

## Daily life 801

### Chapter 801 Victory Is Victory In The End

Because of the rhythm of flow around him, Ma Yuan's body was being transformed to adapt to his state while still maintaining its strength. The changes in his body were adapting to his lack of a core and dantian, while still maintaining its strength and essence as the body of a core formation expert. With the changes happening to his body, soon enough he may not need to eat food that contained dense volumes of spiritual qi and essence capable of sustaining a core formation expert. His body would be able to function normally just doing what he was doing, surrounded by life.

Yang Qing could feel his thoughts flowing into a high state. Ideas that he had thought of being aligned together to form a pathway of enlightenment.

He absentmindedly started walking forward with countless ideas being formed with the essence being extracted for the insights it contained which were then solidified into a pathway. With every step he took the wondrous his state became as he could feel the profundities of the world whisper to him, showing him a world he could not see before, holding his hand and guiding him forward, resolving the doubts he had, consolidating what he thought he knew while adding new ideas that he had not yet thought.

His body, essence, and spirit were being transformed by the step as resplendent lights that contained the charm of the natural dao surrounded him. The dao markings of the yin-yang jade bones lit up releasing an ancient almost primordial aura filled with the balance of life, complemented by radiant all-encompassing transcendent light of the universal light of the myriad worlds cultivation art.

Yang Qing at this moment looked like a banished immortal, free and unfettered, surrounded by ethereal colorful lights that carried the profundity of something that was formed at the dawn of the world, accompanied by the balance of the yin and yang that shaped the functioning of the world.

Looking at him made one feel like they were staring at a world, a world with the laws of life and accommodation. The elements around him seemed to be leaping with excitement as they surrounded him. The pupils in his eyes rotated mirroring the colors of those elements, swirling and mixing them, releasing a colorful radiant glow as they did so.

"What is vitality?"

Yang Qing could hardly sense what was happening around him from the state he was. Everything had blanked out, except for the path beneath his feet. Everything else had been drowned out. The state he was in, he could sense excitement and tranquility, vibrancy and stillness at the same time.

It was after he took the fourth step, that he heard a voice, a familiar voice that was gentle, ethereal, childlike but at the same time carried the weight of the boundless age within it. A voice that was simple yet complex.

Yang Qing looked up and saw a green cocoon the size of his thumb but surrounded by a profound aura of green and blue that was the size of several oceans piled together.

"What is vitality?"

He absentmindedly muttered as he gazed at the sky of green and blue above him before he lowered his gaze leveling it with what was ahead of him. His compound appeared before his eyes. The birds, the trees, the flowers, the insects, the plants, the pond, the earth, the rocks, the air around it, his courtyard, the arrays, Ma Yuan, Ma Ling, and the threads of colored aurora lights that connected them.

And when he looked down, he could see all the threads converging to him.

"The flow of life.." said Yang Qing.

His words, like a trigger, caused the light curtain waves, and the light threads around him to explode with radiant lights as they released a grand, profound, and primordial aura. The threads and curtain wave still maintained form but other lines formed within them. These lines were the sources of the profound and primordial aura. Those threads would switch colors every second and with every change, there was a switch in quality about them. More colors that were not there before seemed to have appeared.

Yang Qing tried to focus on one of the new ones. He extended his senses to one that was grey-silver, however, he quickly pulled back his senses when the harmless-looking silver thread released a terrifying destructive power the moment Yang Qing tried to make contact with it.

Adopting a cautious approach, Yang Qing decided to just soak in the changes around him and flow with it like a leaf that glides along the stream of a river, rather than force it. When he surrendered himself to the flow and freed his mind, he could hear indistinct voices coming from those threads. They seemed muffled. Yang Qing tried to focus more on the voices but nothing came of it. He still couldn't hear them, however, he could feel his body, essence, and spirit being transformed and elevated by the voices.

The state didn't seem to last long with those threads disappearing not long after with the scene back to how it was. Although his cultivation base had not improved and was still at the peak of the second stage, he could feel he had made considerable improvements in his cultivation. His understanding of the vitality dao had improved immensely along with the understanding he had with his purple grade art, the universal light of the myriad worlds.

The proof of it was the internal manifestation of his palace realm. The green flame tree now had a fruit, a crystal fruit that swirled with colorful lights. The lights were weak, but even in that frailty, they contained profound power. He could see the same curtain of light from before being produced from the fruit as it spread to the grass and shrubs below, to the ocean ahead, and to the sun and moon above it, creating a linked connection with the components of his palace realm.

From the change, he could feel his overall strength had improved by at least 5% from the strength of his body to the power of his soul, to the manipulation and execution of his cultivation arts, and even his absurdly huge qi capacity had increased. He was closely approaching the capacity of those who had reached the seventh stage of the palace realm.

That didn't mean that he could fight a seventh-stage palace realm. His qi reserves, though high, still lacked the refined quality of someone in the seventh stage which was a factor of one's understanding of their dao. The deeper their understanding, the more their qi will be filled with it, and the more powerful their abilities are.

His understanding of the dao wasn't at that level yet, thus he would lose out in a frontal confrontation, but when it came to triggering talismans and other treasures that required high reserves of qi, that he could definitely do without regard. With every improvement he made, his abilities to guarantee his life were growing with it. He may not be able to defeat his opponents in frontal confrontation, but he could outlast them in endurance and vitality and scam a victory through it. In the end, for life and death, it doesn't matter how you survive, as long as you do.

At the Institute the instructors always told them, that a shameless scam bag victory had one of the best flavors to it. Frustrating your opponent to the very end and slapping them with a loss they can't swallow.

Even in death, they will be riled up and indignant. There was nothing more satisfying, and Yang Qing, being the diligent student he was, kept those words in his heart to faithfully abide by.

He had a heroic spirit in him and as such, he would love to defeat his opponents flawlessly, in one move, giving them a peaceful ending with the knowledge that they were not defeated unjustly, he was just that powerful. But the world was what it was, and sometimes, quick victories were not possible, and in those cases, as much as it pained his true heroic self, he had to don the robes of the shameless.

Victory was victory in the end, the process mattered too little as long as you acquired it.

Chapter 802 Month Quickly Flies By (1)

Yang Qing flooded with countless insights walked over to where Ma Yuan and his daughter.

"Yang Qing.." said Ma Yuan with pleasant excitement in his tone when he caught Yang Qing out of the corner of his eyes as he was moving the royal crown maple sapling.

"Senior Yang Qing.." Ma Ling said as she clumsily tried to cup her fists in greeting.

"You seem to be doing better.." Yang Qing said as his gaze fell on Ma Ling.

"It's thanks to senior Tan Jue..."

Despite her clear nervousness, when she mentioned Tan Jue, her excitement and respect shone through.

Though Ma Yuan didn't say anything, Yang Qing could tell he felt the same way too.

He wasn't sure if she had regained some of her memories yet and he wasn't about to ask but Yang Qing could tell she seemed to be growing more and more comfortable around Ma Yuan than she did the last time she was here.

Yang Qing could tell from how relaxed her body seemed to be from the moment he walked into the abode, and even now, he wasn't sure if she did it subconsciously or intentionally but because of her

nervousness, she moved close to Ma Yuan almost as if to seek his protection like what young children did every time they were with their parents and they happen to meet someone they were unfamiliar. On reflex, they would seek cover behind their parent.

"It's only been a few days but this place seemed to have transformed yet again.." Yang Qing said as he looked around him.

"I am sorry, I couldn't help myself. The environment here is just too good. I try to control myself but I'm continuously filled with countless ideas and inspirations on what else to add, and this place.." Ma Yuan paused as he sighed in admiration.

"This place seems to support every wild idea that I have and it all feels so natural. I don't think I've ever felt this way. I've always enjoyed discovering new herb species, and caring for young saplings to maturity.."

Ma Yuan's eyes fell slightly on Ma Ling as he said that.

"Being on a piece of land, planting, harvesting.. it's where I feel most alive, but this, I can't explain it.. It feels like I am living in a dream of something that goes beyond my greatest fantasies kind of like how I felt when I grew my first earth-rank herb and first sky-rank herb, only in this, that feeling of discovering something monumental doesn't stop and the more I keep going the more wonderful that feeling becomes...

