said as he bowed to them both.

The two smiled at each other as they smiled warmly at Yang Qing. In some sense, Yang Qing could be considered their half-disciple, a problematic one, but they cared deeply for him nonetheless.

"Now then, please see yourselves out, I have something to discuss with him.." Valley Master Fan Ru said as she threw Ren Shu an innocent smile.

Yang Qing instantly knew Ren Shu's fate was about to turn miserable so he pulled his grandfather along and flew out of the abode as fast as he could, throwing a sympathetic look towards Ren Shu.

Chapter 506 Discussing the options (1)

After hurriedly leaving the abode of Fan Ru and Ren Shu, Yang Qing halted his retreat only when he was close to the pavilion of the coalescing tranquility rivers of healing.

The shock of suddenly finding out he had been unconscious for three days and his potential releasing the abilities of a soul formation expert aside, he was also worried about Ma Yuan and whether there had been any changes for the past three days.

So immediately after he left the abode of Ren Shu, his first stop was the pavilion where Ma Yuan's daughter was staying.

As Yang Qing was making his way in he was surprised to find Ma Yuan absent at the spot he had left him at which was the forest next to the pavilion.

"Is he in?" he wondered.

"Qing'er you go in while I look at the various herbs growing here. I can't believe I've never come here. When you're done, we can head home.." said his grandfather as he bent over to study the various shrubs and plants growing in the area, with deep interest in his eyes.

Yang Qing nodded to his grandfather and quickly went up to the floor Ma Ling had been staying at.

"How is she, Tan Jue?" asked Yang Qing when he reached the floor.

There was a slight rise in his brows when he saw Ma Yuan wasn't in the room. Those present were just Ma Ling who seemed to be drinking some melon juice with a gleeful expression, and Tan Jue who seemed mildly distracted.

However, she immediately jumped up in stupefaction when she heard Yang Qing's voice, which in turn startled Ma Ling who would have almost spilled her juice if it wasn't for the quick reaction of Yang Qing who flashed and reappeared at her bedside stabilizing the juice and Tan Jue in the process.

"You're awake?!" she asked in disbelief.

"Are you okay? is your qi flow rhythmic and regular? how about your soul and mind synchronization? and body senses? movement?"

She fired dozens of questions with no pause as she rapidly released countless diagnostic spells on Yang Qing.

"I am okay Tan Jue. If I wasn't, the valley master and the deputy master would not have let me go..." Yang Qing said with a rueful smile when he saw the glowing blue, green, and white gentle lights that were surrounding his body.

"Right, sorry about that.." Tan Jue said showing a rare look of embarrassment.

Ma Ling had her eyes wide open as she stared at Tan Jue.

"Is this still the same person who always wears that assiduous solemn face all the time and always seems unperturbed by anything?

Are they?" she curiously thought as her gaze alternated between Yang Qing and the embarrassed Tan Jue.

"I guess not. He doesn't have the same look Dad had whenever he looked at Mom. Huh...Dad? Mom? What am I saying?"

Ma Ling suddenly placed the juice down as she held her forehead in pain.

"Ma Ling, what is it?" Tan Jue hurriedly asked her embarrassed look from moments ago, gone and replaced by a devoted physician.

"Nothing, it's just a small headache senior sister Tan Jue.." she said as she smiled, to show that she was really okay.

"Okay, but, just in case can you lie down.." said Tan Jue, as she helped Ma Ling lie down.

After she was down, Tan Jue immediately formed a seal, which triggered white tendril lights to appear from the bed Ma Ling was lying on. The tendrils combined with her seal created a blue-green water bubble that had white runes floating around it.

"Close your eyes.." Tan Jue softly said to Ma Ling who nodded as she closed her eyes.

Within seconds she was already soundly asleep with Tan Jue standing over her constantly monitoring the thin blue light line fluctuations that started appearing from the water bubble.

"How is she?" Yang Qing worryingly asked.

He couldn't deploy his palace sense yet, so he could only monitor things at face value.

"It seems she just had an episode of a deep memory flash and her mind isn't able to accommodate it. It occasionally happens.."

"And Ma Yuan?"

"He is out with Zheng Hu at the moment. He had been asking for you yesterday and I didn't have the heart to tell him your state and add to his woes, so I asked Zheng Hu to step in instead.

