

Daily life 121

Chapter 121 The Ancients

As Yu Huifang was absorbed in her newfound resolve Yu Long sent a message to Dean Zhu Lao via his domain sense.

"Many thanks, Brother Zhu Lao," said Yu Long with deep gratitude showing in his eyes.

Yu Huifang may have thought she had hidden her melancholy well but as her parents, they could see right through her. They had told her countless times how proud of her they were in her achievements and that as long as she lived a fulfilling life, as parents they couldn't be happier but their words seemed to have the opposite effect.

At face value, she'd seem appreciative and glad but when she thought she was by herself her true feelings would emerge which were nothing but sadness, shame, and guilt. It was why they were both happy when Dai Chen came into her life as her smiles seemed genuine and when their circle grew, the young girl who had vibrance in her started to show up.

Even though she wasn't completely herself as she would have bouts of sadness and inferiority here and there, it wasn't as severe as before when she had just broken through to the core formation realm.

"It's nothing brother Yu Long, it's what I should do as her senior and educator. You have a good daughter," said Dean Zhu Lao, replying back via the domain sense.

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"Now where was I? Right, Lifespans. As we have established, someone who has just broken through to the palace realm gets a life span of 10,000 years, when they break through to the domain realm that number increases to 40,000 years which continually increases with every minor breakthrough in the domain realm.

The moment you breakthrough into the soul formation realm that number skyrockets to 100,000 years which is a huge life change from a tiny mortal who could only hope to live for at least 90 years or 120 years at best to a five-digit figure that will enable you to see the rise and fall of dynasties.

Cultivation has changed our whole dynamic as a species. In some regards, it has made our lives worse and in others better," Dean Zhu Lao passionately said.

"No wonder he is the Dean of cultivation art history and dissection. Just casual words from him and I can already detect the charm of dao in his speech," Yang Qing shockingly thought with awe in his heart.

He doesn't know when but as he was listening to Dean Zhu Lao, his cultivation started circulating by itself. He wasn't the only one as he noticed Mao Yunru's shocked expression.

"The reason I mentioned the lifespan is, despite a human soul formation expert having a lifespan of 100,000 years, we still don't have the qualifications of being considered a long-lived race.

The long lifespan we struggle to get through bitter cultivation to the ancients is something they obtain as a natural privilege the moment they are born.

There are even those who are born with a lifespan of upwards of 500,000 years.

Even spirit beasts have longer lifespans than us, you may find a spirit beast with a foundation level strength but has a lifespan of 20,000 years matching a mid-stage human palace stage expert's lifespan.

But the universe has its balance and is not as unfair as it seems. While spirit beasts have longer life spans they have a slower pace in cultivation compared to humans barring special circumstances and they also reproduce at a slower rate compared to us humans.

We have been blessed with the ability to quickly reproduce, adaptability, and a malleable body that can pick things up easily which is why we have the most diversity when it comes to cultivation arts.

But this only applies to spirit beasts. When it comes to the ancients it's a different matter.

They may have an even lower copulation rate but they have something that makes up for it in spades, TIME," said Dean Zhu Lao as he paused dramatically.

Tsk!!

Yang Qing couldn't help but click in envy at Dean Zhu Lao's masterful skills in being a showman.

"No matter how slow your cultivation is or how poor your aptitude is given time that numbers in the hundred thousand of years at least, you're guaranteed to achieve something and that was what the ancients did.

They used their absurd lifespans to their advantage as they muddled their way in cultivation slowly making strides and the more they walked the more absurd their life span became which gave them even more time to grow and explore different facets of cultivation. They passed on some of those insights to their offspring who went on to pave paths of their own.

I don't know how long the ancients have lived but what I do know is their breadth of wisdom and means is more than we or any other organization can compare to including the so-called holy lands," said Dean Zhu Lao with wanton disdain in his tone when he mentioned the holy lands.

"The ancients have a wide array of skills and esoteric means. It is why we had to create a barrier around us. One can never be too careful when talking about them.

There was once a young genius in the soul formation realm who in his hubris mocked the ancients with his fellow disciples within their sect grounds.

In terms of power, if I was to guess, the sect he belonged to had the capabilities of a holy land seeing how they had a chief disciple who was in the soul formation stage.

However, right now that sect along with the chief disciple disappeared. All that was left behind is the present-day Green fog region," said Dean Zhu Lao with an air of somberness.

The news sent terrifying shockwaves to the trio of Yang Qing, Yu Huifang, and Mao Yunru. Even some of the palace stage Order members present had shocked expressions. Only the seniors in the domain realm seemed calmer but even they had some degree of apprehension.

"It is the reason why their information is rarely spread around. There has never been any real sighting of them but evidence of their presence is around us in various shapes and forms.

One of them is what happened to that sect and another is their descendant races who we have records of.

You are familiar with some of them due to their renowned reputations. The likes of dragons, phoenixes, the black tortoise, the white tiger, the vermilion bird, the kunpeng, and enlightened golems just to name a few are descendants of the ancients though they branch from different ones.

This clay tablet of yours belongs to one of the descendant races," Dean Zhu Lao said as he gently traced his fingers along the logo syllabic scripts.

"The tablet belongs to the blue fairies."

Chapter 122 Blue Fairies

"The blue fairies?" asked Yang Qing in confusion. Of some of the descendant races that Dean Zhu Lao mentioned, he had seen some and read about some.

He had met some golem communities during his rounds around the continent. Their recorded numbers and sightings around the continent are few with most of them living within hidden realms.

The golem race had always deeply fascinated him, especially their origin which has always been steeped in mystery.

There were different stories about how they came about but the most common one was that the first golem was a spirit star stone who gained enlightenment when an immortal happen to use him as a sit. He was just a stone then without any life with him.

The immortal being pleased with how comfortable the spirit star stone was to sit in, decided to preach dao as a form of thanks. The spirit star stone gained enlightenment and spirituality from that preaching and became the first golem.

Yang Qing at the time didn't know if that story was the truth but the brief research he had made into the race never yielded any possible results as to their origins. The only thing that was certain is their general makeup which was always some sort of ore or stone.

They usually looked like human-shaped stones but that only applied to the weaker members, those with powerful cultivation have complete control of their avatarization state enough to turn their bodies humanlike. The more human a golem is the more powerful they are.

Other than the enlightened golems there has been little to no interaction with the other descendant races within the southern continent. Yang Qing has never even heard of a proven sighting of any of the races Dean Zhu Lao mentioned.

Though within the churning sea, there's rumored to be an island inhabited by dragons. Whether that rumor is true no one has been able to prove it because of the dangers of the churning sea without even mentioning who would be bold enough to venture into a known dragon habitation ground.

Of the five water bodies that surrounded the blue origin planet; the Millions treasure ocean was the most bountiful with resources, the Celestial ocean was the most mysterious, the Sea of dreams was the safest as long as your soul was strong enough that is, if not you'd get lost in there forever, the Blue origin ocean was the largest and the one that seemed more normal compared to the rest. It was also the one with a lot of unexplored areas and lastly, the Churning sea which was the most dangerous.