Sorry, I am rambling.." Ma Yuan said as he scratched the back of his head in embarrassment.

"No, it's okay. I understand the sentiment all too well, having lost myself to it a lot of times.." Yang Qing said as he saw the colorful waves of light floating around his abode.

He has lost himself one too many times to the mysteries of the world around him, whether it was a phenomenon as what he was seeing happening in his abode, a broken cultivation art begging him to restore it to its former glory, an artifact whose origins trace it to a bygone era, treasures with tales around them.

Whenever his interest was piqued, he could hardly tear himself away from it which always landed him in no small amount of trouble. Half of the fines he got for coming late or skipping a day or three of work were because something had caught his eye and he easily lost himself to it. It was why he severely restricted himself on his visits to the library or the treasure vaults. He knew how weak he was within those halls, and Lei Weiyuan probably did too.

Yang Qing quickly diverted his thoughts from the old fiend when he felt a heartburn coming up.

Right now he had better things to do than figure out how Lei Weiyuan always seemed to know the days he would be late or absent. Seeing the interconnection happening in his abode, and the transformation happening to Ma Yuan, Yang Qing had a few ideas he wanted to test out.

"Ma Yuan, how is your body feeling?" asked Yang Qing.

"Pretty good actually, better than I have felt in a while.." Ma Yuan said as he stretched a few stretches of his arms with a refreshed smile on his face that was a result of how limber his body felt.

Ever since he had his cultivation crippled, his body never felt the same. It felt heavy like he was lagging tonnes of meteor iron in his muscles. Though he knew it was his imagination, he could sometimes feel his bones creak under that weight every time he overly exerted himself.

But since he started working on Yang Qing's compound, his body felt lighter and lighter. It was the most comfortable he had felt in his skin.

As he worked, with the growing relief in his body, he often found himself wondering if the reason his body was changing was because it was no longer under the pressures of the maddening obsession and torment he had been struggling to endure for the past seven years, especially that voice, that voice that grew in strength and persuasion the longer the search remained fruitless. The voice that kept telling him, each day, beguiling his mind, showing him visions and prophecies, with undeniable certainty, his wife and daughter were likely dead, and died a brutal death at that.

He did lose his wife, but the worst did not happen, his daughter yet lives even though she treated him as a stranger, a consequence of the memory-altering gu.

Her being with him, could she be the reason that his body felt better? Or was it because he was finally doing something he loved, farming? His sight and mind no longer colored by hatred, desperation, and self-loathing. Other than his wife and daughter, herbology was the greatest thing in his life. It changed his life after all, from a no-name orphan to a core formation cultivator who had achieved a gold body, and eventually led him to one of the two greatest treasures in his life, Ma Ling's mom.

"Maybe it's Ling'er and the farm.." wistfully thought Ma Yuan as he smiled in gratification when he saw his daughter eagerly reaching her hand out to one of the aqua butterflies wearing the same childlike expression of excitement she wore every time she saw something exciting. Her pale blue eyes would shine just like her mother's.

Her mother wasn't the best at showing expression. She only had two, one was the deadpan expression that showed nothing, and the other which Ma Yuan took great pride in, despite how much he suffered for it, was anger. Over the years, he had angered her a few times, not intentionally of course, but it soon became intentional when he saw how reactive she was. It was the only time she truly wore her emotions and Ma Yuan relished it as he diligently looked for ways to trigger her. He suffered for it, but it was well worth it.

Other than anger, he grew to notice other things too, like excitement, and her eyes would twinkle in the same manner as his daughter's.

His thoughts were soon interrupted by Yang Qing.

"Ma Yuan, I need your help with something.."

"Anything... As long as I, Ma Yuan can do it, I will not hesitate.." Ma Yuan said with enthusiasm.

Yang Qing couldn't help but dryly laugh at his reaction.

"It's not something serious. It's related to the changes happening in your body.."

At Ma Yuan's questioning look, Yang Qing gave him a brief description of the scene he saw which was still ongoing. The flow of essence to Ma Yuan's body from the living components around him was still

kept up at a gradual pace, and the royal crown maple sapling that released sentiments of content was the new member to join that circle as even it shared little of what it had to Ma Yuan.

"Such a thing is happening?" Ma Yuan said with an incredulous expression on his face. He turned his head around to try and see if he could see the scene Yang Qing described but eventually gave up when he couldn't sense anything.

But still, even without seeing it himself he couldn't help but feel gratified as he smiled with his right hand over his chest, displaying the rogue cultivator community's sign of gratitude as he said the words thank you, to the plants, insects, and birds and other living components around him.

Ma Yuan's eyes couldn't help but redden slightly. He had been living in the abyss for so long, that saplings and pupas showing kindness was enough to shake him emotionally.

"No...No ...No.. Ma Yuan keep it together, you can't let Ling'er see you like this.."

Ma Yuan tried to reign in his emotions by hurriedly agreeing to whatever Yang Qing wanted to test.

"What do you need me to do?" asked Ma Yuan.

"Nothing much, just continue as you were and pretend I am not there. I will try the process from there.."  
Yang Qing said as he moved to the green flame tree where he sat cross-legged, quickly immersing himself in the flow of life essence around.

"Universal Light Resonant Creatures."

A pure light almost like a light of creations filled with multitudinous colors was released from Yang Qing's body filled with the densest aura of life that left both Ma Yuan and Ma Ling wide-eyed.

Chapter 803 Month quickly flies by (2)

?The lights flowing out of Yang Qing's body were of different colors with each color being a representation of an element. They flowed freely out of his body with a gentleness that soon turned active as they transformed into various creatures. There were birds one of which resembled the green swallow that Feng Xin used to track Peng Zhen and the rest. The swallow chirped with melodies that



showed its clear excitement. With how lively it was, one could easily mistake it to be a real live swallow and not a manifestation of Yang Qing's qi and cultivation art.

Other than the green swallow, there were other birds too varying according to species but also their elements. The primary five elements looked to have been represented; water, earth, wind, wood, and fire. Other than them, there were also ones that were made of secondary elements such as lightning, metal, and light elements. novel.com

"Is this real?" Ma Ling asked with a dumbfounded expression as she saw a gold-colored doe move over to one of the orchids Ma Yuan had planted and smell it with delight, while a deep brown colored bee joyously buzzed towards one of the flowers that was ripened with nectar or a blue koi fish that started playing around with the aqua butterflies.

A few seconds ago she had just seen them being formed from the radiant light that surrounded Yang Qing. But despite what she saw, those creatures looked real and felt real. They were indivisible from the insects and birds that Ma Yuan had introduced to the place. Had she not seen how they were formed, she would have thought they were real spirit beasts.

"What cultivation art is this?" she muttered unable to even blink from the huge surprise.

Since being admitted to the Order, she had seen her fair share of wondrous arts as she walked around the Medical Valley when she wasn't undergoing medical valley, and what she had seen had upended her perception, and the scene before her had added onto it by a couple of levels.

She wasn't the only one in shock, with Ma Yuan having the same dumbfounded look as his daughter as he looked at the 'new residents' of the abode. One could argue his shock was even greater than hers. She was only in the foundation establishment realm, so it was understandable if her perception was low, but he was a seasoned core formation expert, he may be crippled now, but his senses as a veteran core formation expert were still there as he still had access to his spiritual sense and his body could still perceive certain profundities.

But just like her, he couldn't differentiate the creatures Yang Qing had reproduced from his qi from the ones he had introduced to the abode. He could see a crystal snow moth flying next to the lunar light bees like old comrades who had known each other since they were larvae. The lunar light bee was real, and the crystal snow moth was just made from Yang Qing's qi, but seeing the fly side by side, even with his spiritual sense deployed, he couldn't tell that the moth wasn't any less real than the lunar light bee it had befriended.

It wasn't just the moth, all the other spirit beasts produced were in every essence of the word, real and alive.

