

Daily life 391

Chapter 391 Selling The White Baobab Kingdom

Within seconds every tear within her meridians and other injuries she had suffered because of the Yin Yang imbalance were immediately restored to full vitality, and she could even feel they had been strengthened.

Along with the deep sense of relief, she also felt something being gently pulled together from all over her body into a small ball. Moments later that ball compacted and released a dense energy that flooded back into her body.

Li Shu was shocked to discover the doors to the seventh stage of the core formation realm were quaking. She hurriedly sat down and focused all her concentration in breaking through. However, the arduous process she expected to happen, didn't. The breakthrough to the seventh realm was as easy as popping a bubble. She barely just sat down and the barrier broke.

The dense spiritual qi in the courtroom flooded toward her after her breakthrough. Li Shu pushed the shock of the speedy smooth breakthrough to the back of her mind as she refocused on solidifying her cultivation base.

The dense extremely rich spiritual qi would help her establish a firmer base than if she had used the spiritual qi in her abode at the Shao family. She was not going to let the chance slip by. The firmer her foundations are, the shorter the time she will need to reach the eighth base of the core formation realm.

Things had taken a crazy turn for her. She came in thinking she had pill poisoning and all she could hope for from the court was to get her medical expenses paid for, then she ended up not having pill poisoning but instead something she had never heard of in the name of Yin-Yang imbalance, and when she thought she was deep in the abyss, she was given alms. Her situation was not only resolved but she had achieved the smoothest breakthrough she has ever had in her whole.

If someone told her that her day would end up this way, she would scoff it off and say the odds of her turning into a basil duck were higher.

Novel.com As the rest were waiting for her to complete stabilizing her realm, Luo Fan took the time to butter Yang Qing. Yang Qing like the discerning person he was knew exactly what he was after.

You want my spring of resplendence you damn leech..mmp, time to recoup my losses and then some.

True to form, Yang Qing fleeced him for everything he could take. He was just short of taking his robes. Luo Fan's look had turned from the refined handsome-looking scholar, to a scholar that had been run down by life, and ended up being a beggar at the street with one loosely hanging tooth.

The only thing that brought life to him was the vial that contained four drops of the drop Yang Qing had used on Li Shu. Yang Qing felt it was an otherwise good day with his smug smile and puffed-up chest.

He had erased the karma on the droplets using the medallion and the artifacts in the courtroom before he sold it out. After what he had done to Luo Fan, one can't be too careful.

"Little Qing, you have grown.." Alchemist Ma Bo said with a look of pride and gratification.

"It's because of your care, Grandpa Bo.." Yang Qing said as he gave a deep bow that he would give his own grandfather because to him Ma Bo was no different than one.

They went to to catch up as they exchanged a few words, with Ma Bo still trying to poach him for the Academy and Yang Qing using the same old spiel and deflecting by using some of the strange occurrences he had seen especially the one from Summerfield kingdom.

After ten minutes, Li Shu was finished with stabilizing her cultivation base.

"Thank you for saving my life Judge Yang Qing, I don't know how I could ever repay you for this!" Li Shu said in an agitated state as she performed a hastened bow that she almost tipped over.

"It's okay daoist Li Shu. Solving your issue wasn't that much of a big deal for me. I acted because it just so happens to fall in my area of expertise that's all.." Yang Qing casually.

"Miss Li Shu, I'm truly sorry for what happened to you.." Bai Zou said as he cupped his fists. He had a guilty expression on his face. I think you should take a look at panDasnovel.com

"I'm sorry too," Liang Tian lowly said as he bowed.

He seemed to have been the one of the three to have taken it hardest.

"No, no, it's I who should apologize.." Li Shu said in a fluster.

"I maligned your restaurant. I'm truly sorry. I'm willing to do anything to make up for it.."

The two went back and forth to make up for each other.

"Have you two ever heard of White Baobab kingdom?" Yang Qing asked as form of breaking their never-ending impasse of trying to out guilt each other.

"I have." They both answered.

Bai Zou was rather casual about it, but Li Shu couldn't hide how highly she thought of the place. Her eyes glittered during her response.

"Well, I don't think I need to add much. Miss Li Shu if you want to go there, you can just use my name and the people there should help you settle.."

"Senior Bai Zou, I think it may do you some good to visit the place. There are over a dozen chefs there who use yin salts on yang-rich dishes and they blend them seamlessly together..you might get some insights from them.

The incident today isn't necessarily a bad thing if done right.." said Yang Qing.

The duo nodded as they offered their thanks. Yang Qing shared a few words and called a close to the case, dismissing all members present in haste. The 'collected evidence' would grow cold if they hung around.

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Dinner time, One of the tables at the Thousand flavors restaurant.

"Zheng Hu, is this all true?!"

"It is."

"Yang Qing, you sure know how to pick cases..." Dai Chen said with a tired sigh as he leaned back to his seat with a defeated and somber expression.

Chapter 392 Five Judge Panel

"You can refuse, I know the ask isn't small.."

Yang Qing had a difficult smile as he said this. He knew the matter he was about to suck them into, was anything but easy.

"Qingee, what do you think?" Yang Qing softly asked.

At the table, they were four. It was him, Dai Chen, Zheng Hu, and Zhang Qingge.

Of their original gang of five, Xia Boqin and Kang Huilang had already gone into seclusion to break through to the palace realm, while Yu Huifang was also doing her final preparations before she set off for the tribulation mountain.

It was times like this that Yang Qing wished Kang Huilang and the rest were at the same realm as him.

In Ma Yuan's case because of the severity of the matter and the sentence that was about to be passed, it needed a five-judge panel to decide on it.

Yang Qing was new to the palace courts, he didn't have time to socialize with the other outer palace court judge before he was hit with a case that forced a five judge decision.

While he was acquainted with some seniors, for the case at hand it was better to share the burden with friends rather than acquaintances.

Of their group, only he, Dai Chen, and Zhang Qingge were in the palace realm, and thus could only ask those two to be part of his panel.

After he had completed his cases for the day, Zheng Hu came to his courtroom with more reports that were just as grim as the one he had received from Yu Gen at the herb garden restaurant.

On reading the report, Yang Qing decided against waiting a few days, and despite the unease and anxiety he had because of the matter, he decided to call Dai Chen and Zhang Qingge over.

When he broke the information to them, Dai Chen acted pretty much the same as he did, but when it came to Zhang Qingge, she was no longer her shy self. She had a collected calmness to her, which was a bit unnerving to Yang Qing as he worried he may have sprung up a lot on Zhang Qingge.

"Qingee you don't have to do it. It's okay, I can ask other judges. Lei Weiyuan is bound to know a few..the case isn't easy, even for me who took it on. So you don't have to force yourself.." Yang Qing said with guilt showing on his expression.

In his haste and shock, he had overlooked how much of an impact it would have on them. He couldn't help but regret his sense of selfishness that had overridden his thought as a friend.

Seeing Zhang Qingge's silent and calm state he couldn't help but wish he could turn back time and undo the request.

"No, I'll do it...Sorry, it's just... I had to forcibly calm myself otherwise if I let the rage inside me surface I'd find myself already headed towards the Ice Emerald Sect before we even have a chance to put everything in place.