The churning sea was between the southern continent and the central continent and it was home to an astronomical number of aquatic spirit beasts. They were violent and had the powerful combat ability to back it up. When they were not attacking cultivators who were passing by they were always fighting amongst themselves which was why the sea got named the churning sea as it was always churning from the violent battles underneath.

Also for some reason, though the sea seemed to be the smallest on paper it was always a mystery how big it seemed in person and how it housed so many spirit beasts with some of them even having a size that was thousands of kilometers long.

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"In terms of numbers the blue fairies may actually be considered to have one of the fewest numbers even in comparison amongst their fellow ancient descendant races. They are also the most shrouded in mystery almost the same as their ancestors, the ancients.

While they are almost virtually impossible to track, they are the race with the largest footprint on our continent.

They are an erudite race with a love and curiosity for exploration and research. It is because of that nature that they became the impetus for the propagation of cultivation around this continent. I don't know about other continents but here in the southern continent, the earliest human cultivators came about from studying pieces of knowledge left about by the blue fairies.

Some of the heritages around from long-forgotten holy lands, sects, Empires, and clans both present and past have some tie to some blue fairy paraphernalia especially the hidden factions though you'll have to wait until after your ceremony and you get officially inducted to the palace courts to be told some things," said Dean Zhu Lao as he fiddled around with clay tablet.

His fingerprints had blue ancient scripts glowing from them as he constantly pressed them against the logo syllabic scripts on the tablet. Every time he pressed against a script or a symbol a change would happen. Some of the symbols stopped continuously changing and permanently imprinted themselves on the surface of the clay tablet which seemed to be gradually transforming into a foggy white crystal around the edges as it moved inwards.

Yang Qing was deeply engrossed in his mind to notice anything. The information he had been bombarded with today had been too huge. There was the bit about paragon domains, finally knowing the identity of the creator of the four purple grade cultivation arts, information about the fearsome ancients, and some clay tablet that he got for a bargain is a remnant of the blue fairies and lastly hidden factions.

His mind was racing not sure which aspect of the information he got today did he want to know more about.

Just as he was getting lost in his quagmire of thoughts he noticed something out of the corner of his eye that forcibly pulled him back to reality.

It was Mao Yunru. Her whole face was red with eyes popped and had this fiendish crazy smile the kind you would find in a seasoned psychopathic killer who has just spotted the ultimate prey.

"Of course, she'd react like this....is she having a breakdown because it was too much gossip for her to swallow at once? Or the half information that left one with more questions than answers? Will she be okay," Yang Qing worriedly thought as Mao Yunru turned redder, the eyes wider and the grin greedier.

Yang Qing tried to pinch her arm secretly when he saw she might really lose it and jump Dean Zhu Lao for more information.

He pinched lightly but that didn't seem to do anything so he decided to use a bit of strength which resulted in a sudden scream from Mao Yunru that drew countless eyes her way.

With so many eyes on her, she lowered her head in embarrassment as she vengefully glared at Yang Qing who could only offer a guilty apologetic smile in return.

As the two were exchanging glances there was a sudden burst of light as the spiritual qi in the hallway got funneled in Dean Zhu Lao's direction more specifically the clay tablet.

Crack!!

Egg-like cracks started appearing on the clay tablet as it swallowed the spiritual qi in the surroundings. The earlier clay-like look was mottling away as it revealed a white foggy crystalline look.

After a few minutes, the absorption still didn't halt but even seemed to have increased in intensity as a small whirlwind of qi was formed.

Yang Qing worriedly looked around because he noticed the lighting in the room seemed deemed and the fake sky above seemed duller.

"Will the snow peach blossom tree be able to handle this level of consumption?" Yang Qing worriedly thought as the terrifying suction continued.

When he looked around he noticed the hosts, Yu Huifangs's parents all had calm and mildly intrigued looks as their eyes were glued to the tablet. They didn't have the look of someone whose home was about to be ripped apart from being drained by a voracious tablet.

"Maybe it can hold," thought Yang Qing as he looked around and noticed only he was the worried one with Mao Yunru already relapsing to her maddened gossip devourer look.

The suction went on for almost twenty minutes before it started to slow down.

By Yang Qing's calculations, the spiritual qi it had absorbed within that duration was almost ten times his current qi capacity.

The fake sky above them had disappeared and what was left was a grey background. The dense qi from before had thinned put by a couple of levels. It matched the qi levels of the special grounds of rank 4 organizations.

Yang Qing couldn't help but suck in cold air at the drastic change in the hall room. Before the qi of the hallway was so dense that it made the celestial nesting weaver's nest seem like a dung beetle's nesting ground in comparison.

However just when Yang Qing was worrying that the flower had been damaged there was a sudden resurgence of spiritual qi so dense that some even condensed into a mist. That qi quickly restored the room to its earlier look.

As for the clay tablet, it was no longer a tablet or clay either. It had completely transformed from clay to a white fog crystalline material in the shape of an octagon.

The logo symbolic scripts were no longer flashing all that was left were ancient writings that Yang Qing had no clue what they were and a complex array pattern on the other side of the octagon crystal.

"It's a blue fairy object alright, seeing the enormous amount of spiritual qi it required just to reveal its true form. The race blessed with a dantian the size of an ocean is not a statement made in vain," Dean Zhu Lao said as his eyes glittered with excitement.

Chapter 123 Possible Reward For The Gift

"This will be a little difficult for me to decipher. I can only take it to the tranquil peaks," said Dean Zhu Lao as he sighed.

Yang Qing's pupils froze once he heard that name...how could he not when it was the dream target for every cultivator who joins the Order and sees the dump they are given as abodes.

The tranquil peaks were the only area that could be considered a cultivator's dream abode. It was the home of those who had reached the soul formation realm and unlike the valleys, they called home the tranquil peaks were true mountain peaks, shrouded in fog piercing the skies above.

Its grandness couldn't be hidden as one could feel its majesty even all the way from the junction that led to the different valleys. Standing solitary drawing awe, envy, and longing to all who saw it.

One could even argue those peaks were among the motivating factors behind the incessant pursuit of dao by the employees of the Order.

In Yang Qing's case, he was even more determined now. After experiencing the rich and blessed of the dark valley he couldn't help but wonder how much better the peaks would be in comparison.

This sentiment wasn't shared by him alone as Mao Yunru and Yu Huifang were clenching their fists with longing. Not only them but even some of the senior palace stage guests present had the same look.

The domain experts present didn't mock them for their fascination as they too wanted to scale those peaks too though their target was much higher as even within the Tranquil peaks there was another place that stood out among them, the Eagle's refuge.

It housed the chancellor, the supreme inquisitor who was the head of all the inquisitors in the whole Order, the warden of the Requiem prison, the three vice presidents, and a few other big shots whose identities are usually hidden unless you reach the required standards to know about them.