They left together not more than two hours ago.."

"Did he say what he wanted?" asked Yang Qing.

From his interaction with Ma Yuan, he felt he wouldn't look for him lightly, it had to be something important to him.

"He didn't say, and I didn't want to press."

Yang Qing nodded as he took out his communication talisman to call Zheng Hu and find out where they were, though even without calling, he had an inkling where they'd be.

"Seems they're at the Thousands flavor restaurant.." he said as he put the talisman away.

"Would you be leaving now?" Tan Jue asked with a hint of worry in her tone.

"I am really okay. You know me well, I am not the type to play around with my health or life in the slightest. I am just a little worn out. The valley master said i should be back to full capacity in less than two months..." Yang Qing warmly said to ease the nerves of Tan Jue.

As a guilt-ridden person himself, he could see it written all over Tan Jue's face which was why she was behaving uncharacteristically.

"Okay.."

"By the way, I will still be continuing with what we agreed with.."

"You can't!"

"For reasons I can't say, I need it, Tan Jue.." he said with a solemn air that made Tan Jue falter.

"If it's any consolation, I already sought the valley master and Ren Shu's approval first, and they agreed. They even said it would be good for me.." said Yang Qing to try and reassure her, even only a little.

"Those two would agree to anything you asked.." she muttered silently under her breath with clear misgivings which left Yang Qing smiling bitterly unsure of what to say.

"While that may be true in some regard, but you know when it comes to their profession, they are unwavering in their codes about it, and wouldn't agree to something they are against.."

"I know.." Tan Jue said, finally relenting.

"I can't believe I will be the one saying this, but don't push yourself.." she added.

"I won't, and thank you, Tan Jue. Next time you have a break, I'll buy you soup from the Herb Garden.."

"Okay.." said Tan Jue with a simple smile as she waved Yang Qing goodbye.

Outside Yang Qing picked up his grandfather who was not all too pleased to leave and made their way to the Thousand Flavors Restaurant, where they split apart as Yang Qing went in and his grandfather went home, where they would meet later.

Inside he found Zheng Hu and Ma Yuan discussing something, though Ma Yuan seemed half distracted. His focus only seemed to return when he saw Yang Qing coming over.

"Judge Yang Qing.." he said as he hurriedly got up to cup his fists in greeting.

"Don't get up.." Yang Qing gently said as a gentle formless energy sat Ma Yuan down.

"You feeling better?" asked Zheng Hu via secret sound transmission to which Yang Qing nodded in return.

"Tan Jue told me you were looking for me?" Yang Qing said as he took a seat opposite Ma Yuan.

"Yes.." answered Ma Yuan seeming ill at ease.

"We can continue this at my place if you want?" asked Yang Qing when he noticed the awkwardness and nervousness in Ma Yuan.

"Thank you.." Ma Yuan said as he performed a quick bow.

"I have cases to help Mao Yunru with. I will be taking my leave, Take care Ma Yuan, Boss.." said Zheng Hu as he got up.

"Does she know?" Yang Qing quickly asked.

"No. The only reason I know is because Tan Jue called.."

"Good.." said Yang Qing, visibly relieved.

After Zheng Hu left, Yang Qing and Ma Yuan followed soon after, headed to the dream cloud abode.

Chapter 507 Discussing the options (2)

Dream cloud abode

"So what did you want to talk about?" asked Yang Qing as he poured spirit calming jasmine for both him and Ma Yuan.

"About that.." Ma Yuan closed and open his mouth a couple of times with no words coming out.

"We may have known each other for a short time, Ma Yuan, but i consider you a friend, and i hope you do so to me..." said Yang Qing with a gentle smile.

Ma Yuan stared at him for a little while before he finally sighed as he replied,

"I am honored you consider me a friend, it seems i have been discourteous in my actions, forgive me for that.." he said

"So what's on your mind?"

"It's about Ma Ling and our current circumstances.." Ma Yuan paused briefly as he took a sip of his tea hoping it will calm him or give him courage for his next words.

"As per Master Tan Jue's estimates, her treatment will take seven months to a year at most. I am thankful to you and the Order for the help from saving her and even now you're still helping us at no cost.