Huifang taught me the silent ripple mantra to help me calm down. It usually makes me zone out for a bit, every time I execute, but it works.." Zhang Qingge said as her usual shy demeanor came back.

Thanks to it, my fines have seen a significant reduction.." she softly muttered with a tone that was half mixed with embarrassment and pride.

Pfft...

Yang Qing and Dai Chen hurriedly stifled their laughter, when they saw Zhang Qingge clench her fists at them.

"You're sure, you're both okay with this? You can refuse.." Yang Qing asked once more with a look of concern.

"When we took this job, we all knew there was a possibility of this happening. It is the world we live in. There are thousands of Ice Emerald Sects out there.." said Dai Chen.

"I'm okay with it. Besides, if I ever had one myself, I would come to you too. So it's only fair," he added.

"I'm okay with it too, and just like Dai Chen said, you'll both be my first calls if I ever get one.." Zhang Qingge said.

"What?" Yang Qing asked when he saw Zhang Qingge fidgeting looking like she wasn't done talking and seemed to be struggling.

"You can refuse if you want, but can you loan me 1,500 high-grade spirit stones?" Zhang Qingge shyly asked as she looked downwards afraid to look at Yang Qing's reaction.

"That's it?" Yang Qing asked in shock.

"Sure...though why do you want it?" Yang Qing curiously asked. I think you should take a look at [pαΠdαsnovel.com](http://www.pdnovel.com)

As per Zhang Qingge's admission, her fines had reduced which was the one area she usually lost her money at. Unlike him, Dai Chen or Kang Huilang, she didn't have expensive hobbies to support.

"It was Kang Huilang's stupid idea. He told me he had bribed someone from the case log admission department, and that someone would give him information on the next cases which he would use to place his next bet.

Everything seemed sound and I even met with the person from the admissions department. So I agreed with Kang Huilang to go even on the bet and we would split the profits later.

The odds for the case he chose were 15:1. We would wind up with 45,000 high-grade spirit stones if it all went to plan, which would have given me enough spirit stones to improve the arrays in my abode and pay a bit of what I owe Huifang, but Kang Huilang's stupid bet failed, and because he is not reachable at the moment, they threw his bet obligations on me too..." Zhang Qingge said.

Even with her pitiful expression, Yang Qing and Dai Chen couldn't help but laugh out loud.

"Why did you listen to him? The person from the admissions department was more likely planted by the others in on the bet.

If Kang Huilang really had connections in the place, would he be losing as badly as he does?" Yang Qing couldn't help but shake his head.

He once fell for the same ploy. Kang Huilang sold him on this detailed analysis on how a certain bet was a sure in and they could pull their spirit stones together for a higher payout. Yang Qing at the time was wallowing in fines, a bottomless bird to sponsor, and was feeding on cold leek soup and dry bread, so when Kang Huilang told him there was a way he could end his pitiful state and eat like a king, of course Yang Qing jumped at it.

All Yang Qing got at the end of it was starvation and getting robbed of whatever pitifully few spirit stones he had left.

Dai Chen and Yang Qing teased her a few more times before they focused back on the matter concerning the case.

Zheng Hu after dropping off the jade talisman containing the results of his investigation, had already left in search of Ma Yuan to feel him on the progress of the case.

With how fast things would be moving, along with the complicated situation, Yang Qing thought it was better for Zheng Hu to handle the updates rather than wait for a court liaison from the administration department to do it.

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"So do you have any suggestions on who we can choose for the two remaining spots?" asked Yang Qing.

Zhang Qingge and Dai Chen have been in the outer palace courts for at least a year, especially the latter who has been there for two. They were bound to have made connections.

"I can think of one. His name is Mo Liwei, we got in the same year, and unlike as he has handled one of them before, so I think it will be better to have someone like him, who has experienced it, on board.." said Dai Chen.

"I'll ask him, and see if he'll agree to it.." Dai Chen said he took out his communication talisman.

"I also can try one..." Zhang Qingge softly said.

"She was my senior and helped me a lot when I was starting out in the palace courts. I think she may agree to it..." she added as she took out her talisman to call.

"Liwei will only agree to it after he hears the complete details of the case. How far are you from it?"

"Yu Gen will be bringing the final bits of information tomorrow. He requested help from some of his colleagues from the roaming inquisitors.

Su Jinjing, Luo Meili, and Feng Xin should be bringing in whatever they have dug before midnight..."

"Aah, there they are.." Yang Qing said when he saw the trio walk in.

Unlike their typical jovial mood, they all seemed rather low on spirits, especially Feng Xin who would light up whenever he was in the vicinity of a restaurant. He had a grim look on his face.

"We Ying has agreed. She has said she will pass by the restaurant in the next hour or so after she finishes her last case.." said Zhang Qingge.

"Thank you, both, truly.." Yang Qing said.

At least with this one part of the to-do list had been done. He already had the five-judge panel needed.

Next, the panel would evaluate the findings on hand and vote on what to do next. The result of their deliberations would then be presented to the Judicial review committee, and after that it would be the passing of the sentence.

Chapter 393 Review And Deliberations(1)

The dinner at the Thousand Flavors restaurant extended well past midnight. Luckily since the restaurant was operated by cultivators, it was always open and had no closing hours, which worked well with the brutal schedule of judges, inquisitors, and other staff of the Order.

Wei Ying, Zhang Qingge's friend, ended up taking a much longer time to arrive. The one hour she had given, turned into three.

When they saw she was taking longer than usual, Dai Chen decided to invite Mo Liwei over. They could fill in both the two judges on the case, and with Yang Qing's inquisitors having already arrived, they had more than enough information to present to Mo Liwei for him to decide whether he wanted to be on the panel or not.

Mo Liwei agreed and around two hours in he had already arrived at the restaurant.

He was from the same class as Dai Chen and was one of their top performers, though if one looked at him they would not think like that. He was short, and had a small build and a regular-looking face, with a head of black hair that was given the most minimal of attention.

When Yang Qing saw him, he thought to himself

Now this is the true picture of an Order employee...

Other than the robes that were smoothed out thanks to the self-straightening arrays and other quality materials used in making the robe, Mo Liwei looked absolutely haggard. The kind someone who had been pulling all-nighters and had little sleep for over a week would get.

His eyes were droopy, his shoulders slumped, his walking style seemed like it took all he had to drag his feet, and every movement was slow and labored.

This was the true picture of someone who has been 'well taken care of' by the Order. Every last bit of his qi and soul essence had been thoroughly exploited.

Yang Qing couldn't help but wonder how much work would a palace realm cultivator in the third stage have to do to end up in the same state Mo Liwei was in.

It was only when they started discussing the case, did Yang Qing get an inkling as to the reason for his current state. Judges despite the station, were all meticulous in their working, but when it came to Mo Liwei he took it to another level.

Feng Xin and the rest felt like they were in an inquisition, and they were the ones being put on trial because of the millions of questions Mo Liwei fired at them, and some of them were pretty inane things like the weather that day, if dogs were barking that night and what the weather was that day.