Their reaction wasn't all too surprising to Yang Qing. Purple-grade arts, were purple-grade arts for a reason. They were able to do the unimaginable. His universal light resonant of the myriad worlds art worked perfectly with his physique and he was able to do countless things with it. It wasn't the most offensive art, but from the few purple-grade arts he had seen, Yang Qing could biasedly say it was the most versatile.

Anything from wide-range reconnaissance to defensive and offensive moves, to array placing and dismantlement, to talisman refinement, to deciphering the elemental properties of his surroundings, he could do it all with the art, and the deeper his familiarity with the art became, the more Yang Qing was awed by it as he felt like it contained the blueprint and secrets of an entire world within it.

Take for example the creatures he had produced with the move Universal light resonant creatures. Each of the creatures produced was no different than the real thing as they had independent thoughts and feelings and were capable of independent actions, each with their specialty courtesy of the universal nature of Yang Qing's qi.

Take the green swallow for example that had taken to nesting in Yang Qing's head. It was composed of the wind element, which made it the best at tracking down things within the shortest timeframe. It was the best at tracking living things, as it could follow the 'scent' of their qi that they leave in the air.

The crystal snow moth was the best to use for infiltration as it had the best skills in illusion because of the water element it had which was strong in yin qi. It could create and break illusions and was highly sensitive to the changes of its surroundings.

Every creature produced had its skills and since they were all made from Yang Qing, they adopted his judgment, among other things such as enormous qi reserves which was a great boon for them. Those creatures couldn't absorb qi, they could only survive off of what they had.

Yang Qing wasn't the only one who could reproduce almost sentient spells, others could too, and the reason why its usage wasn't as widely spread was because such spells would only last as long as the qi you used to produce them. Because of this, to others, it was a misuse, and they mostly used it for talismans, but to Yang Qing who had enormous reserves of qi, it was one of his favored techniques. With

his current reserves, the creatures he had just created could remain in place for three days, and if they were forced to face an opponent at the quasi-palace stage they would last half that, and if they faced one who had just freshly broken through, they may last a few hours, provided their opponent wasn't a skilled palace realm expert and just a regular one with normal foundations.

"Ma Yuan, you can just continue what you were doing, just treat them as you would the rest.." Yang Qing said pulling Ma Yuan out of his dazed state.

Ma Yuan nodded his head, still slightly dazed by what he was seeing. It took him a couple of minutes before he got to the rhythm of things and he was able to ignore the shock that had assaulted him.

Ma Ling on the other hand decided to abandon her father as she gave in to her curiosity and decided to walk over to the gold-colored doe that was nibbling at some orchid leaves. The doe muzzled its nose at her in a friendly manner, which was all it took for Ma Ling's nervous apprehension to break as she cozied herself to the doe.

Chapter 804 Month quickly flies by (3)

?With everything somewhat resuming to what it was before, Yang Qing closed his eyes as he circulated his art and used himself as the center, gently guiding the motion of the colorful light curtain that was flowing around him. Because his aura was the conduit, it didn't take long before he integrated his formed creatures into the cycle, sending their essence into Ma Yuan.

Ma Yuan who was at the center of the storm had his eyes flicker in surprise as he felt like his body was being cleansed, reformed, renewed, restored, and strengthened all at the same time. He felt like he was being massaged by the very heavens itself. The level of comfort he felt wasn't only on his body, but on his spirit too as he could feel lighter in heart and thought which translated into a level of free-spiritedness.

"No, I need to focus.." Ma Yuan hurriedly said as he cleared his head of superfluous thoughts and focused his mind on what he needed to do.

Yang Qing carefully sensed all the changes happening to Ma Yuan's body as he felt the latent trauma from his crippling that was deeply entrenched in every essence of his being, slowly get washed away by the essence light waves produced from all the components of his abode.

With him as the guide, the efficacy of the transformation of Ma Yuan's body more than doubled as he could see each and every minute change happening within his body down to his soul.

"I may not be able to restore his core and dantian but I can elevate his body to the maximum level that a late-stage core formation cultivator can support.."

Even though he didn't know the exact mechanics of what was happening, Ma Yuan could feel the transformation his body was undergoing. It was growing stronger, and lighter, and he could somehow feel that he now had an intimate familiarity with the components around him. He could vaguely trace a bit of what Yang Qing was talking about. It felt like a whole new world had opened up to him. He couldn't help but feel excited at the realms he would reach with his herbology skills.

Both Yang Qing and Ma Yuan quickly lost themselves in their own worlds of experimentation. Four hours quickly flew by and Yang Qing had to cut off his experimentation. Everything needed to be done with measure. Thin was the line between medicine and poison. Ma Yuan's body was already close to saturation by the time he stopped.

What Yang Qing was aiming at was the transformation of his entire body so that it could maintain peak form without needing copious amounts of food rich in spiritual qi to barely maintain. His body was still operated with the need of his dantian and core at the center, even in its absence, which was why he was always straining.

What Yang Qing aimed for was evolving it, by telling it, it no longer needed a core to maintain itself. However it still needed a substitute, and Yang Qing was hoping farming would be it. A cyclic relationship established between Ma Yuan and the grounds he took care of.

But all of that was still a concept at the moment, it remained to be seen whether it could be actualized. Ma Yuan and his daughter left for the Medical Valley, much to the complaint of Ma Ling who did not want to part with her new friends.

"I hope one year will be enough. Ma Ling's treatment should be finished within that period, and then they will have to plan for their new lives in Summerfield Kingdom. I have to ensure Ma Yuan is prepared as much as possible.." thought Yang Qing as he gazed at Ma Yuan's departing silhouette.

With Ma Yuan set to start a life with Ma Ling in Summerfield Kingdom at Yang Qing's suggestion, Yang Qing had always been thinking and making plans on how to ensure their safety as much as he could, once they left.

One of those plans included ridding Ma Yuan's body of the hidden traumas left over from being crippled, while the others were centered around self-defense measures such as arrays, talismans, natural treasures, and the like.

The sudden changes to his abode and the effect it had on Ma Yuan gave him a headstart on one of those measures and he couldn't help but form other ideas centered around. The whole night quickly passed by.

"This should be more than enough.." Yang Qing muttered wearing a pleased expression on his face, as the plan he had was more or less refined to meet the needs he had for Ma Yuan.

"Huh, it's morning already?" he added in surprise when he saw the morning rays hit his eyes as he was getting up from beneath the green flame tree.

He stretched his limbs a bit out of habit before he made his way to one of the tables and had his breakfast which was from the leftovers he had gotten from his trip as he was establishing contact with his intelligence network.

"Time to meet Vice Warden Shao An.."

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Medical Valley, Deputy Palace Master Ren Shu's courtyard.

"You seem different.. you've made gains in the art haven't you?" asked Ren Shu who shared a round table with Shao An and Yang Qing.

Yang Qing as the junior was dutifully pouring tea for the two of them before he shamelessly decided to drink his straight from the teapot. He was in Ren Shu's abode, it was no different than being in his abode. He could be as free and shameless as he could.

With a satisfied grin, Yang Qing answered,

"Mmh, It was from a flash of insights i received yesterday.."

Yang Qing went on to describe the scene he saw at his abode and the treatment plan he had made for Ma Yuan.

"What do you think, is it feasible?" asked Yang Qing.

While they were not officially master and disciple, Ren Shu was the one who guided Yang Qing through the use of his physique and his cultivation art. If there was anyone who could help him refine his process, it was him.

Sensing that this discussion might end up going for who knows how long, Shao An cleared his throat as he said,

"Yang Qing shouldn't you finish with the list first before you continue the discussion.."

"Oh, sorry..." Yang Qing said with a sheepish smile as he scratched the back of his head.

"From the list, I have settled on Luo Suyin, the crescent moon blade spirit, Gao Wei the blue-grade healer, and Zhu Qing the blue-grade formation master, it's the last spot that I am struggling with, I was hoping you could help.."

"Mmh.." Shao An said with a curt nod.

"Of those remaining on the list I gave you there is Pan Xing the rogue cultivator, Han Lei the assassin from the Ghost Viper Court, Sun Tao the crown prince of Woodstone Kingdom and Li Chen the former high elder of Thunderclap Sect.