The grace and the kindness you have afforded me is something i could never repay back and as a father i won't pretend that i would even refuse it. For her i would willingly shame myself, thicken myself and go through whichever storm i need to go through to ensure her well being.

Nothing matters to me other than her well being. Whatever pride i had was shattered the moment she was born, but i still hope i can somehow repay you and the Order for all the help you have given and are still giving.

But as i am, no cultivation base, i am struggling in finding a way i can return the favor even if it is only a tiny little bit.

I had thought i could maybe use my herbology skills to try and repay that gratitude, but after seeing the level of skills shown at the Medicine Valley, i am ashamed to tout my inferior skills. I can not simply reach the levels that i saw.

I don't know how to repay you all back, and while i will willingly accept any and all help given to me on behalf of my daughter, i feel ashamed to accept it just like that.." he said with a bitter smile.

"There is more.." asked Yang Qing, though it seemed more a statement of fact than a question.

Ma Yuan nodded with the same bitter smile on his face as he said,

"Other than thinking about how to repay you, these few days, when i wasn't with Ma Ling, i was able to analyze my situation clearly.

With a crippled cultivation base, i can not protect my daughter as i would like to, and i don't want what happened to her and my wife..." a pained expression appeared on his face as he said this.

"I don't want to lose my daughter again, but i recognize my own inability to do it. So i would like to shamelessly request help. Is there any my daughter can join the Order?" he said as he bowed his head with an air of desperation about him.

"There's no need for that Ma Yuan.." Yang Qing said as he gently helped him up.

"Truth be told I've been thinking about your situation too. While i'd like nothing more than for your daughter to join the Order. My hands are tied in that regard, the only thing i can do is file a special recommendation for her where she can take the test any time she feels ready.

However i would not recommend it.."

"Why?" Ma Yuan hesitantly asked.

"She has already formed her foundation pillars, the Order usually accepts those below the foundation establishment, and those it does accept already in the foundation establishment need to have blue grade pillars that are pure.

While your daughter has blue grade pillars, they are not true ones. The Ice Emerald Sect must have done something to help her gain it.

She would have to start over from scratch for her to be given a consideration to join the Order. With all she has been through, i don't know if she can handle the psychological burden that comes with making that choice. It is not an easy one to make, and with all she has endured, i wouldn't want to subject her to such a mental strain.

And i don't think you'd want to either.."

Ma Yuan gravely nodded at this.

"And even if let's say she agreed to do it, it wouldn't be a guarantee that she would get in and i can not do anything to make sure she does, she can only do so through her own efforts.

But let's say she gets in, the Order isn't an easy place to be in. If you want her protected from dangerous situations, then this isn't the best place for that, while her life can be guaranteed she will be in the eye of the storm here.

The moment she passes through those doors she will take on the same burden we all take, and our predecessors have, which is to willingly accept the burden of making an enemy of the entire continent if needed, and should the day ever comes it really does happen, we are not to falter.

If she gets in, that's a burden she will have to accept from the onset.."

The air seemed to have turned graver. Ma Yuan felt his palms turned sweaty as a complicated expression appeared in his eyes.

He, just like most saw the glamor in being a member of the Order, they never saw the cost that came with it, and now hearing it from Yang Qing, he couldn't help but waver.

Making an enemy of the world wasn't just something anybody could carry, and he could tell from the gaze Yang Qing had, he was someone who held firmly to the resolve that came with that possibility.

Was it worth it to hoist such a burden on his daughter?

He couldn't help but clench his fists in frustration cursing his own weakness. If he was strong enough would he even be in this position.

However, Yang Qing's next words pulled him from the cycle of self blame he was falling under.

"But if it's a peaceful life you are after then i have a suggestion.."

"What is it?" Ma Yuan asked hopefully.

"Join the Summerfield Kingdom that's in the territory of the Spiritual Temperance Sect. Wiith your talents in herbology and farming that would be the best fit for you." said Yang Qing.

"Summerfield Kingdom? I have heard of them and I do admit I have heard they have wondrous techniques and people of my profession are readily accepted, but isn't their strength a little too weak to guarantee our safety?

As far as I know, they don't have a palace realm cultivator.." said Ma Yuan with some hesitation in his tone.

Safety was paramount to him now.