By the time Mo Liwei was done, Yang Qing and the rest looked exactly like him, luckily Wei Ying came in and managed to save them from the long torture. She was more free-spirited in comparison.

She had black wavy hair, a beautiful face to boot that was sunny and filled with energy, and she had a lively personality to match it. She was all laughing and had a knack for bringing out hilarious stories that never seemed to stop.

With her addition to the group, whatever damage Mo Liwei had done to them was quickly healed, and they managed to get through the first discussion smoothly before they agreed to do the official deliberation the following day.

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Yang Qing's courtroom, Morning

"We are here today to decide on the matter concerning the Ice Emerald Sect..."

Within Yang Qing's courtroom, the podium's look had changed. On a normal day, it would have been him at the seat, however at this moment the semi-circular podium had elongated to a rectangular shape, and behind the podium were five people.

Seated from the left going to the right were; Mo Lingwei, Dai Chen, Yang Qing, Zhang Qingge, and lastly finishing of the group was Wei Ying.

In front of them was Yang Qing's team; Su Jinjing, Feng Xin, Lu Mei, and Zheng Hu.

Along with them were the roaming inquisitors Yu Gen and Xia Ting.

Even though the courtroom was well lit it had a grim darkness to it, especially with the austere expressions being shared all around.

"When the case started it was a kidnapping case of a cultivator by the name of Ma Yuan. He is a fifth-stage core formation cultivator that I stumbled onto during my evaluations as he was trying to commit suicide in a yin-rich lake.

When I found him, he had his cultivation base crippled and the remnant energy left in his body showed that the technique used on him was a pure yin-based art.

Yu Gen, can you please present that fragment.." said Yang Qing.

Yu Gen produced a prism dark blue shard which he then placed on his right side of the podium.

Yang Qing heaved a sigh of relief and even sent a nod of gratitude Yu Gen's way. Yu Gen had chosen Wei Ying's end instead of Mo Liwei. With this they had avoided the chance of Mo Liwei over-analyzing the shard, delaying the chance for the others to do so.

"That was the shard produced by his attacker and also the person responsible for crippling him. I think you should take a look at

As per Ma Yuan's statement, seven years ago someone broke into his abode, actually not broke, I think it would be more apt to say they were let in.

Seven years ago, while he, his wife, and daughter were having dinner in their abode in Rapid Twin County, an intruder got into their home. Said intruder seems to have a connection with his wife, Shun Fei.

Shun Fei and Ma Yuan met 18 years ago in some mysterious realm, and as per Ma Yuan's statement, she was a seventh-stage core formation expert skilled with formation arrays.

The couple settled in Leek Valley Town in the Mandrake province of the Qian Kingdom. They lived there for a few years before suddenly his wife suggested that they move.

From this incident, we can infer that she was on the run from something or someone. In every place that they have lived since then, she was the one to choose the locations.

From Leek Valley they moved to Monk's Birch which is in the territory of the Wild Birch sect, then they moved to Fairymoss town of the Green Hollow Sect, after that they moved to Flowing Boar County of the Bandicoot Kingdom, then to Yellow Flame County of the Burning Flame Sect before finally settling in Rapid Twin County which is under the control of the Lunar Bug Sect.

Seven years ago, was when the intruder got into their home and attacked them kidnapping Ma Yuan's wife and daughter in the process.

I had to use a mind-clearing incense stick to help Ma Yuan recollect the details of the day since it seemed like the memories pertaining to that day had been tampered with purposefully.

The memories showed that Ma Yuan's wife, Shun Fei knew the perpetrator as she purposefully disarmed the arrays in their home to let the attacker in. From the events that followed it doesn't seem she anticipated that Ma Yuan would get crippled or her daughter getting snatched up in the process.

Before they were attacked, Shun Fei seemed to have been aware that the attacker would be making her way into their home, as she was the one who tampered with Ma Yuan's memory before the intruder came in.

The tampering was a single targetted seal that was meant to distort Ma Yuan's memory of the attacker.

Shun Fei seemed to have done this as a form of protection for him. Seeing how she willingly let the attacker into her home with no fight and had been running away moving from place to place over the years, we can surmise whoever she was running from, she thought she was no match for them.

Whoever they were, they were strong enough to make a seventh-stage core formation expert run away from them or abandon all thoughts of fighting.

This is why I think she placed that seal on Ma Yuan, it was to protect his life by eliminating any clues he could use to track them.

However, her plan was ultimately flawed because the moment the attacker came into their home, Ma Yuan attacked, and he ended up defeated within a few seconds and a smoothly shattered dantian.

The attacker was clearly skilled as Ma Yuan despite being in the fifth stage core formation realm, he had a gold body, so his foundations were solid. Any cultivator that could effortlessly defeat him within a few seconds and smoothly shatter his dantian in the process has to at least be someone at the peak of the core formation realm, with extremely sturdy foundations.

As for the identity of the attacker, this is the image Ma Yuan showed and described..." Yang Qing said as he used his qi to depict the image of a cold white-haired young lady with breathtaking beauty.

"The attacker was well on her way to kill him, but his wife stepped in and pleaded for his life, and in the process she let slip a name before she hurriedly stopped herself. The name she said was 'Yao' which we can presume has some tie to the attacker.

The fact that Ma Yuan is alive shows that she listened which shows some relation with Ma Yuan's wife. However, in exchange for sparing his wife, she asked that along with Shun Fei coming back with her, their daughter had to come along too, which Shun Fei vehemently refused to the point of attacking her.

But, as per the memories of Ma Yuan, the moment Shun Fei tried to attack, a seal appeared on her glabella that knocked her out. This woman took her and Ma Yuan's daughter, called Ma Ling, who was eight years old at the time and should now be fifteen.

I enlisted the Wind Gliding Mercenary Escorts for help in tracking the woman using the shard, along with entrusting the matter to Yu Gen and Xia Ting who did an excellent job of it.

Assuming Shun Fei was running from someone, then the locations she chose to live at had to be places where she thought whoever she was running from would have a hard time tracking her. It had to have little to zero of their presence.

I had Zheng Hu look into the areas they lived in and correlate the powers in charge of those locations and see if they had detrimental relations with any sect or organization that was skilled in yin-based techniques.

Yu Gen and the rest managed to trace it back to the Ice Emerald Sect, however along with discovering their identity, they also discovered that the sect over the past 40,000 years has massacred close to a million people, kidnapped children from their families while they killed their families.

In addition, there have been a few sects, and families that have been destroyed. On paper, they were destroyed by bandit raids or fiendish cultivators.

However, if you look closely, those organizations had one thing in common, they all had a part of the Frozen Serenity Scripture, and the Ice Emerald Sect had a hand in their destruction.

This is just but a bit of the long nefarious deeds that they have dug up.

"I'll let Yu Gen take over, and then I hope we can all decide on what is the suitable punishment for the Ice Emerald Sect depending on the findings. This is no longer just a kidnapping case."

Chapter 394 Review And Deliberations (2)

Yu Gen nodded to the panel as he handed out grey talismans, along with recording talismans to the panel.

"Following Yang Qing's deductions, and with the help of the Wind Gliding Mercenaries we were able to narrow down the list of suspects to Ice Emerald Sect.