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"Little Qing this gift of yours warrants recognition and commendation, especially due to its special nature as an artifact from the blue fairies. The secrets it hides may bring enormous benefits to the Order as a whole.

I will speak to the administration and mention your contribution. They should be able to come up with an appropriate reward. If you have anything in particular you want, you can tell me and I will push for it with them. Though with the scale of this achievement, I doubt there would be even a need for me to do so," amiably said Dean Zhu Lao.

"Well, I'd appreciate anything the Order offers though if I was to ask for anything in particular it would be..," just as Yang Qing was about to complete his statement he was interrupted.

"You will not be getting quadruple leave days, triple leave days, or double leave days if that is what you are after. Give it up little Qing and choose something else," said Lei Weiyuan who had appeared out of nowhere and next to him was the Chief Librarian.

Yang Qing almost choked on his words as he turned his head Lei Weiyuan's way with an 'i knew it' look.

"He always appears when he is not needed that damn geezer and little Qing, who is little Qing? maybe I should start calling him old foggy Lei. Yes, I will do just that starting now in front of all these seniors.

This will teach you to mind your business OLD FOGGY LEI," Yang Qing valiantly thought as he steeled himself.

This was the moment. He has endured Lei Weiyuan for too long. He needed to make his last stand of defiance before he moved to the palace courts. Rioter Yang Qing was about to make an appearance one last time before he retires.

"Many thanks, supervisor Lei Weiyuan for your care. I am always in awe of the care you show to us juniors so that we don't take the wrong step. While I may have had some minor issues in the past I'm happy to say I have mended my ways and grown and it is in no small part thanks to you," Yang Qing even paused briefly to offer a deep bow of thanks.

"I will be using the opportunity graciously given to me by Dean Zhu Lao to gain permission for entry into the 7th floor of the main library at the Institute.

The information I've been bombarded with today has highlighted how very little I know of the world around me and I intend to remedy this by increasing my pool of knowledge no matter how small," Yang Qing solemnly said.

His statement was a mix of sarcasm, hidden jabs, fawning, and truth. It was the truth he had learned his ways. Rioter Yang Qing would do nothing but get him in trouble with fines and deductions he could not afford. His courtroom office and the 13 middle-grade spirit stones that he had left were proof of that.

Shamelessness, fawning, and taking every advantage to score things for free was his true path now.

He had been battling his foe Lei Weiyuan for several years now, and while he may have lost every single battle he had learned a few things or two such as anticipating his moves.

While getting an extension on his leave days would have been the best outcome he had a feeling Lei Weiyuan would intervene in some way, shape, or form like always. He, therefore, decided on something else. Ever since it was mentioned that the clay tablet of his that was an unusual glutton for spiritual qi was a remnant artifact of the ancients, he figured a reward would be in the works for giving out something like that.

There has been precedent of something like this happening all the time after all. Donating something that ends up being a treasure always resulted in generous rewards from the Order.

From that moment forth, he had been thinking about what he would want. The majority of his choices were tied to the treasury vault. He could either ask for something for himself or for his team to help speed up their breakthroughs to the palace realm so he wouldn't have to bear the workload alone.

He had even considered redeeming the reward to gain the services of the formation hall and have the arrays in his abode upgraded along with a few things but all of that changed when he remembered the Chief librarian was present along with a few big shots.

One of his mantras along with 'do little for more' was 'get the very best deal you can even if you have to grovel especially if it involves something you wouldn't be able to get'. That mantra has served him well especially when it came to getting free meals.

Chapter 124 Acquiring Votes

Other than eating, lazing around, scheming, complaining, and scheming some more, he loved reading.

While at the institute, the one place he spent most of his time in, was the main Library. The brief recess time he got when they were not in classes, training, cultivating, or being maliciously beaten by the instructors and some prisoners from the requiem who they often sparred with, he would often spend it at the library.

For a place that was the size of a small town, the volume of knowledge the Main Library contained was astronomical. Yang Qing would choose subjects to read at random very soon it became a habit that he has retained till today as whenever he had time he would still visit the library. He wasn't the only Order employee who did so either.

Most Order employees have their private libraries either in their offices or at their abodes. However, no matter how grand their personal libraries are, they all fell short of the Main Library by miles. Which was why most employees opted to use the main library.

The main library was the culmination of the Order's efforts since it was founded or even before that when the Order was just laying its foundations before it officially started operating. Because of its history and importance, gaining entry into the Main library is usually accompanied by several requirements.

The library has nine floors. The first floor has the least requirements as the only requirement is for one to be affiliated with the Order be they student or employee or outsider with permission slips to enter.

The information stored on the first floor is just general stuff with nothing related to cultivation. It's filled with stories, and different types of basic information like overview maps of the southern continent with no defined details other than physical features such as rivers, lakes, mountains, etc.

The further up one moves, within the library floors, the higher the requirements and the higher the level of information stored in them. There are also different features that accompany those floors increasing in utility and power with each increasing floor level.

Cultivation arts are stored from the second floor moving upwards inclusive of the accompanying floor features. It is for this reason that outsiders are denied entry from the second floor and onwards.

Yang Qing's current access at the library reaches the fifth floor also known as the low-rank blue-grade floor. It's filled with cultivation arts that are at the low rank of blue grade. Along with it are information and features that are at the equivalent of that level.

When Yang Qing was just a student he thought the Order was silly and stingy with its arrangement, especially with its strict entry requirements.

At the time it didn't make sense to him why one would have to pass through so many hoops just to access a floor with high-rank orange-grade arts when they already had access to a few blue-grade cultivation arts, as students.

But it was only later that he realized how misguided his thinking had been. While they had access to blue-grade arts, it was only a few arts that the instructors had picked for them or the students themselves from a small pile.

The same rule applied when an Order employee used their merit points to redeem a cultivation art. They could only choose from a subdivided parameter, for example, sword arts suited for a water attribute. It depended on their present specific needs leaving out other interests because merit points were a hard-earned commodity within the Order.

However, if you had access to a particular floor in the main library it meant you had unfiltered access to all the cultivation arts within that floor, irrespective of type.

This meant at Yang Qing's present level he had access to all the low-rank blue-grade arts the Order had in their collection at the main library, irrespective of type whether it be spear arts, sword arts, fist arts, formation blueprints as long as its rank was low-rank blue grade it would all be stored on the fifth floor. The number of what was stored in there wasn't fixed either as it was always being added to as time progressed.

To date, Yang Qing hasn't even read an eighth of what was stored on the fifth floor despite camping in there frequently during his leave days.

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Yang Qing now wanted access to the seventh floor which stored cultivation arts that were in the high-rank of blue grade along with other equally relevant information and facilities.

He was not sure of his chances at gaining entry to that floor as at the bare minimum it required him to have a cultivation realm that was at the peak of the palace realm or have made contributions equivalent to that level which he was miles away from.

His odds of entry though low had a chance of success because of where he was, more specifically the people present. He was in a room filled with numerous big shots from deans, to formation hall masters and deputy masters, to a superior domain court judge with a paragon domain, and the Chief Librarian, the person in charge of the whole thing was present. If they spoke up for him, there was a chance his request may be granted, and add the value of the blue fairy object, the odds rise further.