In their time at the Insitute, they have shown to make peace with their pasts and i can say theirs decency in them, as for all, they're only here out of a single bad choice they made out of a desperate moment.

But when it comes to the programme, though it is called a rehabilitation programme, its true essence is to make the most out of those we have. Of those four who do you think we can extract the most benefits out of? It's why Gao Wei was on the list in the first place.

For me, I'd go with Han Lei, the skills he gained and the means with which he led the Ghost Viper Court to its demise show he is a highly resourceful person. You can make the most out of him.

Though you could do the same out of the rest too, they are palace realm experts with tonnes of experience after all, but I think Han Lei is better. His life as an assassin leaves him predisposed to think and see things that you may not necessarily see or think of.."

"I was leaning on him and Pan Xing for the fourth spot, but after your guidance, I think Han Lei would be a better fit.."

"Mmh.. When do you want to meet them? As part of their program, they will be assigned a courtyard in a secluded location. You will be able to access it through your medallion after their release.."

"Could we do it at the end of the month, after my vacation is done?"

"I see no problem with it. When you're free just tell me.."

"I will.."

Chapter 805 Month quickly flies by (4)

?Once he was done with his rehabilitation list, the discussion between him and Ren Shu went full swing. The deeper the discussion went the more Yang Qing felt he had made the right choice in coming to Ren Shu for guidance, and the bonus of having Shao An there too who had some insights of his own to share.

The discussion went on for close to eight hours. By the time he left, it was close to dusk. He was grinning from ear to ear because of the fruits of that discussion. If before he only had a hazy string of ideas on what to do for Ma Yuan and his daughter for the one-year period that they were around, he now had a clear structured plan, and that plan left him buzzing as it one of it involved doing one of the things he loved, deciphering cultivation arts.

"Will I be able to come up with one that is at least at the orange grade before the year is up?" he excitedly muttered.

Ma Yuan's body was being transformed by the aura around his abode and the relationships and interconnections he had created there. Yang Qing was just borrowing that force to streamline the process. However, a complete and thorough transformation of his entire body and essence to adapt to his missing core and dantian would take time.

One year wasn't nearly enough time for that. Ma Yuan would have to continue with the regimen after he left Yang Qing's abode and without Yang Qing or his aura being there to guide the process for him, he would need alternative means and the best means Yang Qing could think of was a cultivation art that did precisely that. A cultivation art built on the subtle relationship between Ma Yuan and the grounds he worked. Only this way would, as he circulated the art, would his body eventually get transformed completely.

Yang Qing wasn't sure how long it would take, but he had a feeling it would take at least 100 years. The timeframe could lessen if the cultivation art was good. Other than the cultivation art, he would also have to find a medium to store his essence, since his essence was the glue that held everything together.

Yang Qing could feel his spirits stirring at the thought of creating a cultivation art. He had evolved a couple of cultivation arts over the years with his greatest work being the Brilliant ray fist art, which was a blue-grade art that he evolved from a low-tier orange-grade art. But building one from scratch was something he hadn't tried yet.



He had entertained the thought over the years but with the Order working him like a dog, and his attention that countless things could easily sway, he never got around to it. But now he did, and he couldn't help but feel excited.

Why did cultivators cultivate and pursue great heights?

Some did so to change their fates, others to be more powerful, others to shed off their mortal coils in pursuit of immortality, and others to preserve or start a legacy, as for Yang Qing, one was self-preservation and the other was how his spirit would stir every time he delved to the mysteries and profundities of dao.

The world it showed him was truly breathtaking and he kept wanting to see more and one of the best ways of diving into the depths of Dao was through cultivation arts. Be it creating them, evolving some, or cultivating the arts themselves, one of the best gate passes to the doors of Dao was through them.

"I wonder if Ma Yuan and his daughter have already left the abode?" Yang Qing wondered as he looked at the setting sun on the horizon.

"If they are not around, I may as well check if Grandpa is around. I need his help too in the plans ahead.."

Yang Qing passed by the tranquil lotus pond to check in on Ma Yuan and Ma Ling and found they had not arrived yet. Missing them, he made a beeline to another location. It was a green courtyard filled with all manner of herbs and spirit beasts that had not yet awakened their sentience and a bunch of old men arguing with bluster, threatening to come to blows as they huddled together staring fervently at a cauldron that had a potion that looked like it was fashioned for melting a cultivator's body.

Yang Qing let out an exasperated sigh as he searched for the loudest old man from the sea of old men. novel.com

"Should I just go back? I don't really need his help, do I?" he added as he spotted his grandfather who was yelling, with spittle flying over at the same time he still managed to mix in a crazy boisterous laugh in there when he saw their 'potion' change colors before he quickly switched to arguing some more.

Yang Qing resigned to the situation walked over long enough for his grandfather to notice his presence.

"Qing'er! Qing'er! Is that you? What are you doing here? When did you come back? Come here quick!! We have just created a new potion. It's able to help a mortal jump from a mortal body to the silver refining stage in two weeks. I am calling the silver phoenix potion.." his grandfather said with smugness evident in his tone that was soon cut short when the other old men within his group hurriedly interrupted.

"Who agreed on calling it that?! As one of the people who came up with the stabilizing part of the potion, I should be the one to name it. What silver phoenix potion. A name like that makes it sound like it's a potion for making the skin smoother. A potion like this needs something more domineering, like the spit of the dragon roar.."

"SPIT OF THE DRAGON ROAR?! Are you mad? Who would want to use a potion with a name like that? They would flee to the ends of the earth. It makes my skin crawl with disgust just thinking about it.."

"This is just the reaction I'd expect from a dainty person like yourself Ol' Yang Fen..."

"You, Ol' Chen, let's go to the combat arena. I'll turn you into that dragon spit you seem to like so much.."

"You think I'm afraid of you Ol' Fen. Maybe you might have a chance at rebirth from the beating I'm going to give you. Let's go.."

Chapter 806 Month quickly flies by (5)

"Why does it always have to end like this? Where do they even get this energy.." thought Yang Qing.

"Seniors, please don't. Why don't everyone here come up with ideas they have and you can all vote on the best-sounding one?" Yang Qing said as he went over to grab his grandfather and his counterpart Yang Chen, whose eyes flashed with regret and disdain for Yang Qing interrupting.

Yang Qing clenched and unclenched his fists, resisting the urge to join them in the arena and giving them the beating of their lives.

Eventually, things settled down as they settled on a name. They went with leaping silver body forging fire. It wasn't the most creative name, but it was the safest. At least with it, they could get some poor mortals to try it compared to silver dragon spit.

"Is this really safe?" Once everything had settled, Yang Qing couldn't help but carefully ask, as he pointed to the eerie potion.

Even though he had no idea how they concocted that horror of a potion, he could tell from the ingredients used, that half of them were volatile like the blood-evaporating jujube, purple fire nettle, or the delirium longan fruit, with the growing list of ingredients matching them in properties reaching 14.

If someone without a cultivation base was to soak in that concoction, losing fifteen layers of skin and muscle was the least of their problems.

"Mmph, what do you know? Since when has cultivation never come with a cost? We are helping someone directly leap two stages in the body refinement realm in two weeks. It's a given that it would cost them something. Wasn't that the same with you.." Yang Qing's grandfather said as he threw a disdainful glance his way before turning to face the potion.

"As long as they bear with it for those fourteen days, the potion will not only enhance their bodies but temper their spirits too, which is something that will continue to support them long after they have passed the body refinement stage.

It is a test of one's character and a preparation for what lies ahead. That is the essence of the body refinement realm. Being broken down to your truest essence, so that your journey ahead can be filled with fewer doubts.." he added as he exuded a heroic spirit.

"So, why are you here? I doubt you came here because you wanted to hang out with your old grandfather here?"

Ignoring the ploy of emotional blackmail his grandfather was attempting to use, Yang Qing explained Ma Yuan's situation, before finally driving home what he needed from his grandfather.