While there are many organizations that have yin-based techniques and powerful ones at that, there were few that had relations with the areas that Ma Yuan and his life had lived at over the years.

When Ice Emerald Sect came out as a suspect, we had to dig further since on paper, they don't seem like the type.

Their reputation is of an ascetic sect that keeps to themselves. Other than the hostile relationship they had with the Lunar Bug Sect they were cordial with most of the other organizations within their area and their neighbors.

Even from 9,000 years ago, when they first produced a palace realm cultivator, the way they operated never changed.

They kept to themselves, had minimal activity outside their own sect grounds, and even their territories are usually handled by subordinate organizations.

When they became a rank 3 sect, they didn't overly display their power or grab territories of those around them. Though their territory has grown over the years, it wasn't of their own doing. Some of the organizations around them willingly ceded some of their territories in exchange for being under their banner.

The terms of subordination are fair when compared to other organizations. The Ice Emerald Sect only requires 30% of the resources within the territories of the organizations subordinated to it, and are amiable in the duration of the payment.

By all accounts, on the surface, they seemed like an above-board sect, which was why Xia Ting and I had some doubts that one of their members was really involved in the kidnapping. With the reputation that they have built up, there is no need for that, and cases of organizations flawlessly framing each other are not unheard of..."

All members present nodded at that conjecture. Since the Order began its work, that has been one of the impediments to their work.

When the Order started, a lot of organizations around the continent would try to frame each other so as to try to borrow the Order's hands to get rid of their enemies.

At the start, almost 30 of 100 cases were deliberate frame jobs. Every organization out there saw the Order as the knife they could wield against their enemies. The frame jobs were subpar at the start and did not require a lot of effort on the Order's part to unravel for them.

To deter such cases from happening, the punishment was severe for those caught. A crippling or five was usually handed down, along with a 50-year ban and forced isolation in which the organization caught in the act was forbidden from stepping outside their main grounds within the duration of that ban.

The sentence could be longer depending on the severity of their frame job.

However, despite the risks and punishments associated with the framing of others, their numbers didn't dwindle and only grew in sophistication. It was for this reason that the Order altered its lineup.

At the start, every judge was assigned one inquisitor to handle all their workload, but with the increasing complexity of the frame jobs and the lengths to which different organizations would go to, to one up each other, the number of inquisitors attached to a judge increased.

Currently, every judge needed a minimum of five inquisitors, and the upper limit was ten. It was to give the inquisitors breathing room and reduce their caseloads. They needed to have sufficient time to vet the cases handed off to them, and before the cases reached their hands, some would have already had preliminary investigations done on them by investigators from the administration hall.

"Xia Ting investigated with that in mind. At the time we thought there might have been a possibility of the Ice Emerald Sect being framed. Despite keeping to themselves, they have no shortage of enemies. I think you should take a look at

We therefore started digging into cases with an almost similar setting. A series of kidnappings more specifically one of young girls, and one done by women.

With the sect's reputation of being an only female sect, if they were to be framed and make it seem believable, it would have to be tied to how the sect is.

We began the investigation within the Ice Emerald Sect's territory as we worked our way outwards toward their neighbors both the ones they had a good relationship with and ones they had a hostile relationship with.

Within their territory there were minimal cases of kidnappings and the ones that were recorded were usually of the normal variety associated with gangs, debts, and the like.

But as we made our way outside the territory of the sect, a few cases here and there started popping out. Girls barely ten years old, taken away, their families missing.

Those cases by themselves had nothing in common, other than the fact that they involved young girls. But the more we dug, we found out that the case had a sudden spike in the past 20 years. Before that, such cases were rare.

We decided to deepen our investigations by researching the areas a century or two back and see if those kidnappings were there..."

With the long lives of cultivators, and esoteric arts that could retrace the life or history of an area even a few millennia back, digging up information that happened a few centuries back was not a hard thing.

It would only be hard if the area under investigation had all residents and witnesses massacred, and every karma associated with the place erased.

But as long as that was not done, finding out about the history of a place that dates back 1,000 years ago was as easy as researching what happened a day ago in the area.

"About two hundred years ago, there was a spike in the kidnapping cases in the territories of the neighbors surrounding the Ice Emerald Sect.

If one wasn't looking they could easily overlook it, since the cases were spread about through the 200 years so as not to stand out.

Realizing that in itself was a pattern, we extended our research timeline to 1,000 years. When we did that, a veil unfolded and something was revealed.

The girls that went missing, based on the description of the witnesses, all possessed a quality, and based on the description, that quality has likely association with special physiques that may be Yin related.

While all these are not enough to point a finger at the Ice Emerald Sect, it was enough for us to doubt them and treat them as suspects.

We intensified our investigations and formed a new thread with the Ice Emerald Sect as being guilty of all those kidnappings over the past millennia, and we kept pulling it.

We finally managed to find a living witness per se, as we furthered our investigation about 5,000 years back.."

"A living witness? If they have been that long, it means they are a palace realm cultivator by now. With their strength, how come they are coming forward only now?" asked Mo Liwei.

Chapter 395 Review And Deliberations (3)

A peak core formation expert had a life expectancy of 4,500 years and only if you had a gold core or purple core would you have one that was above that. A gold core would give 5,000 years and that number would increase depending on the type of gold core since quasi purple cores gave 6,000 years while those with a purple core had 7,000 years.

The fact that the living witness was from 5,000 years ago either meant he was a palace realm cultivator or at the very least was someone with a gold or purple core at the peak of core formation realm.

Regardless of which it was, it meant they were people of means, who should have been able to come forward much earlier in the past thousand of years since the Order's founding.

"While I did say he is a living witness, I used that term closely. It's more apt to call that someone a proxy or secret keeper.

I think it's better if I invite him in.." Yu Gen said as he nodded toward Xia Ting to open the small door to the side.

At his behest, Xia Ting went through the door and a second later came back in with an elderly man who was hunched over with white hair that was smoothly combed back, though, at the top of his head, one could see the hair had waned out and was thinner. His skin was wrinkled and filled with liver spots.

One look at him, and one would think he wasn't far off from sleeping forever.

He had a green tang jacket and matching pants, and in his hand was a smooth polished walking stick that had the dragon scales intricately carved onto it.

The old man slowly and steadily walked over to the center of the courtroom with Xia Ting cautiously walking beside him in case he fell.

"This is Tang Wenyan and is the fifth generation patriarch of the Tang family found in the Elm Wood Kingdom which is a rank 4 kingdom that has been in existence for the past 24,000 years.

The Tang family is currently a rank 5 clan and is situated within Gentle Fall County..." said Yu Gen.

"Senior Wenyan, could you please explain the matter you told me the other day? Don't leave anything out. You can just say it as you did the other day..." Yu Gen softly said as he led the old man by the arm to the middle of the courtroom where a sound amplification array gently lit up beneath his feet.

The old man nodded his head as he smiled.

"My name is Tang Wenyan and I'm the fifth patriarch of the Tang Family, but because of my current circumstances, I will be abdicating in a few months, and enjoy the last few years of my life.."I think you should take a look at

Tang Wenyan was at the tenth stage of the foundation establishment realm. Even though he seemed steady enough and even when he spoke, he was clear and firm in his speech. He had about 50 years left in his life expectancy.