He decided to take advantage of the moment and try his hand. If it failed it was no loss to him, he would just pick up a treasure from the treasury vault. But if it succeeded he would reap a lot, most importantly he was sure a lot of world secrets were stored in there which was a supposition he had based on the information he had access to just on the fifth floor.

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" Well it's not an impossibility to get you access but don't put your hopes up just yet as at best you'll gain temporary entry and as for the duration even I can't tell.

Your entry to the seventh floor will have to be put up for a vote since you will be gaining entry through special circumstances instead of the normally met criteria.

I can try to speak up for you to the rest...Luckily you already have a few votes here including mine," Dean Zhu Lao said as he looked to Dean Chu Zhen, Meng Chao, Vice dean Yu Long and Vice warden Shao An who all nodded back in agreement.

From those present, they were the ones who had the ability to cast a vote on the matter. The chief librarian had a vote too but for some reason, Yang Qing noticed Dean Zhu Lao seemed hesitant to ask for his opinion.

Just as he was wondering the reason behind Dean Zhu Lao's strange expression the other person in question spoke.

"Hehehe what an interesting kid. You have my vote too though you owe me one. I'll collect if you gain a paragon domain if not ooh well I'll just think of it as me doing a good deed," said the Chief Librarian as he lightly chuckled with a gleam in his eyes.

"Many thanks, Chief Librarian En Sang and the other seniors too. Even if I fail to gain entry I'll make sure to repay the favor someday," Yang Qing solemnly said as he bowed in gratitude.

"You can have my vote too Yang Qing. Apologies to everyone for coming late." a soft penetrating voice sounded in everybody's ears.

The next second seemingly out of nowhere there was a dashing youthful-looking man in white robes standing next to Dean Zhu Lao.

Chapter 125 Spirit Howling Mountain

Everybody's attention shifted towards the newcomer by Dean Zhu Lao's side.

"What an interesting thing....It seems like some sort of key," said the white-robed youthful man standing next to Dean Zhu Lao.

He bent further to zoom in on the artifact leaving only a few millimeters of gap between his face and the blue fairy object.

It took only a second before Dean Zhu Lao reacted.

"Vice chancellor Wu Ling, it's nice of you to show up, especially with your busy schedule and the entrance examinations for new students just around the corner," Dean Zhu Lao said as he laughed patting the white-robed man's back.

Mmmh!

The man offhandedly nodded as his attention was solely focused on the object.

Dean Zhu Lao on seeing his absorbed reaction that ignored everything else could only smile as he shook his head. It was a familiar occurrence for the man in question. Whenever he found something that drew his interest he would forego everything else and devote all his attention to it.

It therefore came as a surprise when he was made the vice-chancellor, as the job involved juggling multiple things at once especially with the chancellor always absent more so in the last century.

However, despite his inability to focus on anything else when his interest has been piqued, during his tenure as the Vice-chancellor he has handled the running of the institute splendidly.

Yang Qing and the rest including some of the domain experts had a look of respect and awe toward the youthful-looking Vice-chancellor. Some of the guests present had been his students once. Though by the time Yang Qing joined the institute he had stopped teaching and focused on the administrative aspect. With the number of students increasing he didn't have time to give classes on the side.

Though Yang Qing may have not been taught by the vice chancellor he had heard of him from the instructors who would regale them with tales of their time as students and being under the tutelage of the Vice-chancellor. They always sang high praises of him.

His nurturing skills were one of the reasons behind the awe in everyone's eyes and the other was he was one of the 13 people who have been recorded to have reached the 14,000-meter mark of the Spirit howling mountain which is very close to the mountain's peak which stands at a height of 16,800 meters.

The Spirit howling mountain was a strange natural treasure owned by the Order whose origins from what Yang Qing had heard was from the seemingly normal and vast Blue origin ocean.

It was one of the founding treasures of the Order and one of the reasons behind its rapid growth.

Just like its name, the Spirit howling mountain was filled with the incessant sounds of different spirits. Some would be human, others spirit beasts, or another random race that was neither a human nor a spirit beast.

Whatever form it took the sounds had one thing in common, their main purpose was to attack and break the souls of those who heard them. The attack took various forms; beguilement, illusions whose distinction from reality was a thin line, a direct frontal attack on the soul, and many other varied means.

Due to its unique nature, the Spirit howling mountain was used by the Order to temper the spirits of its members. They did put special measures in place to reduce fatality as anyone who had their souls broken in there would suffer real death. However, despite those measures, fatalities did happen from time to time along with long-term injuries that required years and years of recuperation.

With danger also came reward. Those who survived the torment and attack on their souls would have their souls refreshed and strengthened. There were even times when they'd gain sudden enlightenment which was usually tied to the source of the sound that tormented them. This is why the Order advocates for its members to scale the mountain despite its apparent risks. They also give out rewards and merit points depending on the level you reach. Every single person who scales the mountain has their progress automatically recorded on a special large white engraved platform at the bottom of the mountain for all to see.

Every progress one makes is like a badge of honor as the record has the names of all who have ever scaled that mountain for the past 500 years which is what makes the vice chancellor's record of being in the top 13 so awe-inspiring.

He reached the 14,000-meter mark when he was in the domain realm as those who reach the soul formation stage rarely climb the mountain due to the minimal benefits they get from it. So all the names recorded in the platform are the feats of those who climbed the mountain when they were in the domain realm and below, with the minimum threshold set at the foundation establishment stage.

From what Yang Qing had heard, the vice chancellor has been a soul formation expert for the past 100 years because he was formerly a member of the spirit council before he was transferred over to be the Insitute. And in those 100 years, those 13 names have remained unchanged though Yang Qing didn't know who the top 5 names were or what level they reached as their names were covered in fog.

As for the Vice-chancellor, he was in the 11th position having reached the exact height of 14,745 meters while Yang Qing's last recorded level was at 4,883 meters though he last climbed the Spirit howling

mountain when he was only at the peak of the core formation stage as for his position he was too embarrassed to even think of it because it was in the quintuple digits and the lower spectrum at that.

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"I'll definitely reach the top 20,000 this time," thought Yang Qing as his eyes blazed with a fighting will. His thoughts of glory were mildly interrupted when the Vice-chancellor finally pried his eyes away from the blue fairy crystal.

"You intend to bring it to the tranquil valley right?" asked Vice chancellor Wu Ling.

"Yes, there are some things I will need to consult on and also as a precautionary means it's safer to experiment on it at the Tranquil peaks rather than here or at the institute," said Dean Zhu Lao.

"Mmh, I agree. Speaking of the institute that reminds me, You will be providing lectures back to back to make up for the time you spent in your seclusion and your classes will not be restricted only to the seniors but also the new entrants and the rest of the juniors.

This is in addition to the specialized training you give to the instructors in your faculty.