"You have always been curious about reforging a cultivator's body even after they have broken past the body refinement realm, well, Grandpa, this is the perfect opportunity for you. Aren't you curious about the potential of body refinement? There is no better opportunity than this one. A shattered dantian, shattered core, with nothing to rely on but his body. If we forged his body to its utmost limits, what would we find at the end?" Yang Qing said with an impassioned gaze.

His grandfather stood there with a dazed look like time had gone still before it turned back on again.

"Good, Good, Good.. You're my grandson alright.." Yang Feng said as he laughed boisterously while smacking Yang Qing's shoulders with great enthusiasm.

"Let's DO IT!" he added as an unquenchable flame shone from his pupils spreading throughout his body.

He extended his hand to Yang Qing who was wearing the same crazy look as him.

"Let's do it.." Yang Qing said as he tightly clasped his grandfather's hands, exchanging a tight handshake.

"You two better not be thinking about leaving us out of something this interesting.."

"Yes... I have a few recipes I have been dying to try. They would be perfect for something like this.."

"I have a few ideas myself. Ol' Feng, Little Qing, don't think of leaving us out of it. Even if you are, we will shamelessly come and create a scene. You don't want a bunch of old geezers crying outside your abode, creating all sorts of tales do you.."

"These shameless fossils.."

"How would I dare to think that? All the achievements I have today are because I had your great shoulders to stand on. I will be relying on you seniors.." Yang Qing said as he smiled like a filial junior which did the trick as the shameless old men turned from threats to praises.

Owing to their eagerness, they wanted to charge into Yang Qing's abode then there but Yang Qing had to hold them back so that Ma Yuan could get the night to rest up. After tonight, knowing those old men and also what he had planned for him, tonight might be the only peaceful night he might get till the year was up.

They agreed to start the regimen program the next day at night which would give those old geezers plenty of time to refine their ideas. Their craziness aside, Yang Qing had to admit they were always thorough and meticulous in their work. A day was more than enough time for them to formulate a clear and concise workable plan within the timeframe.

With everything in place, Yang Qing gingerly made his way back to his abode after picking a few dishes here and there from both the Celestial Soup Herb Garden and the Thousands Flavors Restaurant.

He was whistling joyously out of tune of course before he paused in surprise when he saw someone standing outside his abode whilst wearing a dangerous smile.

"Someone seems to be in high spirits. What has gotten you in such a good mood, Yang Qing? Is it the Sacred Flame Swan you met?" the figure asked.

"How did she know? Who spilled? I have a traitor in my nest.."

With a fawning smile, he said,

"Mao Mao, what a pleasant surprise.."

"Pleasant is it? You've been here for more than a week and I had no idea. What happened to checking on your juniors? Or did that stop?" asked Mao Yunru, who was wearing a simple orange flowered dress that went perfectly with her delicate beauty.

Yang Qing was about to use a clever excuse to smoothen things out, however, after seeing the hidden sadness in her eyes, he decided to change tact.

"I am sorry Mao Mao.." he said with deep sincerity in his eyes.

Mao Yunru's eyes flickered in surprise as she had expected him to mouth off and try to weasel out like he always did. His direct admission and apology caught her by surprise.

She couldn't help but break out in pearly laughter when she saw how fidgety and anxious Yang Qing seemed to be as he warily looked at her reaction before quickly looking down.

"So how was your trip? Find anything interesting?" she asked with a lighter air about her which made Yang Qing sigh in relief as he felt like he had escaped an execution.

"As a matter of fact, I did.." Yang Qing smugly said as he produced voice-recording talismans that he had made when he visited the sacred graveyard of inheritance. The talismans contained the stories told by those spirit beasts entombed there.

As he expected, Mao Yunru was practically beaming with joy as she received those talismans.

"Did she just drool?" thought Yang Qing as he threw curious glances at Mao Yunru. When he handed her the talismans, he could have sworn he saw something crystalline slip out as she was smiling.

"What?" Mao Yunru ferociously asked like a beast protecting its kill.

"Nothing.."

Some things were better left unsaid and unknown.

Chapter 807 Month quickly flies by (6)

As they walked in, Yang Qing filled Mao Yunru in on his exploits over the past months and the following weeks, before finally finishing with his plans for Ma Yuan.

"If there is anything I can do to help, I would be more than willing to offer it.." Mao Yunru said as they turned the corner past the pond that housed Starlight.

The crab seemed to be at a crucial juncture in his cultivation as he refined the wisdom pearl Yang Qing had handed to him. The starlight crab was surrounded by a colorful water bubble that was flashed with a sharp refracting light.

"I had those thoughts.." said Yang Qing.

"Ma Yuan would need the abilities of your physique to help him master the technique once I come up with it. The purple mind path mist from your purple cloud physique will help lessen the time he needs to learn the art better than any other means I may employ. When the time comes, I will be relying on you, Mao Mao.."

"Mmmh.." Mao Yunru nodded softly with a pleased smile adorning her face that left Yang Qing slightly dazed at how breathtaking it was. He quickly tried to hide it before Mao Yunru noticed it. She would tease him endlessly if she noticed.

Ma Yuan caught sight of them when they were close to the courtyard. He looked to be just about ready to leave with his daughter for the Medical Valley.

Ma Yuan, as always was enthusiastic with his greetings as he sneaked in a few expressions to Yang Qing that only a fellow man would understand. He threw Yang Qing a few smiles here and there as he secretly alternated his gaze between him and Mao Yunru who was striking a conversation with Ma Ling.

The suggestive non-verbal cues that seemed to be saying,

"Yang Qing, I didn't know you had a pretty lady in your life. She yours?"

Yang Qing responded in kind with a humble bragging smile with his nose facing the high heavens.

"Of course she is!!"

After a short exchange, just as Ma Yuan was preparing to leave, Yang Qing said,

"Once you have taken Ma Ling to the valley, could you come back? There are some things I need to discuss with you.."

Noticing the seriousness in Yang Qing's tone, Ma Yuan nodded before he and his daughter left.

"Why don't you just let him stay here as your gardener? Once we become judges and are assigned an abode, we are allowed to have staff to maintain it, should we wish to. The Order can provide, or you can have some entirely of your choosing.." Mao Yunru said as she made herself comfortable on one of the seats next to the fireplace at the front of the courtyard.

Yang Qing took out a jug of wine, poured himself and Mao Yunru a cup, and then took out the dishes he had bought at the two restaurants.

Only after he had taken the first sip, did he answer. A dejected sigh escaped his lips before he did so.

"This place...." Yang Qing paused as he used one of the burning sticks to point around. The stick burned with a blue-orange flame. It left a line of beautiful orange flames as Yang Qing used it to point around him.

"Ma Yuan will never be able to move on as long as he remains here. We helped save his daughter and he somehow feels indebted to us because of it, but, this place, will forever be a reminder of one of his best and worst memories. For them both..." he grimly said

"It was here that I announced his daughter was alive, but it was also here that I told him his wife had died.

This place will be an anchor for those two distinctive memories and if he remained here, he may forever be shackled by them. He needs a new environment, one not mired by all that he has endured for the past seven years.

He and his daughter need a fresh start if they want a chance at truly living their lives way beyond the tragedy they suffered, and they can't do it here.



That's why despite knowing the dangers lurking out there, especially for someone with a crippled cultivation base, I'm still insistent on them going rather than staying here where I could guarantee their safety more or less.." Yang Qing said as he tossed the burning stick into the pit of fire to join its flaming compatriots.

"As safe as this place is, we are surrounded by chaos, Mao Mao. It is why the Order never spares any resources to strengthen us so we can survive and thrive in this chaos. This isn't exactly the best place for someone looking to escape it.

Ma Yuan's and Ma Ling's chances at a better life lie out there. All I can do is ensure they are better equipped to increase their chances of holding onto it.."

There was a part Yang Qing left out and that was, he was also doing it for himself. The guilt he had weighing on him for the death of Ma Yuan's wife had lessened significantly but a bit of it remained.

He knew it was irrational for him to still feel guilty about it, but since when had emotions ever been based on rationality?

He had replayed the entire incident with the Ice Emerald Sect over and over in his mind, and in the end, he concluded there was nothing he could have done differently from what he did. He did wish he had discovered about the misdeeds of the sect a lot sooner but with the resources they had, the timeframe from which he learned everything was the best he could hope for.

