

When Dyon calmed, he came to a realization. A golden hue in one's Aurora denoted an innate one, whereas a white light denoted a forcibly awakened one. The fact that Dyon's aurora had already awoken meant that he had had his aurora before even coming to the academy.

Now that he thought about it, that had to be the only way he managed to enter the Academy at all.

Since the Mortal World and Martial World shared a planet, they had some loose relations. One of their traditions was the testing of willing participants to be taken into the Martial World.

Without suspense, all failed. It was simply impossible for a mortal to be born with cultivation talent. So, as the years passed, the tradition became more of a formality than anything else. In fact, no small number of people made fun of those who even cared to continue trying to pass this test of talent. Eventually, those even deemed to try were looked down upon.

That was.... Until Dyon somehow managed to break a failure streak that had last hundreds of years.

Remembering these memories, Dyon couldn't help but sigh, a rare somber expression on his face.

'Are you doing alright, Clara...?'

Dyon furiously shook his head, trying to shed himself of such thoughts. Clearing his mind, he managed to regain his focus.

In all his excitement, Dyon had forgotten to even consider what level of strength his soul had reached. He had originally assumed that he was simply

at the lowest level, but that was when he remembered that he had an Innate Soul.

The most common types of Innate Souls were ones birthed into the Lower Foundation Stage. Of the 20% of people who would be born with such a soul, over 90% of them would be born at this stage. Dyon wasn't sure if he was among this 90% or not.

Unfortunately, Dyon was having a harsh time gauging his level. Unlike the Foundation Stage for energy cultivation which had very clear and obvious dividing lines, the path for soul cultivation seemed to be more arbitrary.

'I might be able to deduce my true level by another method. For example, if there's an array that can only be drawn with a certain level of strength?' magic

Dyon nodded to himself, this would theoretically be possible. The only issue was that Dyon didn't know how to draw any arrays just yet.

It felt like there was just one headache after another. As though that wasn't already bad enough...

'If it was hard to find energy cultivation methods, it's going to be even harder to find soul cultivation ones. How am I even going to improve from now on?'

Dyon had finally deduced the reason speed reading had become easier to him: his soul had grown in strength.

If he understood correctly, it was likely because he had drained himself completely using the speed reading technique previously. After sleeping, his soul naturally grew.

This was a similar concept to body weight training, except for the soul.

The good news was that this affirmed Dyon's talent. The bad news was that doing things this way was much slower than having a real technique. This left him with yet another dilemma.

Dyon's brows furrowed. He kept running into roadblocks.

'Wait a minute, maybe array theory can tide me over for the time being. My Aurora is powerful and I have array explanations up to the 9th Common Grade, only a step away from the practitioner array alchemist ranks.

'If I'm able to master some of these arrays, I'll have some capital to defend myself and I'll simultaneously be able to deduce what level my soul is at...'

The secondary profession grades, at least as far as Focus Academy was concerned, was split into Common Grade, Practitioner Grade, and finally, Master Grade.

Common Grade professionals were able to make suitable pills, formations and weapons – depending on the profession, of course – for Foundational Stage warriors. The 1st Common Grade could make things for 1st Foundational Stage warriors and so on.

So, Dyon got to work. Unfortunately, what he didn't know was that the soul wasn't very conducive to battle. Many used it as a supplement, but it was never the main source of combat strength. The soul was simply too fragile.

But, even if Dyon did know this... What other choice did he have?

As soon as he read his first book on the martial world, Dyon had already decided to become the ever-elusive perfect expert who practiced all 3 martial doctrines: body, soul and energy.

Originally, his plan was to begin with the conventional energy method, because body and soul cultivators were in the heavy minority, so he had conceded that it would only be realistic if he were to start with energy. But now, everything was different. He couldn't start on the crazy plan he had pushed to the back of his mind.

That said, Dyon wasn't exactly at a loss. Unknowingly, by ignoring the energy cultivation path for now, he was helping himself.

To be the perfect martial artist, you had to start with the perfect base. But, unfortunately, no one could because of eroding talent one would experience as one aged.

The Foundation Stage was about preparing your body to accept greater forms of energy from the higher stages of cultivation. But, because martial talent eroded as people aged, most were forced to begin cultivating before their bodies fully matured.

The result was that their foundations weren't as solid as they could be. This was the unfortunate trade off for having higher martial talent during cultivation.

Those from really large sects and academies could partially fix these faulty foundations with exotic fruits and pills. They would both begin to cultivate early and consume these fruits to offset the deficiency of their youthful bodies. But.. they'd never be the perfect selves they could have been.

That said, there also existed another group. True geniuses believed in themselves.

They tempered their wills, deepened their understandings of secondary occupations and cultivation, delved into their auras, and sharpened their understanding of battle without cultivating. These geniuses didn't begin energy cultivating until they were 13 or older, some not even until they reached their peak levels of physical maturity at 18.

Those that waited until their bodies matured at 18 were the greatest geniuses the Martial World had to offer.

While the strength between a mortal 5-year-old and a mortal 18-year-old might seem negligible to martial artists, only the ignorant would think this. Cultivation is about exponential increases based on your foundation, even a

marginally better foundation would lead to massively large strength differences among martial artists.

If you couple this with the special physiques these geniuses were born with and tempering that push the mortal body to the limit, the peak of these patient geniuses is unassailable to the normal.

Dyon had unknowingly stepped into a realm only the peak level geniuses of the martial world would even think of attempting to join. But the problem was, those geniuses had unshakeable sects and clans backing them, while Dyon could only rely on himself.

And that's where array alchemy became his hope. Not only would it allow him to better temper his wills because of his Aurora, it would also earn him the money he'd need to temper his body to peak form and make up for his weak mortal upbringing.

'How fascinating... to reach the best foundation in energy cultivation, patience is needed... but, it doesn't seem like the same is true of soul and body cultivation?'

A gleam could be seen in Dyon's eyes as he greedily sped through all of the books Libro had lent him. By the time he was finished, the once bright blue in his room had become dark and he could no longer see up to the surface of the lake.

By that point, Dyon was absolutely certain. His soul had somehow already reached the Peak of the Foundation Stage something that would shock the elders of Focus Academy should they know about it.

But, despite the good news, he had a frown on his face.