The fact that he could walk, talk, and see while being over 1,000 years old and having little life left, was the strengthened physique brought about by his cultivation. Even after his death, it would take 100 years for his body to start decaying, and that time only got longer the more powerful the cultivator was.

Yang Qing even heard there was a mysterious realm that had a dead cultivator who if you judged by face value might seem alive. Their body was intact, the skin still retained the suppleness and rosinness one would have when they were alive. His hair was pristine black. By all accounts, he seemed like he was alive and just sleeping but he was in fact dead, and his body has been in that mysterious realm for over 100,000 years, and in that time, his body has not decayed even an inch.

Some cultivators did try to cut some part of him, but even ascendant-grade artifacts couldn't pierce his skin. When they tried to lift him, he seemed to weigh almost as much as the planet. Five domain experts tried to lift him up and failed.

Even dead, his body's strength remained. A cultivator's body in some circles could be considered a valuable treasure or precious ingredient for a lot of things.

"About five thousand years ago my great great grandfather had someone he liked very much during his younger years. The person he liked was a lady from the Shu family by the name of Shu Wen.

Shu Wen and my great-great-grandfather were promised to be wed, as an arrangement by the elders from the two families to bring the relationships closer. It was considered a good thing by both families, and even Shu Wen and my great great grandfather were in support of it. They had already developed feelings for each other, since our two families were close even before the marriage alliance was proposed.

The Shu family was not as powerful as us, since at the time the father to my great great grandfather was a core formation expert while the highest expert of the Shu family was only at the seventh stage of the foundation establishment realm.

The old timers of the Tang family were all in support of the union between the two despite the Tang family being more powerful, and my great-great-grandfather was praised for having enough talent to reach the core formation realm at the very least.

At 11 years old he already achieved a diamond body and had broken through to the qi refinement realm. With his talent, the Tang family could have arranged a marriage with the royal family of the Blue Spear Kingdom, which is where we originally were before we moved to the Elmwood Kingdom. But they chose the Shu family because of Shu Wen.

Other than an unmatched beauty, she had a special physique, the lunar butterfly physique that gave her an unseen aptitude when it came to alchemy and cultivation. She was two years younger than my great great grandfather, and at 9 years old she was already in the qi refinement herself.

A lot of hope and expectation was placed on the two of them, and the heights they could reach. However, all that was destroyed when Shu Wen was thirteen years old. She disappeared, one night along with the whole Shu family.

All 800 members, died, in a single night. The death was made to look to be the handiwork of a group of blood fiend cultivators, because of the manner in which the corpses were laid about, along with a blood refinement array that was found in their family grounds..."

Chapter 396 Massacre At The Shu Family (1)

"That was the story that was spread around, and our family believed that tale except for one person, my great-great-grandfather.

When the news of the Shu family getting massacred broke, it sent uproars around the region and the Blue Spear Kingdom as a whole, since something like that had not happened in a while and the manner in which they died, made everyone wary.

The Tang family as the ones with the closest relationship to the Shu family were the ones hit the hardest. Our clan founder went to investigate the remains of the family and came to the same conclusion as all the others, that it was the work of blood-fiend cultivators.

With the marriage off, the founder suggested that my great great grandfather join the Celestial Harmony Sect.

Our founder was once an outer sect member of the sect, therefore with his connections and my great great grandfather's talent with his diamond body, he was sure-in to join even though he was from a low tier rank 4 clan while the Celestial Harmony Sect was a prominent rank 3 sect.

Even now, while they're currently a rank 2 sect, he still would have made it in.." Tang Wenyan said.

Pride and admiration could be detected in his tone as he talked about his great great-great-grandfather.

Yang Qing and the rest knew he wasn't blowing smoke when he said his great-great grandfather could have made it in the Celestial Harmony Sect even though it was currently a rank 2 sect that had been newly promoted 70 years ago when one of their previous sect masters broke through to the domain realm.

As someone who had reached the diamond body stage, even the Order would guarantee him a direct entry let alone a newly promoted rank 2 sect that was rank 3 at the time.

"My great great grandfather agreed to it. It should be noted from the night the Shu clan was destroyed, all our family members expected him to be distraught and broken, angry. His love for Shu Wen was clear as day.

This was why the founder suggested he go to the Celestial Harmony Sect even if there was a chance he would be asked to cut his ties with the Tang family should he become a core disciple. The rules for outer sect disciples were looser when compared to core inheritors such as inner disciples and core disciples who would need to cut ties with everything in their past and wear the banner of the Celestial Harmony Sect to their last breath.

Despite the risk of potentially losing the chance to elevate the Tang family by letting my great-great grandfather join the Celestial Harmony Sect, our founder still chose to do it. It was a way to help my great great grandfather leave the region before the events of the Shu family dug their way into his mind, which would have happened if he remained in the Tang grounds.

To their surprise, my great-great-grandfather agreed with not much as a single complaint. Throughout the whole period, he was silent and indifferent. Almost as if whatever happened to the Shu clan and the loss of his fiancée had not shaken him one bit.

He successfully got into the Celestial Harmony Sect and was even made an inner disciple when he was accepted as a disciple by one of their elders due to his performance and also his natural talent. I think you should take a look at

After he got in and it was announced that he had become a personal disciple to one of their elders, the Tang family didn't hear from him again for years.

It wasn't until almost 100 years had passed did the Tang family finally see him since he left. The founder had a decade or two left to live at the time, he was ecstatic when he saw heard the news that my great great grandfather had come back home.

However, that excitement turned to sorrow because my great-great grandfather had a crippled cultivation base. A mishap occurred during his cultivation which ended up ruining his gold core, which was left shattered in the aftermath.

My great-great-grandfather didn't share much, but his master passed by and told our founder that the mishap occurred because of the mental demons that plagued him over the years. The sect lacked the means to help him reform his core and even if they did, my great great grandfather did not seem to have the ambition to cultivate.

So by mutual consent, they decided to let my great great grandfather come back and spend the rest of his years with his family. Even with a shattered core, he still had the life expectancy of a gold core formation expert minus a few hundred years because of the shattered core.

He was less than a hundred when he broke through to the core formation realm, so he had at least 4,000 years left to live.

Our founder was heartbroken, especially when he learned he had formed a gold core that most couldn't. He himself only had a high-tier red core, so he knew what the implications of having a gold core meant and the potential it had towards the latter part of one's cultivation. But it was all gone.

I wonder if that was one of the reasons he died earlier than the predicted timeline, leaving my great-great grandfather as the next head, even though even after he came back, he barely interacted with the rest of the clan members.

The one time he did interact with them was when he announced that the clan would be moving from the Blue Spear Kingdom to where we currently are.

As you can imagine, it was met with vehement opposition, especially from the elderly who had lived all their lives there. It started off with words but then escalated.

With it being well known that my great great grandfather had a crippled cultivation, it didn't take long for covert and overt challenges to come in from those who were dissatisfied with the founder's decision to name someone with a crippled cultivation base as the next head of the clan.