"When it comes to strength, mmh, well they are in the territory of a rank 3 sect who they have a relationship with even if it's thin at best.

And I'm not afraid to tell you the Spiritual Temperance Sect while on paper could be considered a rank 3 sect, it has a domain expert, and their territory had a few situations recently that will force them to be vigilant, so this is the time to move there.

Other than that, the Order will be building a branch there and it will more than likely be placed within the territory of the Summerfield Kingdom.

Among the numerous organizations located within the territory of the Spiritual temperance sect, the Summerfield Kingdom is the only one we have a deep relationship with.

Also while the Summerfield Kingdom may not yet have a palace realm cultivator, i feel in the near future, it won't be that way.." said Yang Qing with a mysterious smile.

He still remembered the strange farm he passed through as he was making his way to the capital.

"Will they accept me as I am?" asked Ma Yuan.

With all the points laid out by Yang Qing, the Summerfield kingdom had met all the criteria and worries he had, now there was only the problem of worth.

Someone with a crippled cultivation would always be shunned and looked at with scorn wherever they went.

"You shouldn't worry about that. Your body still holds the strength of a core formation expert, and your gold body is an added advantage.

Besides to them, your value as a herbologist matters more to them than your strength. The only thing you need to ask yourself is if your skills are good enough, which I think they are.." said Yang Qing with a smile.

Ma Yuan went silent as countless thoughts flashed in his eyes before he finally decided that Summerfield Kingdom would be their next home.

"The debt I owe you just keeps growing.." he said with a joking laugh.

"Well if you want to pay me, how about this, I've been planning to improve my backyard and add all sorts of plants mostly those with edible fruits and ones, that can be inhabited by creatures. Maybe you can help me with that..." said Yang Qing as he pointed toward his backyard.

"If you don't find my skills beneath it, I would be glad to.."

"It's a deal..Have this, you can use it to come and go as you please.." Yang Qing said as he handed a green wooden medallion to Ma Yuan who accepted it like it was some treasure.

Yang Qing went on to show him his backyard, which made Ma Yuan suck in a breath of cold air because the wild vegetation growing despite being unattended was of high quality.

Yang Qing explained a few of his ideas and left it to Ma Yuan to add a few of his own, giving him free rein to arrange things how he wanted.

After he was done, he left the eager Ma Yuan examining his backyard with his spirit as a farmer slowly reigniting.

Many years later when Ma Yuan became a renowned blue-grade herbologist, he would look fondly at his time in Yang Qing's backyard, and how it was the impetus for his transformation in so many ways.

Chapter 508 Test of the jade

When Yang Qing reached his family's courtyard he was shocked to find a full house present. His cowardly father was around today though he was still squirming in his seat as his eyes occasionally darted in the direction of his grandfather who was lost in his own thoughts, his brother and wife were around like always, and his two nephews while his mom was effortlessly preparing a sumptuous meal.

Yang Qing came in just the right time when she had just finished her preparations. Like a dutiful son, he helped her put them in serving bowls while sneaking a few early bites here and there with his mother's approval of course.

While his family always ate their meal, they were never as enthusiastic about it as Yang Qing was which was why his mother always loved asking him to come over as often as possible.

Yang Qing was always in awe of her cooking skills. She was a skilled alchemist and had contributed a lot to the clan through it, however, her real passions lay in cooking, so she decided to combine both and had slowly been improving her skills as a chef alchemist, though it was more apt to consider her a chef physician.

She knew how to combine her ingredients well and maximize their properties with the goal of improving the health and functionality of those who ate her meals.

With everything placed, Yang Qing unreservedly gauged himself. Later his mother asked him to stay over for a few days.

Yang Qing wanted to reject, but when he saw her worried eyes and pleading look he obliged. Even without telling her anything, either about the ordeal at the Ice Emerald Sect or his being unconscious for three days, and his physique experiencing a period of weakness, his mother could already tell something was wrong with him even though she was weaker than him, and Yang Qing going to great lengths trying to conceal everything outwardly.

"A mother's intuition is scary," he thought to himself.

After the meal, he, his father, his grandfather, and his brother went outside for a discussion. For a family of body refinement zealots, though this was mostly his grandfather, with his brother slowly growing to the title, the discussion they had mostly centered around that topic.