This will be your schedule for the foreseeable future until I can deem those 50 years have been made up for. So do prepare yourself," austere said Vice-chancellor Wu Ling.

He had a sudden shift in his demeanor from the earlier archeology nerd to a stern superior.

Chapter 126 Bleak Futures Ahead

"This..," Dean Zhu Lao was caught off-guard by the statement that he was a little lost for words. He had just gained freedom from his forced seclusion and now he was being thrown into more work before he even had time to savor the taste.

His wife, Formation hall master Ling Meimei was giggling, gleefully taking the moment in. With this sudden turn of events, her biggest worry of Dean Zhu Lao going back to prior habits was put to bed.

With his new crazy schedule where would he get the time to go crack jokes with his friends all night long over warm wine and ginseng tea?

Just as Dean Zhu Lao was about to make a plea he was interrupted by the Vice-chancellor.

"The chancellor has signed off on this," calmly said Vice-chancellor Wu Ling.

Dean Zhu Lao hurriedly swallowed the words that were at the tip of his tongue as his demeanor turned subservient with a pitiful nod of agreement.

"Vice dean Yu Long you're free to take those accumulated leave days anytime you wish to. On behalf of the institute I thank you for studiously going above and beyond in your duties. It's not easy having undependable bosses," said Vice-chancellor Wu Ling as he sighed.

"It really isn't," said Vice Dean Yu Long as he sighed too in return.

The two seemed like kindred spirits while Dean Zhu Lao was wondering why they had to dig into him further. Wasn't the inhuman work schedule even by the Order's standard enough?

Meanwhile, Yang Qing's sadistic mind surfaced. Dean Zhu Lao's situation was somewhat pleasing to him. Knowing there was another person being overworked even more than he was, gave him some sort of comfort. For the first time in a long time, he felt like he may actually enjoy going to work and not do his usual routine of incessant complaining and threats he would never follow through to the dread that washes over him when he gets caught in a scheme.

People saw the glamor but they didn't know how stressful it was to be an employee of the black-hearted Order. At least from tomorrow he would only have one thing in his daily routine which was cursing Lei Weiyuan for a bit before he went to work.

Just as Yang Qing was lost in his thoughts thinking about whether to mix it up with the morning curse the Vice-chancellor turned his way.

"Yang Qing it's good that you're here too as I had something to tell you too. A few days after your ceremony you will be in charge of setting and supervising the entrance examinations for the prospective students for the institute. It's one of the duties of newly promoted palace court judges, since we are understaffed and all, adding the growing number of students we need all the help we can get.

I'll send one of my assistants with the particulars and you can also consult some of your seniors here who have had some experience with it.

Well then everyone I will be taking my leave, do enjoy yourselves.

Zhu Lao tomorrow early and don't be a second late," said Vice-chancellor Wu Ling as he threateningly narrowed his gaze on Dean Zhu Lao before he flashed and disappeared from the spot.

Dean Zhu Lao was left with a pale and crestfallen figure but at least this time he wasn't alone as Yang Qing was right there with him.

Supervising the entrance examination would seem glamorous but it was too much work and would span more than a day where he would be required to be present at the examination grounds day and night. Worst of all, you got paid nothing.

"I see bleak days ahead."

"I see them too."

Young and old stood slumped shoulder to shoulder sighing continuously whilst lamenting their future.

Yang Qing's mood improved a bit when finally food appeared. It turns out the food was deliberately hidden away as an elaborate prank arranged by Meng Chao, Lei Weiyuan, Formation Hall master Ling Meimei, and Yu Hong, Yu Huifang's mom to tease Yang Qing, especially with his known reputation as a foodie.

Yang Qing was shocked when he learned of this and how many people were involved.

"Do they have a grudge against me or something? Old man Lei I understand but the rest..No....and shouldn't they be using their time better rather than scheme. They give the Order a bad name," Yang Qing righteously thought as he gorged himself on some sweet and sour pork fillet.

Dean Zhu Lao had gone off to make the most of his limited time and catch up with some friends and exchange some laughs before his brutal work schedule sentence began.

Yang Qing finally got a chance to talk to Vice warden Shao An and gain some insight into the prisoner release program. No one would be qualified to guide him through it than the vice warden of the place, well maybe the warden would be the best but he was a little out of reach for Yang Qing's current level and if it wasn't for the invite to the party so would have Vice warden Shao An.

The Vice warden was generous enough to offer his two cents on the matter but they had to reschedule it to a later date as the vice warden got dragged away by Dean Zhu Lao for a dao discussion along with other peak domain experts within the hall. Some of the early domain experts and even the late-stage palace experts joined along to expand their horizons by listening in.

Yang Qing, Mao Yunru, and Yu Huifang were left to hang out by themselves as their levels were too low to really harvest much from their level of discussion. Yang Qing didn't mind it too much as he happily devoured the delicacies that were left untouched and still in large quantities.

However, he had to take a pause on eating when Meng Chao came over to talk to him before he left.

"I'll find you the week after your ceremony to discuss Jiang Fu's situation and my plan moving forward,"

"I wonder if I could make a presumptuous request senior Meng Chao." Yang Qing politely asked.

"What is it?" Meng Chao curiously asked.

"I wanted to bring Zhang Qingge with me. She is very close to Jiang Fu and I feel like she ought to know especially if what Jiang Fu is doing is dangerous," Yang Qing hesitantly said carefully watching Meng Chao's expression.

"Oh her? There's no problem because I intended to invite her too. It was Jiang Fu's request that she be made privy to everything that is going on including his past," said Meng Chao as he smiled.

Yang Qing couldn't but heave a sigh of relief.

They exchanged a few more words before Meng Chao left. A few hours later Lei Weiyuan came and brought Mao Yunru and Yang Qing back to the junction he had picked them from.

The other guests were in no hurry as they stayed well through the night engrossed in their dao discussion.

As for Yang Qing after he made his way into his abode he sat weakly in one of the chairs by the porch. He kept on repetitively sighing as he ate some of the takeaways he had on him.

The reason for his languishing look was, he was three days away from his ceremony. What should have been a cause for celebration was now something he dreaded very much.

"Maybe I should just accept Ren Shu's offer and join the medicine valley."

Chapter 127 Gentleman's Way

Yang Qing spent the whole night by the rattan chair lost in his thoughts and dreading his future life as another exploited worker in the cog known as the Order that he didn't notice until the morning rays hit him that the night had passed.

Luckily once cultivators reach the core formation realm they can live without taking shower since most of their body's impurities will have completely been cleansed by then and the mechanisms in which their bodies operate also completely transform at that point like no longer having the need to eat too as they can subsist on spiritual qi alone.

Therefore the stress of preparing themselves before leaving for work was virtually non-existent for a cultivator more so in Yang Qing's case who was a palace realm cultivator with a peerless jade body to boot. His body was as pristine as it could be and due to his nature's Yin Yang jade bones, he always had the scent of nature on him. As for clothing, the Order issued robes came with dustproof arrays along with self-cleaning arrays and thermal regulation arrays not that cultivators of Yang Qing's level were affected by temperature.