But they came to know even an old and out dragon could still strike fear into a seasoned spirit beast. Even with a crippled cultivation base he still had the physical strength of a core formation expert whose body had been nourished with qi refined by a gold core, had the foundation of a diamond body, and had his experience as a former core disciple of a rank 3 sect.

He easily trounced all opposition forcefully and with that, we moved. A long while later, about two hundred years, he had a son, my grandfather, to whom he left the seat of patriarch about a hundred years later. Along with the seat, he also left something else..."

Chapter 397 Massacre At The Shu Family (2)

"He was there that day, the day the Shu family was supposedly annihilated by blood-fiend cultivators.

He liked meeting up with Shu Wen every two days and that night was one of their scheduled meetups. He always used a coat made from the silk produced by a shadow cloak spider. It was a gift he received from the royal family of the Blue Spear kingdom.

With it, he could move undetected from those in the core formation realm since it isolated the user from being detected by either the physical senses or the spiritual senses.

He liked to use it to avoid the extra attention of those from the Shu family or Tang family if they knew he had come out to meet Shu Wen.

That night, he thought it would just be like every other night where he would get to share snow jasmine tea, and warm rice wine with Shu Wen like they always did as they envisioned the heights they would reach as cultivators and other things but there was a major alteration to his expected plans.

When he went that night all he saw was a grey-haired lady in her mid-forties with a mole under her left eye waving her palm which produced a bluish-black flame that sucked the life out of every member of the Shu family.

She floated above the clan grounds, coldly watching those corpses dry out to her flames, and in her hands was Shu Wen clasped by the neck.

She had tiny purple and blue flowers growing from her body and within ten minutes she disintegrated into dust while the purple and blue flowers combined together to form a white fruit that was in the shape of an egg that had butterfly wings on its surface.

My great great grandfather at the time was swallowed by fear and shock at what he was seeing that he couldn't even move. He stood rooted as he watched Shu Wen transform into dust, and her clan get drained of their very life essence to the last member.

He couldn't move, talk, breathe, or blink, all he could do was bear silent witness to what happened.

After the grey-haired lady had gotten what she wanted, she drew the blood-refining array in the middle of the Shu family grounds and left.

It was only after five hours had passed did my great-great grandfather regain his sense of self and mobility.

The first thing he did was to run to the Shu clan grounds. However, he was too weak to step into the Shu family grounds. The remnant energy left from the technique that lady used, was too much for his body to bear, even after five hours had passed, and the majority of the energy had dissipated.

He wanted to rush over and tell his father, the founder what happened, but in the run over, he had some time to analyze the details of what he saw. A single person had killed over 500 people with a single spell and they didn't even have enough time to scream. Their abilities were definitely higher than the founder, then there was the single fact that the cultivator seemed to be floating by herself.

Even though at the time he wasn't sure if she did so with an artifact or by herself, it definitely meant they were no simple person and to err on the side of caution my great-great grandfather immediately assumed they were a palace realm cultivator. I think you should take a look at

The founder was a second-stage core formation expert, there was no way he would be able to handle someone in the Palace realm, and neither could the Blue Spear Kingdom's royal family. He thus decided to keep the matter of what he had seen to himself, lest he invite calamity to his clan, and when the opportunity to join the Celestial Harmony presented itself, he quickly jumped at it as a way to protect himself.

He wasn't sure if that grey-haired female cultivator had noticed him or not. When he came back to the clan, every night since then he half expected to be attacked along with the clan members. That they too would be engulfed in that blue-black flame which though was a flame, it might as well have been the frozen tundra in flame form.

He said that flame had a chill that even put the chill of death to shame..." Tang Wenyan said with a shiver in his tone almost as if he was there.

"Even without the founder's suggestion to join the Celestial Harmony Sect, he had already decided to join them to protect his life. At the time he didn't care about the clan, or even seeking vengeance for Shu Wen, all he had was deep-seated fear.

The Celestial Harmony sect was the best place he could run off to for safety since it had palace realm cultivators of its own.

When he reached there, he went all out in the entrance test so he could stand out to at least draw the attention of the palace realm cultivators of the sect, which he did, and it was his master.

But sadly even with the protection offered by the sect, he couldn't escape the demons that haunted him from that night.."

A soft sigh escaped his lips.

"Even as a core formation expert, he was still afraid, tormented, and maddened by the events of that night. He was even afraid to talk about it, which is why he never told his master, afraid if he revealed what he saw that day, it would spell his death.

It was only when he was nearing his death, did he finally mention it, and he did it to one person only, his son, my great-grandfather. Along with it, he left a decree to him which was to be passed along the family line until it was met.

The decree was to find the identity of that woman and seek justice for the Shu clan and Shu Wen. But the prerequisite was to have sufficient strength to do so. If we didn't then, we were to keep the evidence of what happened then alive until the day someone in our line was strong enough to do it.

Thus, the decree has always been passed from father to son. My father did so to me, and I did so to my son.

I think along with the fear, my great great grandfather was unable to forgive himself for how he acted. So leaving the decree was his way of atoning to Shu Wen and her family for not being able to act back then.."

Chapter 398 Witness From Beyond (1)

"Did you ever find out the identity of the grey-haired lady?" asked Yang Qing.

"No, we have not. However, our power level is what has restricted us. If it is as my great great grandfather said that the person who did all that to the Shu clan is a palace realm cultivator, then with our strength and foundations we can't go around digging what happened back then.

We risk inviting disaster to the clan and not a way to prevent it. Unlike him, we don't have a massive sect to run to, and it's not like we can go to his master and try and seek his help on the matter.

After the death of my great great grandfather, he did come over to help for the first hundred years, but after that, he never came back. We can consider his ties with our clan severed.

With how we are currently, in the past 5,000 years we haven't made any headway in the case because we haven't actively dared to investigate it. The only thing we can do is ensure what my great great grandfather saw that day is kept alive until a point where we will have someone capable of fulfilling his wish..." said Tang Wenwan.

Even though his skin was wrinkled making his facial expressions indiscernible, one could detect embarrassment and shame oozing from him.

"Pardon me Patriarch Tang Wenyan, but there are one or two things I'd like to seek your clarification on if you don't mind?" asked Mo Liwei.

"If there is anything I can shed light on, I'm more than happy to do so.." answered Tang Wenyan.

"You said your great great grandfather was a core formation expert and one that had a gold core at that. Based on the experiences I've had at the Order, he should be alive right now. Those with a gold core have a life expectancy that reaches 5,000 years.

Even though he shattered his core which likely reduced some of those years, there are ways to regain those years and ensure you live out the complete 5,000 years. His master as an elder of the Celestial Harmony Sect would in no doubt know those means and have the necessary materials to accomplish it.

What I want to know is, is your great great grandfather alive?" asked Mo Liwei.

"As for the next question, it's more or less directed to both you and Yu Gen. While i don't mean to doubt the veracity of the tale you have told us, Yu Gen how does what happened then tie to the Ice Emerald Sect?

And if there is something that ties the sect to that incident at the Shu family, then Patriarch Tang Wenyan's account of the events isn't enough since by his own admission he wasn't there.