Even knowing that, he still beat himself up about it. Though the beating was softer than before. But if Ma Yuan stayed in his abode, would he ever be able to let it go and accept it truly?

Just like how Ma Yuan would probably think of the death of his wife every time he was in Yang Qing's abode because it was the place where the news was first delivered to him, Yang Qing too would be reminded of that incident every time he saw Ma Yuan.

Maybe he was doing it all for himself in helping Ma Yuan start over somewhere else. Regardless of his motives, he truly felt this was the best choice for both of them.

His guilt aside, he still had every intention of checking up on him, even after he left. One of those measures was having the royal family of the Summerfield Kingdom keep tabs on him to ensure his and his daughter's wellbeing, along with other means he had thought of such as roping in the mountain jade serpent into the plan, and should the worst come to happen and the father-daughter had to flee, they could always flee to the former location of the Clear Sword River Sect which had the mountain jade serpent and his arrays and other protective measures he had left in the area.

Yang Qing was pulled from his thoughts when he felt his nose hit by a gentle pleasant fragrance that he was all too familiar with. With his focus back, Yang Qing felt his heart quicken when he saw limpid black eyes with clouds of purple dancing within filled with an endless lust for curiosity, empathy, gentle care, warmth, mystery, and mischief, just inches away from him.

Yang Qing wanted to ask Mao Yunru what she was doing so close to him that he could feel her breath, but his mouth for the first time, failed him. It refused to move, as much as he wished it to.

"Ppfthahaha!! Who knew the greatest expert of the silver tongue dao would one day be tongue-tied? It looks adorable on you, being flustered and all.." Mao Yunru said with a teasing smile as she gleefully took the sight in with a cunning glint in her eyes as she suddenly leaned over, Yang Qing's heart racing, threatening to jump out of his chest the closer she approached his face.

"Is this it?" he wondered.

His thoughts were cut short when Mao Yunru moved past his face to his ear.

"Little Qing, you didn't think I'd be the first to make the move, did you?" she whispered before she returned to her seat smiling cheekily at the bashful Yang Qing.

Only she knew how fast her heart was racing, she could feel her ears ringing, while her palms had already started trembling before she pretended to fix her dress so she could hide it.

"It's my win.." she smugly thought as she did smug air fist pumps in her head. If she wasn't afraid her knees would give out because of how much they were shaking, she would have done it for real. Yang Qing's shamelessness had long rubbed off on her.

Seeing how smug she was, helped Yang Qing settle down. fr(e)e

"Well played Mao Mao.." Yang Qing said as he smiled wryly to which Mao Yunru casually flicked her hair in utter smugness.

The next hour was spent in awkward silence before Ma Yuan finally came back, saving the two. Detecting the awkward atmosphere between the two, Ma Yuan smiled slightly as he tried to excuse himself, but Mao Yunru got up, and said her goodbyes, speeding away immediately after like she was fleeing for dear life.

"Yang Qing, you and.." Ma Yuan grinned ear to ear. His line of question was all too obvious to Yang Qing.

Yang Qing embarrassed by his earlier display, avoided it as he used the remainder of his wine to clear his thoughts and wash away his shame before he finally turned to Ma Yuan offering him the seat opposite him.

"You must be wondering why I called you over. How is Ma Ling's recovery coming along?"

"Faster than expected. Miss Tan Jue estimates it won't be long before her memories start stitching themselves together, and the one-year timeframe may shrink as a result of it.." Ma Yuan said with clear excitement in his tone.

Even though he handled it better than before, he still found it difficult to pretend he was a stranger to Ma Ling so she didn't feel overwhelmed.

Yang Qing nodded as he clasped his hands together.

"Then it won't be long before you have to plan what's next for you both, once she fully regains her memories..."

Ma Yuan's gaze turned solemn when he heard those words. Why he threw himself into the farm work, other than his love for it, was to avoid the gut-wrenching worry he had every time he thought of what next.

The trauma of his wife and daughter being snatched away and him helpless to do anything about it still haunted him.

He couldn't help but wonder what if it happened again. Even with his cultivation base, he was still helpless to do anything. How much more helpless was he now that he was crippled? Could he protect his daughter as he was? As he was lost in the endless trepidation, he heard Yang Qing's voice, like an anchor pulling him out of the storm.

"For the next year, I will train you in every aspect possible, body, mind, spirit. Every part of you will be put to the forger. You may not be able to defeat a palace realm expert at the end of it, but you will be far stronger than you were when you still had your core. I can promise you that and you will also have more ways to protect your daughter.

However, it will not be easy, you will be pushed to extreme bounds. Are you willing to try, Ma Yuan?" Yang Qing softly asked.

Ma Yuan sat there dazed for a second before he shakily asked,

"Is this True? Will I really be able to protect my daughter?"

"Not against everything, but your means will be much better than before, and provided nothing unexpected happens, you'll also be able to live the entirety of your lifespan and watch her grow.

Besides with more time who knows what the future holds. There are treasures out there known to reform or give someone a new dantian. Who knows but as long as you're willing to live, there's always a chance.."

"I don't dare hope for something so extravagant, but as long as I can take care of Ling'er I am willing to try anything. I accept the offer. Please help me be able to take care of her!" Ma Yuan said as he bowed his head.

"Good, I will. Rest here tonight, and make use of the short reprieve. From tomorrow, your training begins.."

And just like that, a month quickly flew by. Yang Qing researched countless meditation arts for reference as he strived to create one for Ma Yuan. His grandfather and cohorts monitored every single change that happened to Ma Yuan from his treatment, while others like Mao Yunru, and even Dai Chen and Zhang Qingge who passed by joined in to train Ma Yuan's body and mind, and his understanding of his cultivation arts, sharing their own insights in the process.

Ma Yuan had severely underestimated how demanding it would be, but for his daughter's sake, he gritted his teeth and persevered through it all.

#### Chapter 808 Mortal's path to transcendence

"The month has quickly flown by so fast.." said Yang Qing with a sigh with his gaze outside the window of his study. It was early morning with the rays filtering through the leaves of the pear tree outside his window.

His study was filled with scrolls, talismans, parchments, and books strewn about and opened. On the desk were empty bowls that looked to have contained food in them. Some had the oiliness and crumbs of baked goods, and others had the stickiness of stew. Only the teapot that was releasing steam looked to retain its contents still.

In the four corners of his study were spirit-clearing sandalwood incense sticks with only a few centimeters remaining from burning out and at the center of the room was a yellow stone that exuded a gentle glow. The stone was the tranquility earth stone and from the ethereal quality exhibited by the one on Yang Qing's desk, it looked to be one that had reached the monarch grade.

It was a great material to use when one was meditating or doing something taxing for the mind which Yang Qing had been doing for the past month. Over the past month other than healing and strengthening Ma Yuan's body, he had been researching countless arts looking for references as he aimed to create one that would help with the development of Ma Yuan's body.

The meditation art would be stepping in place of Yang Qing in the transformation process of Ma Yuan's body by freely guiding the interconnection between Ma Yuan and his surroundings as he worked the land. The meditation art would be the binding link between the two.

Since he wasn't looking to create a top-tier meditation art, but rather a fairly decent one that would maybe be at the top tier of the orange grade, he didn't need a lot of reference material. His personal

collection of meditation arts would suffice as guiding lamps, while his main cultivation art, the universal light of the myriad worlds would be the real backbone of the whole thing.

It was his aura that triggered the reaction between Ma Yuan and the surroundings in his abode, and his aura was a component of his cultivation art which was built based on encompassing multiple components into one which was Yang Qing's qi ended up being a universal qi that featured the attributes of most elements.

Though Ren Shu did say getting universal qi from the art wasn't guaranteed for all and the only reason Yang Qing was able to establish it so seamlessly was because of his yin-yang jade bones whose nature and the art's nature coincided.

Yang Qing hoped to borrow his insights into the universal light of the myriad worlds and combine them with the insights from the meditation arts he had on hand, to create a brand-new meditation art.