This was even without considering the materials used in making the robes that were atleast of the monarch grade and were chosen because of their specific attributes that targeted protection, comfort, and maximum utility. Yang Qing had to admit when it came to the Order issued robes they didn't spare any expense, unlike other areas where they did the bare minimum coupled with hidden schemes that made the users spend more of their resources whilst making it seem like they are doing them a favor.

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Yang Qing lethargically put on his robes as he grabbed a snow peach he had gotten from Yu Huifang's place and made his way out.

Yi Jie had already filed his seclusion and breakthrough leave and was currently staying at the celestial nesting weaver's nest to take advantage of the environment there and make sure he was at his peak state before he attempted to break through to the palace realm.

It was because of his stay that Yang Qing decided to rest on his porch. Yang Qing wasn't sure how long Yi Jie would be around but at the bare minimum, he thought it would take a month or two before Yi Jie gained enough momentum then after which he would head to his own abode to complete the breakthrough.

Yang Qing would have to sleep in a different place for those two months. His office would be the ideal place but if he could avoid it he would not spend his nights there. It was always a slippery slope. You sleep there one day, two days, a week next thing you know it's 2 years and your office has become a permanent home, falling right into the Order's schemes.

Yang Qing always found it suspicious why the offices seemed a couple of times more comfortable and well-equipped than even their abodes. Almost as if the Order wanted to bait them to live there with that environment that was filled with very dense spirit qi, retrofitted with all kinds of life improvement arrays and other facilities that just draw you in.

If it wasn't for his riots and the punishment he got for those riots in which he ended up with his office downgraded and the reduced supply of materials necessary for the maintenance of the office, Yang Qing was sure he would be another unwitting victim who spent his entire life within the confines of the courtroom building.

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"Maybe spending the nights there a day or two wouldn't hurt. There are only three days left to my ceremony, two if I count today. I should spend some time in that office before it is given away to someone else," Yang Qing pensively thought as he rubbed his chin.

"Three days it is," Yang Qing thought before he whistled.

Moments later the two peak core formation stage black dragon horses appeared before him with the carriage already tied to them.

"After having Yi Jie act as a carriage driver for a month, it feels off getting on this thing without one," said Yang Qing as he sighed.

"Hei, Ma, the both of you will soon be leaving right? Time sure flies fast. The two arrogant colts from back then have grown into fine steeds about to break through to the palace realm and after that, you'll finally gain the ability to transmorph into humans," said Yang Qing as he patted the two dragon horses' heads with a gentle smile.

The two dragon horses were brother and sister. He knew them when they were just colts and he was a student then. During his overzealous stint in the Institute where he had taken a lot of courses just to stand out, spirit beast nurturing and taming was one of them.

As part of their curriculum, they would occasionally take care of the spirit beasts at the Beast hall. When he saw the two black dragon horses with their sleek black coat, and silver scales on their feet and back along with the dragon horns, and add to that their regal aura owing to the thin dragon bloodline in their system, he thought they looked cool.

The two horses were at the late stages of the foundation realm at the time and even with that cultivation realm, they had an inborn arrogance about them that they always picked fights for supremacy with the core formation spirit beasts who shared nesting grounds with them. They won some and lost some but despite the result, the arrogance still remained. It was with that arrogance that they always gave a small welcome beating to the students who were put in charge of taking care of them.

When Yang Qing's turn came he never saw the beating coming. He was mid admiring the black dragon horses saying how cool they were and how he would look amazing riding them when he got knocked out with a flick of their tails. Next time he came to, he was neck deep in manure and phlegm with spirit beasts throwing mocking condescending looks. The worst of the looks came from the black dragon horses.

Yang Qing went through that repetitive torture of being knocked out and buried in manure for a month before he decided to drop the spirit beast nurturing course for something else. He was only at the perfect qi circulation realm by then and miles away from tussling with spirit beasts that were cross-realm fighters.

He swallowed that bitter pill and engraved the experience in his mind. For a gentleman, 1,000 years is not too late for revenge. Soon the moment came when he got the post as an outer core court judge.

Chapter 128 Yang Qing's Present In His Courtroom

His chance at payback came when he was at the first stage of the core formation realm and the black dragon horses at the time were at the fifth stage of the core formation realm. A few years had passed since Yang Qing had got humiliated by them.

When Yang Qing came to the spirit beast nesting grounds they stayed at, the two black dragon horses were just like before lording over the other spirit beasts. However unlike before they were many times larger now with their pride mushrooming to epic proportions.

Yang Qing was surprised to notice even with their increased cultivation base, supposed pride, and a lot of time passing by, their sadistic tendencies never left them. There was a poor cultivator buried under a pile of manure while unconscious with a red whiplash mark on his cheek.

Yang Qing didn't waste any time going by the familiar route of vengeance, where he asks the black dragon horses if they remember him, what they did to him, and how he has been training tirelessly to get back at them. When he saw them he immediately gave each one of them a powerful blow to the head which knocked them unconscious after which he buried them in the manure where the other cultivator was.

Immediately after he had the beast taming hall assign those two dragon horses as his mount. Which they were all too glad to do, due to how problematic those two spirit beasts were.

When the two dragon horses woke up with massive headaches they were all too shocked to find themselves in an unfamiliar place filled with all kinds of trees and a green-haired youth standing above them kindly smiling at them as he told them they were his mounts from now on.

In typical fashion, they retaliated with violence and were soundly beaten seconds later.

Yang Qing gave the two dragon horses a solid beating for a whole month while burying them in manure. He did this not out of petty vengeance to repay back the month he went through the same thing, No, he did it from the spirit of a principled and cultured person who always gave back what they received with equal proportions. Nothing more and definitely nothing less.

After a month, all the arrogance had been beaten out of the two dragon horses as they meekly accepted their new duties as mounts. They did try to act arrogantly towards Yi Jie once which resulted in them hiding in Yang Qing's abode for three months without leaving.

With time despite the complicated start, they grew to love Yang Qing's courtyard and its spirit-rich lush vegetation and developed a close relationship with Yang Qing. Yang Qing also promised them the moment they reached the palace realm they would no longer need to serve as his mounts.

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"As I promised before, when you reach the palace stage you will be free to do what you want. You can join the beast hall, be instructors at the institute, go the inquisitor route if you want, or join any other departments you would wish to in accordance with your talents.

The options are a lot and you will also get your own place. Though you are still welcome to stay here if you want to. I have more than enough room for two cheeky dragon horses," softly said Yang Qing as he patted their heads before he went in the carriage.

The two dragon horses turned their heads backward at the carriage where Yang Qing was and then glanced at each other before they firmly nodded their heads at each other as if in complete agreement about something.

They soon trotted their way out of the dream cloud abode as they made their way to the court grounds.

"Dammit!!! it seems there really is no other way than to get fined again. I didn't even mess with them that much just a tiny bit here and there. How can arrays be this fragile? Is it a setup to get more money? I really hope Dean Zhu Lao remembers to speak up for me to his wife as he promised," Yang Qing grumbled while in the carriage.