Yang Qing opened up to his father and brother about his passing out and the speculative cause for it, in addition, he also mentioned to the three the experience he had months prior when he was trying to investigate if there was a manifestation of his physique two months prior when he was last here.

"The peerless jade physiques are truly mysterious. I feel we have barely scratched the surface with it.." said Yang Qing's brother as he rubbed his chin in deep contemplation.

"Qing'er you're sure you're okay, the valley master confirmed there are no underlying permanent repercussions for what you did.

Everything has an equivalent balance. If you used the abilities that approached the realm of a soul formation expert as a palace realm cultivator, then an equivalent cost for doing it will be borne.." said his father with worry in his tone.

"They did say the price would have been much dire if I did not have a certain thing left to me by my senior. The senior is a powerful soul formation expert, even among others of her kind, she seems to have a special position.

The object she left served as the price.." said Yang Qing as he winced bitterly when he recalled all he had left of the green pearl Green Cocoon left him was a single wisp that would disappear in a month as per his estimates.

"But this is still shocking, I didn't expect the peerless jade physique to have spirituality.." added his father.

"I didn't either, though I am grateful I was protected because of it, I still feel at ease at the prospect my body was taken over without me noticing it.." said Yang Qing with a grim expression.

"When did you become such a worry wart. Shouldn't you be jumping in joy for having a fail-safe measure to guarantee your life.." his grandfather gingerly said as he stroked his beard.

"Besides, I feel the part about your body being taken over is misconstrued.." he added as his eyes shone with wisdom that had been honed over and over for countless years.

"How so, Grandpa?" curiously asked Yang Qing adopting the air of a studious student.

Despite having a higher cultivation base, Yang Qing was always reverent to the breadth of wisdom his grandfather and even his father had.

Having a high cultivation base didn't mean that one knew more than those lower than them in cultivation base, though it was usually assumed that those with a higher cultivation base knew more because they had long lifespans and had powerful abilities that became tools they could use to grow their wisdom and knowledge.

However, that wasn't always fact. Those with lower cultivation bases, if they had single-minded devotion to a particular subject, and were actually good at it, may know more than those with higher cultivation bases, which was how even someone with a core formation cultivation base who excelled at formations could end up becoming a blue grade formation master before even stepping into the palace realm.

Cultivation base was cultivation base, experience was experience, and wisdom was wisdom. In his mind he always felt the amount Dean Zhu Lao knew, was probably more than what soul formation experts would know despite the former being at the peak of the domain realm. This was why he always adopted a humble attitude whether it was to his grandfather, and father, or to those who had devoted their entire lives to the study of a single subject for countless years.

"I feel you judging your physique similar to that of inherited bloodline physique and are going on the notion that what you experienced was an antecedent atavism, but thinking that way is wrong, while what the valley master said had some truth, it is also erroneous..."

Yang Qing raised his brow in surprise when he heard that before a look of realization hit him.

"You did not inherit your physique, it was not passed down from someone or something to you, you acquired it, and as your father said, everything has an equivalent balance and cost, you paid the price to gain your Yin Yang jade bones.

Whatever its demands were, you paid it and finally reaped its rewards. No spirit beast, no spiritual plant, or rare treasure gave it to you, you gained it by yourself which is why I think peerless jade physiques can not be replicated.

The test is unique to the person, and I feel the type of physique you get is also tied to who is fundamental.

Yang Qing, the physique you got is yours, it's not the Yang family's, it's not something some cultivation art gave you because if it was, we would have already produced one already. It is not something you got from some spirit beast or special bloodline.

Your yin-yang jade bones are yours and yours alone. They appeared because of you and no reason else. If we subjected someone else to what you went through and they formed a peerless jade physique, even without any evidence to back it up, I am confident he/she would not get the yin-yang jade bones.

So the fears you have, they're unwarranted. To me, it's the same as fearing your own shadow.

The Yin Yang jade bones are you, everything it took to create them, came from you. It is no different from your hands, feet, eyes, or legs.

Let me ask you this did we tell you the name of your physique, or did you instantly know its name the moment it appeared?" asked Yang Fen.

"I knew it.." Yang Qing answered.

When he broke through to the peerless jade physique, the name Yin Yang jade bones appeared within him like he always knew it, and it had always been with him from his birth, something etched within his soul.