Even though he was aiming for an orange grade art whose level of difficulty wasn't as high as improving a red grade art to a blue grade art, creating one, no matter how low the grade still required tremendous effort and chance on Yang Qing's part, which is why even after pouring through countless techniques, and breaking down his cultivation art, he was still in the fog, trying to find the pathway to that meditation art.

Seeing one of the incense sticks finally burn through and disintegrate into ash followed by the second one, Yang Qing took it as his cue to pause his efforts and focus on something else.

Getting up, he stretched his back out of habit, picked the teapot containing mirror heart jasmine tea, and made his way out of his courtyard, where he found Ma Yuan already hard at work preparing the ground at one of the uncharted acres in Yang Qing's abode.

"The meditation art progress aside, at least the month had not been in vain.."?Yang Qing said with a satisfied smile as his gaze fell on Ma Yuan.

Over the past few weeks, Ma Yuan had been put through the paces either by his grandfather and his crazy clan members or by Dai Chen and Zhang Qingge, with Yang Qing picking up whatever pieces of him that was left after, and putting him back together so he could go through it again. Ma Yuan persevered through it all and the results could be seen.

Originally, he had a burly build, but right now, his body was much more compact and leaner which inadvertently made him seem a lot younger. His skin was supple, looking youthful and unblemished, and his aura looked reserved and calm, mirroring the essence of nature.

Seeing Ma Yuan now and before, one would hardly assume he was the same person, be it in terms of physical appearance, or presence. Before, he had the appearance of someone robust with an untamed aura and edginess to him, but now he had the silence and stillness of a lake in the middle of the day with no wind, but underneath that stillness hid terrifying power and resilience.

He still had a long way to go, but Yang Qing could say with confidence by the time the year was up, Ma Yuan would be able to effortlessly beat three or four of his previous self, and the reason for that, the major part was Ma Yuan's relentless efforts to the regimen given to him, the other was those providing the help. Each was a master of their craft, from his grandfather and the other old Yang Clan fossils who were walking treasure troves of body refinement to Dai Chen and Zhang Qingge who were combat prodigies, and Yang Qing who could rebuild his body even if it was a pile of puddle. All these factors were slowly reshaping Ma Yuan.

"Ma Yuan could you come for a second.." Yang Qing softly called, as he waved Ma Yuan over.

"Yang Qing, you're up early?" Ma Yuan said as he rushed over wearing a light smile. He had long shaved his scruffy beard, and his brown hair was nicely tied in a bun while his eyes looked spirited.

"I have to, it's my last day of vacation and I have to make the most of it but before that, have you heard of the mortal path of transcendence?"

Ma Yuan looked incredulously at Yang Qing because of the question but still answered,

"I have, almost everyone has. The mortal path of transcendence is the foundational combat arts that those in the body and qi refinement realm are taught to help strengthen their bodies and hone their sense. Why do you ask?"

The mortal path of transcended though widely spread was a simple technique, as it was only used by those in the body refinement and qi refinement stages. One of the reasons it was so widely known was because it was rumored to have been created by a gifted genius who was rumored to be gifted in fists,

kicks, palm, sword, spear, and saber arts, reaching the absolute peak in each of these arts and suppressing an era singlehandedly.

That genius was a commoner with no powerful sect, clan, empire, or any other powerful organization to nurture him. It wasn't by choice as he was judged to have a mediocre talent in cultivation with no sect willing to take him.

However, unwilling to give up his dream of being a cultivator, that genius trained by himself, relentlessly. With no one to guide him and the label of inept hanging over him, a crazy thought grew in him. A single stick is easy to snap, but a bunch of sticks bound together will be tough to break. If his talent was lacking, he would train in everything to try and make up for that gap. He trained his punching, kicking, palm attacks, sword moves, saber moves, and spear moves.

He couldn't afford any techniques so he adopted the most rudimentary approach to training them. Punch a thousand times until your punch can punch through the air, swing your sword and saber a thousand times until they can slice through the air, kick a thousand times until your kick can slice through the air, and thrust your palm and spear a thousand times until you can thrust through the air, and if a thousand times isn't enough, do it five thousand times, and if that isn't enough do it ten thousand times, do it until you can slice, punch and shatter through mountains and rivers.

He pursued it with a pure single-minded devotion that he won the approval of the Dao who became his mentor in place of those who rejected and shunned him. Trained by the Dao, he became Dao. Through his relentless efforts, he managed to capture the true essence of those arts, and through it, he transcended his mortality and rose to the soul formation realm in a single bound. It is unknown whether that tale was true, but the cultivation art rumored to have been created by him was accomplished when it came to establishing and training one's foundations. novel.com

The mortal's path to transcendence adopted simplicity, repetition, and resilience, and had no requirement on one's talent just discipline. Its simplicity and low requirements on talent were what made it so widely spread throughout the continent along with the promise that one could ascend to the heavens as they kept at it.

Other than its rumored creator, no one has ever been recorded to ascend to the soul formation realm using it, but it was widely accepted as being one of good for creating firm foundations, though most prominent organizations choose to use their own, and those who opt to use the mortal's path of transcendence are usually the low ranked ones or those without sufficient means.



Even though most don't there are a few top-tier organizations that use the art, such as the Thousand Hall Battle Pavilion, that enforce it as a foundational requirement for all its members. The stance is a given considering the pavilion was started in admiration and reverence for the relentless spirit of the creator of the mortal's path to transcendence.

The Order uses it too, but unlike the Thousand Hall Battle Pavilion that makes its use mandatory, at the Institute, the students are given a choice on whether to use it or not.

#### Chapter 809 Short spar (1)

Yang Qing had been one of those who had chosen the mortal's path to transcendence. His reason for the choice was more out of affinity than anything else. Like most who chose the art, he did have a secret ambition of maybe grasping its mysteries and jumping to the soul formation realm in a single bound.  
.com

As someone who had grown up with his fair share of fears and paranoia, especially towards dangerous things with cultivators being at the top of that list, jumping straight to the soul formation realm from the qi refinement realm would solve a bulk of those problems.

Who in their right mind would try to attack a soul formation expert?

He thus hoped the mortal's path to transcendence would give him a shot at his ambitions of living a carefree life. However, the other reason he chose the art was he felt a sense of resonance with it because of his peerless jade physique that pursued harmonious balance which was the framework of the art itself which helped a cultivator improve their saber, sword, spear, fist, palm, and kicking skills with equal measure.

Of course, there were those who chose to specialize in a particular aspect of the art, but Yang Qing didn't choose to do so. Just like the creator, he pursued mastery of all six forms up until he broke through to the foundation establishment realm and then moved on to specialize with his present purple-grade art, and a few other gold and blue-grade arts in his arsenal.

Even though he didn't continue with the art, he still borrowed its philosophy and spirit in his pursuit of the dao. It has continued to influence him to date, and the blue-grade art he evolved, the Brilliant ray fist technique was heavily influenced by it. The art was a fist art, but within it were other arts that worked concurrently with the fist technique to complement and supplement it. Yang Qing had incorporated a movement art, a palm art, a finger art, a soul art, a body and qi refinement art, all working together to enhance the abilities of the fist technique.

He pursued evolution in harmony when he created that art, and all of that was because of the insights and experience he acquired from the mortal's path of transcendence.

"Have you cultivated it before?" asked Yang Qing.

"I did try to once, with my friends when we were just starting out, but I soon gave up when it couldn't immediately produce the results I so desperately needed.."

Ma Yuan couldn't help but let out a melancholic sigh when the images of his three childhood friends flashed in his mind. They were all orphans, the lowest of the rungs, desperately trying to etch out a living in an unkind world that always seemed to have an agenda against the weak.

Like most, they knew the only way to change their fates was through cultivation. Only through cultivation would they have the strength to be treated as humans. Eventually, through stealing and doing various jobs, they earned enough to buy a single copy of the mortal's path to transcendence. They were all excited when they bought it, but that excitement soon turned to fury when it didn't help them leap for the heavens, it didn't even help them jump off the ground.

Even after cultivating it for months without stop, they were still at the bottom of the barrel in the food chain. They were still treated as lowly worms and stomped on. Eventually, they abandoned the art and decided to risk it by exploring some ruins they stumbled onto when scavenging.