What we have is second-hand information, which isn't enough for us to decide on the punishment of the sect.

We need something that ties them to it.." Mo Liwei gently said.

Despite how harsh his words seemed, the other judges were in agreement with him. While Tang Wenyan didn't seem like he was lying, his words alone were not enough damning evidence.

"When I said there was a living witness, I meant it..." Yu Gen said with a teasing smile. I think you should take a look at

"Patriarch Tang Wenyan, would you please.."

"To answer your question senior, the first and second questions have more or less the same answer.

Yes, my great great grandfather should have had more years to live even with his shattered core, and yes, his master did leave various pills and natural treasures to help prolong his life but he never used them.

The Celestial Harmony Sect may or may not have known this, but his shattered dantian wasn't the result of his cultivation going haywire because he was attacked by his internal demons but rather my great great grandfather did that to himself..."

As Tang Wenyan said this he undid the buttons of his Tang suit revealing his bare chest.

"Once during a mission for the sect, he stumbled onto a grotto, and in it, he found the corpse of some cultivator that had grey bone in his hands. That bone had an esoteric cultivation art inscribed on it.

That technique was called the chrysalis soul incubation art. He didn't know the grade of the art, but the more he studied it, the more he realized it was the answer he needed.

The first stage of the art could only be completed by sacrificing his core, which was how he ended up with a shattered dantian, and in exchange for it, he got the chance to materialize a part of his soul, and within that soul was specific memories.

The art itself was incomplete but the parts that were available were more than enough to help my great-great grandfather with what he wanted..."

The green polished stick in Tang Wenyan's hand transformed into a grey bone that was the length of an arm.

The bone had inscrutable markings on it and had cracks all over it.

Yang Qing and the rest had their pupils constrict when they saw the bone. The faint energy fluctuations it released were that of a domain expert. Whoever or whatever that bone belonged to had a cultivation base that was in the domain realm though the energy within it had long dissipated and all that was left was the tiniest of traces.

At its state, even a foundation establishment cultivator could break it if they hit it at full force. If its energy wasn't dwindled, Tang Wenyan with his ninth stage foundation establishment cultivation base would struggle to lift it let alone get close to it.

Even in death, a domain expert was a domain expert. Every part of the corpse of a recently deceased domain expert contained enough energy to pulverize someone in the foundation establishment realm.

For Tang Wenyan to be able to hold it closely the owner of that bone had to have been dead for at least 50,000 years or whoever inscribed a cultivation art on it dissipated the energy in it which made no sense since the more energy the bone had, the better it could preserve whatever he/she had inscribed on it.

"He started researching the art when he was at the Celestial Harmony Sect and continued to do so even after he had left and came back to the clan.

Chapter 399 Witness From Beyond (2)

The demands for cultivating the art was why he who should have lived for 5,000 years ended up living for less than a thousand years.

But in that thousand years, thanks to the arduous efforts and sacrifice he had put into studying the chrysalis soul incubation art he managed to materialize his soul and separate a part of it which he incubated in his bloodline.

The decree he formulated before his death, was done on the basis of what he had harvested from that art.

Along with passing the mission from father to son, the memory of that day was passed in word and also in its truest form.

What I told you may have been second-hand information but I think you would believe it if it came from the person himself, my great great grandfather, Tang Niu."

Tang Wenyan immediately began muttering strange incantations which resulted in light grey scripts appearing in his chest. Immediately after a strange sound was produced from the bone. The sound produced was the mix of a bird cry and a flowing river.

The sound it produced seemed to reverberate with the scripts on Tang Wenyan's chest. Beads of sweat appeared on him as a small red gold droplet congealed together at the center of those scripts.

The red gold droplet then floated out of his skin as it moved towards the bone and dissolved in it.

Immediately after something that looked like a mirage was produced by the bone.

"This is what my great great grandfather saw that day..." Tang Wenyan said as he gasped for breath.

Whatever he had done seemed to have overdrawn not only his body but also his soul. With someone with just a few years to live, the technique he had just conducted seemed to have strained whatever vitality he had left to the limits.

Yang Qing frowned and immediately flashed and appeared in front of him.

He produced the same droplet from the spring of resplendence that he had used on Li Shu earlier, except this droplet was smaller and the energy contained seemed much milder and gentler.

The instant the droplet fell on Tang Wenyan, his pale skin immediately regained some color, and his labored breaths started to become smoother as energy returned to various parts of his body.

"Have this," Yang Qing said as he stuffed orange-colored ginseng down his mouth before he had a chance to refuse.

After he confirmed Tang Wenyan had swallowed the ginseng, Yang Qing went back to his seat, leaving a wide-eyed Tang Wenyan behind.

"This?!!!!" he stuttered in stupefaction.

The droplet from earlier was miraculous enough as it instantly restored not only his body but every other wound he had ever accumulated, was restored, and the overdraft to his soul was also renewed and restored.

As if that wasn't enough, the ginseng that had just been forced down his throat, seemed to have done even something even more outrageous.

As it stood, he had about 10-12 years to live and after he executed that art, that number went down to about 8, but now after consuming that ginseng he felt like he had more years to live. If he were to put a number on it, it would be about 30 years. He could feel the vibrancy of his blood and his qi, which even translated to his physical body. His cloudy eyes were a bit clearer, and he had a few grey hairs mixed in with the white.

He couldn't help but wonder what miraculous object he had been fed. I think you should take a look at

"Th..ank you.."

Tang Wenyan offered a deep bow as he said that with a voice chalked with emotion. While he had made his peace with death, and had his affairs settled. Towards the end, anybody would ever and wish for more time, especially if they had something to live for, and Tang Wenyan wasn't different.

He hoped to be around his clan members some more, see if one of his grandchildren had the opportunity of reaching the core formation realm and most of all, he wished to see if the decree issued by his great great grandfather could be fulfilled in his lifetime.

With the Order potentially being involved in the case, maybe it might.

While he still had no idea what his great great grandfather saw that day had to do with the Ice Emerald Sect, the fact that the Order was digging into the affair opened the door to the possibility that what happened to the Shu family may actually have a resolution, and their mission would be done.

Tears couldn't help but form in his eyes as he thought of that.

Meanwhile, the mirage formed from the fusion of the red-gold blood and the grey bone had started to form a clear image.

The image portrayed was of a clear night sky with the moon out. It was slightly windy as one could see the grass and the leaves rustling as they were being moved by the wind.

The liveliness of the night was in full effect with the twinkling stars in the skies and the insect noises on the ground.

However, an eerie silence immediately invaded the place, as cold frost marks appeared on some of the vegetation on the ground.

Seconds later someone appeared a few hundred meters from the eyeview of what was being projected. Though even at such a distance the features of the person were distinct. They had a pure white robe, grey hair hanging loosely, an oval face with city-toppling beauty that had a coldness to it.

The lady floating above the grounds in the distance had a black mole beneath her right eye. She stared coldly at the ground before her as a cold smirk appeared on her face.

She immediately waved her hand and a young lady who looked to be about fourteen years old floated toward her.

She had purple hair and jade milk skin. She had a look of primal fear as she floated gently toward the lady in grey. A magnetic force seemed to be pulling her toward the grey-haired lady till her neck was tightly clasped in the lady's hand.