"And the abilities, did you have to train them to discover them?"

Yang Qing shook his head sideways. He instinctively knew how to use the Yin Yang jade bones' abilities with perfection, like it was second nature. It was as easy as breathing and easier than walking.

"How is that any different than learning to use your nose or ears when you are born? You don't train to use them, you just use them.

Your yin yang jade bones are you, the more accepting you are of it and stop seeing it as something external, the more I feel you will discover about it and of yourself since it's basically a reflection and amalgamation of you.

The core part of you, the real you, one that hasn't been marred and colored by the things around you.? We all have things that are fundamentally us from the moment we are born, however, it gets buried in the happenings of life and we forget or deny it.

The reason peerless jade physiques are hard to get or replicate is because i feel it involves finding oneself and not many people can.

Who protected you that day, was you, not some will or something else, just you, the pride of our life, Yang Qing.."

Chapter 509 Yang Fen's advice

?

Yang Qing's eyes flashed like he was about to grasp something but it kept escaping his grasp at the final moment.

His grandfather's words were like an endless storm of inspiration. Every sentence he spoke seemed to contain profound wisdom that kept filling the missing pieces in Yang Qing's mind.

"Grandpa is Grandpa after all.." he thought as his awe-filled gaze fell on his grandfather who was still enthusiastically going on about the peerless jade physique.

He may be the one with the physique but his grandfather seemed to have deeper insights about it than he did.

All this while he had been treating the Yin Yang jade bones as something separate to himself, like an external weapon instead of considering it a part of himself.

It took his current weakened state and his grandfather's insightful words for him to suddenly realize his peerless jade physique was no different from his soul.

He could feel something within him stir when he came to grips with that thought and willingly accepted it. However, he couldn't capitalize much on the feeling. It was like a soft itch that came and went.

"Must be because of my weakened state.." mused Yang Qing.

"Thank you, Grandpa.." Yang Qing suddenly said with a simple smile though was simple bore the weight of how he felt.

His grandfather paused in surprise before he laughed as he said,

"You're my grandson and we are family, there's no need for these wish-washy words.."

Though he said that, he couldn't hide how pleased and proud he was.

"The valley master said it would take two months for you to go back to normal and regain complete use of your physique.

What were your plans for those two months?" his grandfather suddenly asked as he narrowed his eyes with a serious expression.

Yang Qing paused briefly in thought before he said,

"Well other than continuing the treatment plan I was given by the Judicial Review Committee.."

When he reached here, he realized he had not shared with his family yet about the ordeal with the Ice Emerald Sect and the events after.

His family already worked for the Order, so sharing the details after the fact wasn't considered a breach of the rules, and he needed to offload it on someone, and there was no one better than his family.

In his recounting of the events he started from how he met Ma Yuan, his story with his wife and daughter and how they were kidnapped, down to the crimes the Ice Emerald Sect had engaged in over the years, and the lives it took, and finally the sentencing of the sect.

While he divulged the relevant parts, including his frame of mind at the time and even currently, he did leave some parts out, like how he and the rest almost died to the red abyssal tree.

He didn't want to add to their worries, especially his mother's. He detected her presence slowly leaning on the door to the courtyard. Clearly, she knew something was up with Yang Qing which was why she had been hanging close.

Even with his palace sense temporarily unusable, Yang Qing still had his heightened sense as a palace sense cultivator and it was his mom. He could sense anywhere almost instinctively with or without a cultivation base.

Her presence was part of the reason he decided to go ahead and divulge what had happened, and the remedial measure and advice the Judicial Review Committee had given him.

"You're sure you don't want to join the Medical Valley, Qing'er?" asked his grandfather.

"You can join the Institute too as an instructor or researcher if you like.." his father added.

"Or the alchemy division, or the formation hall too.." added his brother.

"I won't deny that switching departments had crossed my mind especially before I started the treatment.

I had given it some serious thought, but I don't know I feel like I am where I should be. When I graduated, I became a judge because the pay seemed better, I would be safe within the walls of the headquarters, and I was also under the illusion that the work would not be a lot.

Had I known it would be a never-ending storm, maybe I would have chosen a different route. But after doing this for quite some time, without even noticing, it seems to have grown on me.