Though he wasn't too hopeful that Dean Zhu Lao would speak up for him. For one he didn't seem like the type to have a voice at home otherwise the 50-year seclusion wouldn't have happened, the other was with his new crazy schedule he doubted he would even remember.

When Yang Qing's thoughts reached this point he decided to throw all worry to the wind and whatever happens next he will take it as it comes. The arrays were already damaged and there was nothing he could do. The fines will definitely come as they always have and there was nothing he could do about that. He will deny the charges like always with creative excuses to back it and they won't believe a lick of it like always and there was nothing he could do about that.

He just had to prepare himself to get his storage ring wiped out of anything valuable like always. It was a familiar dance between them.

"The only thing I can do now is take a nap and dream my problems away. Sweet sleep be kind to your loyal friend today like you always have," Yang Qing mumbled as he dosed off the next instant.

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Twenty minutes later the dragon horses had already arrived at the court building's entrance. They both neighed a few times before Yang Qing finally groggily woke up as he made his way out of the carriage.

"Thanks, Hei and Ma," Yang Qing waved as he made his way into the building as the dragon horses went their way to a different part of the grounds.

When Yang Qing made his way into his courtroom he was surprised to find no one else in there except the prime source of his nightmares, Lei Weiyuan.

"OL'...I mean supervisor Lei Weiyuan what are you doing here? I know I'm not late," hurriedly said Yang Qing as his voice shook with uncertainty and dread.

"Not that I don't welcome you into my courtroom though as you're the supervisor this could be considered your courtroom too...Your bearing seems more like an immortal's bearing every time I see it...." Yang Qing went on to nervously ramble on for a few minutes shamelessly throwing compliments with awkward laughs before Lei Weiyuan decided to speak up from worrying Yang Qing would talk endlessly if left to his own devices.

"I came here to inform you for the next three days you will not be handling any cases but handling rank 5 promotion evaluations in the southern quadrant from the white baobab kingdom all the way down to the boundary of the Bluesky carp sect.

Here's the list of the sect, clans, and organizations you will be reviewing. They are about 1,400 or so which can be easily done within three days. Luckily cultivators don't need to eat or sleep.

All the best blood, sweat, and tears Yang Qing. The Order expects great things from you," Lei Weiyuan calmly said as he left the talisman with the list in the pale-faced, wide-mouthed, and frozen Yang Qing.

Chapter 129 Rank Evaluations, Promotions, Demotions And Perks

Yang Qing stood rooted to the ground for quite some time before he finally weakly walked away from the lonely courtroom.

"1,400 evaluations in three days isn't this too much? They want to work me to death, Yes they definitely want to work me to death. I've pulled a few schemes here and there, exploiting the Order but none of what I ever pulled is enough to warrant this.

Will I survive?" Yang Qing worriedly muttered.

"Even if I make a complaint, with how things always go they may pile even more workload on me with the excuse of training my temperament and the high hopes they have for me.

No, no, no, Yang Qing endure. It's just three days, you can survive three days with no sleep or food and constant work right?" Yang Qing muttered to himself trying to rouse his spirits.

"No, I can't. But what other option do I have other than just do it and collapse while doing it," Yang Qing's figure quickly deflated as he slumped his shoulders walking distraughtly to the administration's floor.

"1,400 evaluations," Yang Qing weakly muttered as he shook his head in defeat.

Once one became a judge of the superior core court other than handling cases there were other duties that fell under their docket and one of them was handling the promotion of unranked sects, clans, and other organizations into rank 5 organizations. In that same vein, they also handled the demotion of rank 5 organizations.

For one to be promoted to rank 5 they needed to have atleast one member of the organization having a cultivation base that was at the foundation establishment realm. Whenever an organization had one of its members breakthrough to the foundation establishment realm they can file with the Order to have their organization evaluated for a rank-up promotion.

Upon a successful evaluation, they will receive a rank 5 certificate along with a plaque issued by the Order. Receiving the certificate meant you were under the rules that govern the Order and should anything happen to the Organization they can submit their case to the Order. Those with the certificate have priority over those without.

With how understaffed the Order is, it came up with the ranking system as a way to have a rough estimate of the organizations around, their locations, and their general power level as a way to grow its pool of information around the southern continent and also ease its work in the monitoring and enforcement of the agreed upon rules.

They set the minimum threshold for being ranked to be the foundation establishment instead of the qi circulation stage or body refining stage because the latter two groups are as many as the grains of the sand in the ocean. If they started evaluating organizations that had body refinement or qi circulation experts at the helm they would never be done with it even after a millennium passed and monitoring them would prove impossible.

Though it was still a huge struggle for the Order even with the minimum ranking requirement set at the foundation establishment realm as the number of experts at that level was not small either due to how rich the southern continent was in spirit qi and other cultivation resources.

Yang Qing at times couldn't help but lament the irony of the situation as the better the Order did their jobs the more rank 5 organizations popped up and the more their workload became.

When constant wide-scale wars were a thing it was the lower-ranked sects and organizations that paid a price which made it hard for new sects and other cultivations organizations to get a footing especially if they did not have someone powerful to protect it, one who was at least at the later stages of the core formation realm.

In addition to the promise of priority in their cases, the Order added another incentive so Organizations would willingly undergo a ranking evaluation. This incentive was quota privilege.

Depending on the rank of the organization they would be assigned a different number of quotas. For example, a rank 1 organization would be given 10 quotas, while a rank 2 organization would get 7 quotas as for a rank 5 organization, they would get 1 quota.

With that quota, they can have one of their members no matter the age, trained at the Institute for a whole year.

Within that year they will share classes with the other students of the Order though their access will be limited compared to the Order's own students. For one the amount of subjects they can take is limited, unlike the Order's students who have no limitations as long as they have the energy and talent for it. The other is the restriction to the main library where they can only access the first floor while the last one is the grade of cultivation art they are trained in during their stay is capped at the middle rank of the orange grade.

Though for a fee, the institute can train them in a low-rank blue-grade art of which the type of art they get taught is left to the discretion of the institute and if the cultivator with the quota fails to gain mastery of the art within the year, the institute doesn't offer refunds and they are also forbidden to share that art with their organization or even children or any other person they have a close relationship with. If it's found out they have disclosed the cultivation art, they have their cultivation base crippled and sent to the mines for the rest of their lives.

Other than that everything else is the same, such as receiving the same treatment in accommodation, food, and clothing even allowances and rewards students get for good performance.

Though the higher-ranked organizations may not value such an opportunity the lower-ranked ones are all too glad to get evaluated. Having their disciples or clan members trained at the Order is a life-changing opportunity that they can't afford to let pass them by. The experience those members gain there is enough to last them several lifetimes which will in turn benefit their organizations.

Some of these organizations have even used their quota as an incentive to recruit more talented members.