The purple-haired girl tried to struggle free but immediately fell into a daze when the grey-haired lady blew white mist on her face. Immediately after purple and blue flowers started appearing on different parts of her body as they increased in number by the second. With each flower produced, the purple-haired girl seemed to shrink in size.

The grey-haired lady then proceeded to produce a blue-black flame that was the size of a tangerine from her hand and waved it downwards to the buildings below her.

The flame on reaching the ground immediately mushroomed and blanketed every single area that was within the walls of the area she floated above.

"That's the Non-luminous dissecting ghost yin flame.." muttered Wei Ying.

"It seems like it is.." answered Dai Chen with a grim expression on him and the rest of the judges.

Chapter 400 [Bonus]Release From A 5,000 Year Old Curse

The Non luminous dissecting ghost yin flame could be in certain aspects considered an alchemy flame except where typical alchemy flames were used to refine and maximize spiritual herbs and other alchemical ingredients, the non-luminous dissecting ghost yin flame refined humans and treated them as ingredients. It refined everything from blood, and qi down to their soul essence.

It was the go-to flame for corpse refiners and blood refiners, and its origins tied back to an ancient sect known as the ghost lamp sect.

A sect of heretical cultivators who studied everything from soul refinement to corpse refinement, to human puppetry and the like. The sect existed over a million years ago and its hey day it was as powerful as the Radiant Sword Sect or the Flowing Valley.

It was rumored that the founder of the Crimson Wave found an artifact belonging to the Ghost Lamp sect, and that artifact was one of the reasons he managed to hold his own against four inner core elders of the Radiant Sword Sect despite being besieged alone and even managed to heavily injure one of them.

Despite being long gone, the remnants of the Ghost Lamp Sect still influenced the current Southern Continent. They had countless mysterious realms and grottos floating about in the continent which contained thousands upon thousands of cultivation arts, their research, and artifacts among other things that constituted their foundations which have formed the backbone of some of the major heretical organizations formed around the continent.

The non luminous dissecting ghost yin flame was but one of its many fruits.

"The chrysalis soul incubation art is really something.... the memories inscribed here managed to capture everything senior Tang Niu saw down to the intrinsic sensual details, such as the chilling cold of the non-luminous dissecting ghost yin flame.." said Mo Liwei.

"Couldn't have been easy for him. He really was talented to be able to reproduce such a thing as a core formation cultivator. Sealing a memory inside your bloodline by materializing your soul, couldn't have been an easy feat.

The technique and that bone had a major part to play, but his part can't be overlooked either.." said Yang Qing as he sighed in pity.

Based on what they could see, had Tang Wenyan's great great grandfather been alive and not shattered his core, with the talents he had shown, reaching the domain realm was in the realms of high possibility.

The scene played out just as Tang Wenyan had described. Everyone within the grounds died, their blood essence, qi, and energy sucked dry by the non-luminous ghost yin flame.

Afterward, the purple-haired young lady disintegrated into dust as the flowers around her body blended together to form a white fruit.

The grey-haired lady stored the fruit away and then proceeded to draw an intricate blood-refining array below the grounds where the massacre had just happened.

She dropped a few blood-soaked natural treasures, activated the array briefly, and then disappeared from view.

The image cut off after that point, and the bone stopped producing the bird and river flowing sound. It seemed to have more cracks than before.

Tang Wenyan grabbed it and formed a short seal that transformed it back to the green polished cane from before, though its luster seemed a bit duller.

He couldn't help but sigh as he noted the change.

"Yu Gen, I take it you know the identity of that woman with the mole under her left eye?" asked Dai Chen.

"Yes, she is the first elder of the Ice Emerald Sect, Guo Mei. With just this, even if we ignore everything else, we know there is something wrong with Ice Emerald Sect. One of their elders massacred the Shu family just like that, and it seems like in the process she also refined Shu Wen into a fruit, as to what ends, I don't know, but what we do know is that she was targeted, and the Shu clan was eliminated as a result of it.

The fact that the elder can produce the non-luminous ghost yin flame is another factor. Since as we all know you can only produce that flame by draining the entire life essence of at least 30,000 cultivators in the foundation establishment realm, and it needs to be done above a high-grade yin spiritual vein.

Only in this way can you harvest the seed of the non-luminous ghost yin flame. Odds are Guo Mei isn't the only person from the Ice Emerald Sect to know that spell.

Other than Tang Wenyan, we managed to find countless others whose stories matched more or less what his great great grandfather saw that night.

It isn't exactly the same, in the manner of execution, but in most instances, someone with a yin physique was at the center of it, and these events run back 40,000 years.

In addition, there are a few survivors of organizations that had certain parts of the frozen serenity scripture, and their description of the attackers links back to the Ice Emerald Sect.."

"Are they here?" asked Mo Liwei.

"They are.."

"It seems we have a long day ahead of us.." said Wei Ying.

"Seniors, does it mean you know the identity of that woman?!" Tang Wenyan suddenly interjected in disbelief.

Despite hearing the identity of the woman, and her affiliation with the Ice Emerald Sect, he still couldn't believe it.

"We do, Patriarch Wenyan.." Zhang Qingge who had been silent all this while, softly answered.

"Good, good, good...." Tears started falling from his eyes as he smiled, and when his trembling legs couldn't handle the excitement from the news, he sat down as he smiled and cried, saying good over and over.

Yang Qing and the rest didn't dare interrupt him and let him process it, however long it took.

It took almost half an hour before Tang Wenyan settled down, albeit mildly because his hands were still shaking and he had a relieved smile plastered on his face, and tears still danced at the tip of his eyelashes threatening to fall.

"Sorry about that...I'm sure it's not an easy experience seeing an old man cry..." Tang Wenyan said as he smiled in slight embarrassment.

"Those memories just weren't memories. Having them stored inside our bloodline, since we share the same bloodline as him, there was a resonance, I don't know if it was intended on his part, or it was an accident, but because of it, everything within that memory was vivid to us as though we were there, including everything my great great grandfather felt in that moment, and after.

The fear, how bottomless and swallowing it was. It never seemed to stop. The guilt that came after, and regret. We felt it all, every day from the moment the seal was passed onto you and activated.

While I respect my great-great-grandfather for trying, another part of me resents him. That was his burden to carry but he subjected his descendants to a never-ending torment of reliving his memory of that day.

He was a rare talent, one that hadn't been seen in thousands of years, but what were the odds of another person like him appearing in our clan? We are not him. Reaching the core formation realm is hard enough, let alone the palace realm.

I always felt like he knowingly condemned us to endure the same torment as him. Out of spite or out of trying to achieve a sense of peace from knowing there were others who would feel what he felt back then.

Whatever the reason, it was complete hell for me, my father before me, and my grandfather. They all seemed broken towards the end, the shell of the people they once were, and I was there too, and the thought my son would go through the same thing did nothing but add to my sorrow.

On behalf of the Tang family, I want to thank you. It might be another case to you, but to us it's a redemption from a five thousand year old curse.

Thank you..." Tang Wenyan said as he performed a deep bow.