Even if I were to switch departments, it can't be because of fear of what might happen next, otherwise, that shadow may follow me for the rest of my life. I can't do that.." said Yang Qing.

"But I am okay, well I am slowly getting there thanks to the support given to me by the seniors at the Order. Also being at the auspicious grove has really helped a lot.." said Yang Qing as his eyes secretly darted to the shadowy silhouette at the back of the door.

He could feel his mom's body tighten. The rest of his family members had noticed her presence too, so they didn't delve much into the topic, and just offered their help should Yang Qing at any point in time need it.

In typical fashion, the three Yang members, this is; his grandfather, brother, and father, had a quick change in tune when they asked Yang Qing to bring back some of the water from the brook of clarity if he could, so they could use it in their various experiments, especially when they heard from Yang Qing about its wondrous properties.

Yang Qing could only helplessly acquiesce to their shameless begging before he continued where he had left off on his grandfather's question.

"After that, I will follow the valley master's guidance and continue my treatments at the Valley to try and deepen my understanding of the Universal Duality cultivation art.." said Yang Qing.

"But from the way you asked, I take it you have another idea in mind, Grandpa?" he added.

He knew his grandfather well. The fact that he asked that question meant that he had some idea in mind and he only asked that question to try and see if Yang Qing had the same plans.

"Well, it's not something out of the way. What I had in mind happens to align with Valley master Fan Ru's advice somewhat, on you practicing the various techniques and spells, to try and improve your understanding of them without the boosted effects brought on by your physique.

However, different from her, I want you to internalize and note the difference in every technique and spell you do.

Note down the subtle differences you experience now, from when you did them when your physique was operating normally.

I would advise that you don't just concentrate on the healing techniques alone, but on every technique you have mastery over..."

"You want me to use that as a reference point to try and discover the nature and properties of my physique that I may have missed?" asked Yang Qing slowly following his grandfather's train of thought and intention.

"Mmh, that's right. Some techniques may not be affected, while others may be affected greatly, which will help you know more.

Be as detailed and thorough as possible on the differences just like I taught you. You can seek your father's help on that. He may be a coward, and too willful but he has always been meticulous with the minute stuff.." Yang Fen said which drew a surprised look from Yang Qing's father, who didn't expect the compliment, though it was still laced with vitriol.

Over the years, the only compliment he ever got, was marrying Yang Qing's mother, and having Yang Qing and his brother. Other than that all he got was threats, criticism, and guilt trips on his lack of filial piety.

Yang Qing nodded before he suddenly remembered something,

"Oh and Grandpa, the day you told me about the peerless jade physique, I saw something..."

Yang Qing went on to describe the process by which he discovered the ethereal jade tree lying deep within his palace realm.

"A tree huh.." muttered his grandfather as a strange look appeared in his eyes.

"What?" asked Yang Qing when he noticed his grandfather's look.

His grandfather suddenly coughed like he was trying to conceal something before he answered,

"Nothing.."

Did he see a tree because I made the comment about him being nothing more than a glorified tree? Did I curse him?

No, there is nothing wrong with being a tree. Trees are strong, resilient, adaptive, have long lives, and have wondrous abilities that are not only beneficial to themselves but to others also.

My grandson being a tree is a blessing for him and the Yang family. Yes, being a tree is a blessing.

I hope he doesn't remember what I said that day..."

Chapter 510 Egg Peak

Yang Qing and the rest were surprised when Yang Fen suddenly went silent with a suspicious look on his face before he suddenly got up in a maddened hurry mumbling gibberish things about certain experiments and how he had a sudden epiphany that he needed to act on, and left for the valley.

"Has Grandpa finally lost it?" Yang Qing wondered out loud, as he saw the dust storm he left behind.

"He has always lost it.." said his father with his brother nodding along in agreement which drew a strange look from Yang Qing who as far as he saw it, his brother was slowly following their grandfather's footsteps. He felt it wasn't long now. He could see that crazy experimental fanaticism flame slowly growing in his brother's eyes. He wasn't sure if the person in question had noticed it yet.

He couldn't help but sympathize with his two nephews who were competing on who could throw the century iron stones the furthest as they glided on the pond's water surface, completely unaware of the tortured future that awaited them.