This is why the number of organizations seeking evaluations and promotions from rank 5 up to rank 3 is always in an upward increase compared to those from rank 2 or rank 1 organizations. However, even though the Order seems to have made headway with lower-ranked organizations, when it comes to the high-ranked organizations it's a different matter.

Due to the mildly invasive nature of evaluations most rank 1 or rank 2 organizations rarely go through with it which is why the number of rank 1 organizations on the Order's file hasn't changed for the past 500 years except for the rank 1 sect that got demoted. And when it comes to rank 2 organizations while there is still a good number of rank 3 organizations that seek promotion evaluations when graduating to a rank 2 organization, the same cannot be said of a rank 2 organization that already has the qualifications of a rank 1 organization. Most choose to hide that they already have a soul formation realm expert. So on paper, it seems they only have a domain expert as the peak expert at the helm when in reality they have a soul formation expert.

It is why the number of rank 2 to rank 1 promotions conducted in the past century only numbered about twenty. While it is extremely difficult to break through from the domain realm to the soul formation stage, the Order doubted that in the whole southern continent, only twenty people were able to advance to the soul formation realm in the past 100 years.

This is why the Order adopted other means such as use of the Shadow hawks, their own intelligence department to try and get a rough picture of the power segmentation and profile around the continent. It's still slow work in progress as these organizations know to hide their power well not only from the Order's eyes but other organizations around themselves as well.

Though the flames of war in the southern continent have been doused a little, the habits ingrained from times of war still remain.

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Yang Qing soon made his way to the administration hall. Before he left for the evaluations there were procedures he would have to follow especially considering he would be away for three days. The procedures were meant to ensure his safety while he was outside, especially with the recent attacks on Order employees for the past 50 years.

Yang Qing headed to one of the transportation arrays in the hallway of the superior core courtrooms. The area was still packed full of cultivators like usual, who secretly threw wary respectful glances at him as he passed by. There were also those who had vengeful eyes, provocative eyes, eyes filled with battle intent, and so forth though they were a select few.

Yang Qing paid them no heed as it was a common occurrence. Those who came here had different outlooks towards judges or inquisitors. Some saw them as beacons of hope to address their grievances and mete out justice on their behalf while others saw them as nose-eyesores who were constantly ruining the essence of being a 'free cultivator' for them.

...

With a hazy translucent flash of the transportation array, Yang Qing disappeared from the hallway and reappeared in front of a large intricately designed door made of twilight sky ebony wood which was an ascendant grade material that could withstand the blow of an early-stage domain expert without budging an inch.

Tsk

Yang Qing clicked in envy as he saw the door more specifically the material used to make it.

"Order does love its face. Wish they put as much effort in the abodes as they did with the administration floor," silently muttered Yang Qing as he pushed open the twilight sky ebony doors.

Chapter 130 Administration Department

Inside the administration hall, was a vast circular space that was at least half a kilometer in radius and the true picture of opulence.

Every single material used in making the hall and the department as a whole was at the very least top tier of monarch grade while the spiritual qi was as dense as any sect grounds that belonged to any top tier rank 3 sects.

The floors were pristine white almost glasslike with an incandescent glow on them as they reflected light while the roofing was in the form of a nebula as it swirled with deep violet clouds and a cluster of stars.

The stars were not the only clusters in the administration hall room as it was filled with all sorts of people with different robes that showed they were not all from the same party.

There were the inquisitors with their famous half-red robes however they were from different courts as evidenced by the half red half blue robes some wore which showed they were from the core formation courts, others had half red half dark gold robes that showed they were from the palace courts, there were even two who had half red half black robes that showed they were from the domain courts.

In addition to the inquisitors, there were judges and people from other departments of the Order but even their numbers paled in comparison to the 'guests'.

The guests were the cultivators from different sects, clans, and organizations filling the administration hall room heading to different sections under the guidance of some of the guide workers from the Order.

The administration building could be considered the central hub of the Order that kept all the other cogwheels turning.

Whenever a ruling was made the subsequent enforcement of the ruling would be handled by the administration building and this was just part of what fell under their purview as they handled all sorts of logistics that concerned different departments within the Order. For example, filing a complaint on a faulty formation array would be done via the administration who then forward the request to the formation hall or when it came to the requisition of resources and materials by the craftsmanship department, it would be done via the administration.

The administration hall had different sections that worked conjointly for example; logistics was in charge of the distribution of resources around the Order down to the branches while there was an audit department that ensured things went where they were supposed to. Though when it came to logistics

there were two sections, there was logistics of internal matters and logistics of external matters. The former dealt with all things within the Order while the latter dealt with reimbursements and restitutions to cultivators whose cases were ruled in their favor. There was also the review committee that handled the monitoring and evaluation of penalties issued to cultivators.

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Within the hall room, there were plaques above every section for ease of direction with staff guiding people to their destinations. Despite how crowded the area was, everyone moved with neat precision and order thanks to the staff.

As for the Order employees they had a separate section away from the rest due to the sensitivity of the matters they dealt with. There were even a few guards who maintained the line to prevent the outside cultivators from heading into the Order employee section.

They wore dark gray robes with cultivations bases that were at the early stages of the palace realm. They were four in number and their presence there was more of a deterrent as the route that led to the Order employee's only section was filled with all sorts of terrifying arrays that would immediately strike the person who took even half a step into the area.

The guards' presence was to prevent silly fatalities that would result from those who just couldn't help themselves.

...

Once Yang Qing went through his section path he made his way to the room with the plaque 'Deployments' above it.

There were three cultivators seated behind different desks and chairs studiously writing on some scrolls and reviewing jade talismans as they conversed with the different Order personnel in front of their desks.

The three cultivators had black and white robes. This was the signature robe of all administration employees. It was two men and one female. The female was at the early stages of the palace realm while the two males were both in the middle stages of the core formation realm.

As for the three different Order personnel they were conversing with, from what Yang Qing could tell two of them were inquisitors of the inner core courts as for the last one he couldn't make heads or tails of who they were. They had pale black worn-out robes with a roguish air about them and their cultivation base was at the middle stages of the palace realm though Yang Qing couldn't tell which level specifically.

Even though Yang Qing was just a few meters away from them, he couldn't hear what they were talking about as there were antiscrying and noise cancellation arrays at the desks which affected a few meters around it. The arrays could even prevent an early domain expert from eavesdropping on the conversation even with the use of their domain sense.

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Yang Qing didn't have to wait for too long as one of the inner core courts inquisitors was done and soon his turn came up.

He swiftly made his way to the desk whose administration department employee was a male seemingly in his thirties. He was slim, with narrowing cheekbones that gave him an austere sharp look and neatly tied black ponytail hair.

Yang Qing didn't know him as he rarely got deployed as a judge and due to the huge workload the administration department had, the Order constantly rotated the administration employees in shifts to avoid burnout and the mistakes that may come as a result of it. A casual mistake in the administration department may end up with dire consequences especially if that mistake creates a bigger mistake chain that mushrooms into a catastrophe somewhere.

It was why despite the Order's black-hearted reputation they were careful with the balance of work and demand on the administration employees.