Three young orphans with nothing to their names but the tattered robes on their backs, investigating some ruins with no cultivation or anything related to it, the exploration went exactly as one would expect from such a lineup. Three died, leaving Ma Yuan as the only survivor, albeit barely and he only survived because his friends sacrificed their lives to give him the chance. If they couldn't make it, they hoped that at least one of them would get to live their dreams and soar in the skies.

"Brother Meng, Brother Luo, Brother Wei forgive this foolish little brother of yours for almost callously throwing away the life that you all gave yours to protect. I will try my best not to forget and do my best to live for all of you... for Fei'er, For Ling'er, and finally for myself too.." Ma Yuan thought as he looked up to the skies and saw the faces of those he had ever cared for but were now gone, look at him with smiles on their faces.

When Ma Yuan regained his senses he found Yang Qing staring at him wearing the same carefree smile, he always did.

"Seems like your mind went elsewhere?" lightly asked Yang Qing.

"Sorry for that.." Ma Yuan said with an awkward smile.

"It's okay. Now, to the matter at hand. Here.." Yang Qing said as he handed Ma Yuan a booklet that contained the mortal's path to transcendence.

"What am I to do with it?" Ma Yuan asked in confusion as he took the booklet, though deep down he felt he already knew the answer to that question.

"Familiarize yourself with it of course.." Yang Qing said with a matter-of-fact tone.

"You will need to continually familiarize yourself with the abilities of your body and there's no better technique for that than the mortal's path to transcendence.." he added.

"This?"

Even if he already expected it. Ma Yuan couldn't help but be confused by it.

As wondrous as the art was, it wasn't even graded like most cultivation arts. He may no longer be able to draw in spiritual qi which renders him incapable of using most techniques in his arsenal, but he felt with his foundation as a late-stage core formation expert, at the very least he could still use red-grade cultivation arts and not a beginner art like than the mortal's path of transcendence.

It wasn't like he was resetting or recultivating his foundations again. In terms of foundations, his shattered core and dantian aside, he still had the body of a core formation expert, that had been refined by the lightning tribulation and he also had his gold body from the body refinement realm to fall back on.

Personally, he felt there was little he stood to gain from cultivating that art. He only had a year, it was better to focus it on other things. However, he kept those doubts to himself. The transformative experience he had the past few weeks, opened his eyes to things that subverted his imagination. What he counted as common sense could no longer be relied on, so even with the doubts he had, he told himself, that maybe there was something to the art that his limited horizons kept him from seeing.

Yang Qing was a much more gifted cultivator than he was. He was just a crippled core formation expert, while Yang Qing was a palace realm expert, of course, the vision and insights of the latter vastly outshone his.

Yang Qing secretly nodded in appreciation as he observed Ma Yuan's demeanor.

"By the time the year is up, you will be delighted that you practiced the mortal's path to transcendence. It will open a whole new world for you, but then again, some things are better shown than told.

How about a little spar?" Yang Qing said with an ominous smile.

Chapter 810 Short spar (2)

"Surely, there's no need for that, is there?" Ma Yuan said with a wry smile. When he had his cultivation base, twenty of him were worth less than Yang Qing's pinky, let alone now. His body was regaining its vigor, but he still was weaker than he had been with his core intact.

"Don't worry, I will restrict my strength to the peak stage of the foundation establishment realm and I will use nothing but the moves of the mortal's path of transcendence for the spar, while you're free to use whatever means you have at your disposal. Which is your weapon of choice, i would be more than happy to provide you with a suitable weapon.."

"Peak of the foundation establishment realm?" Ma Yuan asked with a questioning look. Surely he was not that weak? After he was crippled he had defeated a bunch of early-stage core formation experts just fine.

He may not match Yang Qing in terms of ability or foundation but wasn't Yang Qing looking down on him?

As if reading his thoughts, Yang Qing couldn't help but dryly laugh as he said,

"It's not that I am looking down on you. Even as a peak foundation cultivator, I could still defeat those in the early stage and sometimes middle stages of the core formation realm, and that was then. Right now even with my realm suppressed, I still have the natural insights of a palace realm expert.

If you think of it that way, you're the one at a disadvantage.."

Yang Qing was confident of beating him with a fourth-stage foundation establishment cultivation base, but to not shame him, Yang Qing opted to restrain it to the peak. At least if he lost, it wouldn't be as embarrassing.

Ma Yuan stood silent for a short moment before he grimly answered,

"Fine, I accept the challenge. I use a spear.."

Yang Qing nodded and took out a finely crafted orange spear from his storage ring. Its quality was at the top tier of the sky grade.

He casually tossed it to Ma Yuan whose eyes widened when he came in contact with the spear. He didn't know what materials it was made of, but the moment he made contact with it, he felt his senses heighten and full of vigor.

"Let's begin.." Yang Qing said, pulling Ma Yuan from his reverie.

"He's like a different person.." Ma Yuan muttered as he sensed a formless pressure being released by Yang Qing. He still looked carefree, but Ma Yuan felt like he was facing a drowning ocean wave as he faced him even if Yang Qing had suppressed his realm to the peak stage of the foundation establishment realm.

Just as he was debating whether to be the one to attack first and what technique to go with, Yang Qing had already charged in, his weapon, a branch he had picked from the green flame tree.

Ma Yuan instantly thrust his spear forward with quick precision. He may not have achieved spear intent, but his foundations with the weapon were firm and solid nonetheless and he had achieved spear sense and spear qi. The spear in his hand was no different than his limbs.

With the thrust, even if it was done in haste, he was sure was sufficient to halt the movements of an early-stage core formation expert.

However, things didn't go as planned, Yang Qing used the green flame branch like a sword and veered the spear's trajectory to the right, borrowing its momentum to nimbly roll over the spear, quickly approaching Ma Yuan on his unguarded side. He quickly swung his branch, aiming for Ma Yuan's ribs, but Ma Yuan reacted quickly and drew his spear in just in time to block the branch's trajectory.

Clang!

The sound like that of metal hitting metal was produced when the branch and the spear collided, greatly shocking Ma Yuan. However, he didn't have the time to linger in it as the shock from the clash flowed into his body almost shifting his organs.

"Is this the strength of someone at the foundation establishment realm?" he wondered in shock as he was quickly put on the defense.

Half a minute in, he was already sweating buckets as he was constantly bombarded in a flurry of attacks. Yang Qing sometimes attacked with the branch adopting the stance of a sword or a spear, other times he launched a fist, another a palm attack, and another he kicked.

There was no sophistication in his moves, they were simple and direct, but even so, Ma Yuan could hardly retaliate and was forced into the defense which seemed to be crumbling with every second, and it wasn't long before he couldn't even keep track of Yang Qing's attacks and was forced to defend with his body.

Seventeen minutes! Seventeen minutes was all it took for him to be left in the wretched state he was in. Ma Yuan was already on his hands and knees, wheezing as he tried to gasp for air. His robes were in tatters and drenched in sweat. His entire body was shaking from extreme fatigue and pain. He felt like millions of fire ants were gnawing at his bones and flesh. Somehow even if his bones were intact, he felt

like they had been smashed several times over by a mountain-sized club. His vision was blurry as he struggled to maintain his consciousness.

But despite how broken he felt, his body had no visible wounds, courtesy of the monster that subjected him to that state who would inflict damage and restore it in the same motion.

Yang Qing not even a hair out place, stood a few inches away from the trembling Ma Yuan.

"I told you the mortal's path to ascension is something. You can meditate beneath the green flame tree, and when some strength returns, use the hot spring that's about half a kilometer that way, to soak your body. It will help.." Yang Qing said as he pointed a short distance away to his right.

Ma Yuan mumbled something to say he had heard, before finally passing out. Yang Qing picked him up and placed him underneath the green flame tree before finally leaving for Dai Chen's place where they had promised to sample a few wines and seafood dishes.

As his last vacation day, with how eventful that month had been, Yang Qing decided he might as well take the last day easy. Eat some fish, and enjoy some good wine.