However, his sympathetic side was quickly short-lived and was replaced by his petty side.

"Sorry nephews, the Yang family tradition must live on. Brother, I leave it to you to educate them, leave nothing out.." he thought as he threw an encouraging look his brother's way who seemed confused by Yang Qing's strange eye glances he was throwing his way.

"First Grandpa and now him. Is there no normal person in this family.."? Yang Gen thought to himself and when his gaze fell on his father, he couldn't help but sigh to himself.

The night quickly passed with Yang Qing promising to stay over for at least a week at the behest of his mother who also seemed to encourage Yang Qing to invite Mao Yunru over, which Yang Qing pretended he didn't hear.

When morning came, like always, he used the blue tear-dropped stone to go to the auspicious grove wood tree's location.

Even without telling the saint grade tree anything, it could already tell Yang Qing was in a weakened state and that it had something to do with his physique.

Yang Qing went on to explain what had happened, after which the saint-grade tree produced a multicolored crystal pebble from one of the shallow mounds within its trunk which it gave to Yang Qing to use to cultivate with.

The crystal pebble would help keep his soul and mental sea revitalized and refreshed at all times as long as it was next to him as he cultivated.? His hours at the brook of clarity were also extended to six hours.

The two hours where he personally experienced the events of the Ice Emerald Sect with vivid details, remained, however, the period of coalescing that came after was extended from two hours to four.

Yang Qing was extremely grateful to the saint-grade auspicious grove wood tree, and without missing a beat he thickened his face to ask for more water from the brook of clarity, which the saint-grade tree agreed to but not without asking for something from Yang Qing in return, which was him cultivating next to the tree when he reached the domain realm, and he was to do it for two continuous weeks in a year.

Yang Qing could only guess at its reasons, that it had something to do with the Universal Resonant Light Sect's cultivation art, especially when he remembered the effects it had on the spirit beasts and plants at Deer Mountain Range.

However, now, he couldn't help but wonder if his peerless jade physique had also been a factor.

However, he pushed the matter to the back of his mind to concentrate on collecting the water from the brook of clarity.

After the session was done, he made his way to the Medical Valley where he checked on Ma Yuan and Ma Ling first before he went on to handle the cases for the day.

He noticed his healing abilities had been affected though he could still perform them easily and they were still powerful, he could feel the intrinsic differences to when he used them a few days prior, before his accident.

They worked fine, but they seemed to lack a sense of vibrancy and liveliness that was there before.

As he did his work, he took great care to note down every single difference like his grandfather asked. As he did, he was continuously surprised at how much his physique boosted his abilities and spells without him noticing, including even the ease with which he executed the techniques and spells contained in the Universal Duality cultivation art.

Even though his mastery was still there, he could detect minute differences in the time it took to execute them, his natural movements as he did so, and the resonance with the art.

No one other than him could detect those differences, though he felt the valley master and Ren Shu could.

Now when he used the various spells and techniques it was like he was a swimmer, a human swimmer who had learned swimming from birth training day and night, that his body's structure gradually developed and morphed to meet the demands of swimming. That was what he felt currently, without his physique's presence, however when he recalled how he felt using the same techniques and spells with the physique active, he felt he was like a fish in water.

No matter how good a human was at swimming, they could never be freer in the water as a fish, no matter how much they tirelessly trained and conditioned their body.

Presently that was how Yang Qing felt. The Yin Yang jade bones had somehow enabled him to use the various spells and techniques as though he was born with them from birth and now without the technique, it felt less natural and more like something he had tirelessly trained for to have it ingrained in his body.

With a reference point established, Yang Qing wholly committed himself to delve deeper into those techniques to try and close that gap as much as he could, and maybe when his physique came out of its dormancy, he would experience a qualitative change in the use of his techniques.

His schedule over the next few days remained unchanged, as he left his parent's home to the auspicious grove and then to the Medical Valley before he finally went home.

A deviation only appeared on the fourth day, which was the day Peng Zhen would have his first match for his life and death sentence.

Yang Qing admired his character, so he wanted to be there when he had his first match, and all his other matches if possible.

So after a session with the auspicious grove wood tree, instead of heading to the Medical Valley like always, he made his way to Egg Peak, which was the name of the region where the first years of the Institute were trained.