

Daily life 401

Chapter 401 Two Remnants (1)

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"We would also like to offer your thanks for the information that you have shared with us today and your willingness and the lengths you went to do it.

You can rest easy Patriarch Tang Wenyan. The Order will take up your great-great grandfather's decree on behalf of your clan and fulfill it.

We will seek retribution for the Shu Wen and the Shu clan as a whole.." said Yang Qing.

"Thank you.." Tang Wenyan softly mumbled half choked up in emotions.

After he regained himself he was led away by Xia Ting as they brought in other witnesses.

Yang Qing and the rest of the panel heard their accounts one by one, which slowly painted the picture of how dark the Ice Emerald Sect was.

The Shu clan wasn't the only clan to get slaughtered throughout the years. Between 40,000 years to 30,000 years ago, the killings were more prevalent in that period than in any other period and were not as meticulous as they are now.

Around 40,000 years ago, the Order wasn't around, so sect and clan annihilations were a regular occurrence, which is why it became easy for Yu Gen and the rest to dig out clues that tied back to the Ice Emerald Sect since back then they didn't bother to hide their fingerprints in most of those killings.

Yang Qing and the rest were shocked to discover that some of their members knew the non-luminous dissecting ghost yin flame even from 40,000 years ago.

While they didn't know the exact identity of the perpetrators since they didn't match the current lineup of the sect's hierarchy, the technique they used had similarities to their current core cultivation art the Emerald frost flow veiled scripture.

Using the shard they got from Ma Yuan it wasn't hard to use it as a point of reference and draw similarities to the witness account statements that were being given.

The witness testimonies finally ended with two individuals. It was a man and a woman who both seemed elderly and had varying cultivation bases.

The woman was a lady who looked to be in her early sixties. She was the maidservant of a princess of a rank 4 kingdom that had long changed its name from the Han Kingdom to the Chu Kingdom.

She was an eighth-stage core formation expert who was currently a supreme elder of the Mulberry Sect which was a rank 4 sect that was rated among the top tier sects in the rank 4 sector. It was skilled in alchemy and palm techniques. It had a balance of both the combat aspect and the alchemy aspect and was one of the rare all-rounded sects in the lower stratum that had shown a perfect balance in both combat and non-combative aspects.

The elderly lady was called Dai Ya and had been with the Mulberry Sect for 1,800 years. She had joined as an outer sect disciple and slowly made her way up the ranks till she became a supreme elder, and she was one of seven within the sect.

Before that, she was one of the maidservants who worked for the fifth princess of the Chu Kingdom, formerly the Han Kingdom. The name of the kingdom changed 2,400 years ago when the royal family that went under the Han name was slaughtered within the royal palace.

Their deaths looked like the work of a skilled assassin, as every single member died from a single slit to the throat, and no commotion was made even as over 100 of the royal clan members were killed.

The array protecting the palace looked to have been broken effortlessly, and the royal clan members even to their death seemed unaware of how they had died.

The fifth princess had been away from the palace at the time, so she escaped the massacre and became the only survivor of the Han royal family. As the only surviving member, it meant she was the next one in line for the throne, but it also meant she was the stopping block for all the major families that wanted to be the next rulers of the Han Kingdom.

Realizing the precarious position she was in, she decided to escape from the Han Kingdom along with a few of her guards and maid servants of which Dai Ya was one as they made their way to any other place but the Han Kingdom. She had the other aristocrats to watch out for and the mysterious killer who had just assassinated her entire clan. The Han Kingdom was the last place someone like her could be in.

The escape wasn't easy because they had few resources, and some of the former allies turned traitors, which put her life and escape in jeopardy. The princess ended up dying about four years later from succumbing to her wounds, and the grief of losing her entire family. Dai Ya was one of the few in her retinue who survived.

About 20 years later the Chu clan which was one of the four most powerful clans in the Han Kingdom managed to win out in the struggle for the throne and renamed the Han Kingdom into the Chu Kingdom.

Dai Ya in the meantime moved from place to place until she was at the doors of the Mulberry Sect. Years later when she was an elder at the sect, did she use the powers afforded to her as an elder of the sect to find out the goings of the Chu family and also to try and dig up what happened to the Han family all those years ago and who was behind it.

It was in those investigations that she discovered that the legacy art of the Han family was not found when the rest broke into the royal palace. And even after a couple of centuries of the Chu family being in power, they never obtained any trace of it. The legacy art along with a few key treasures of the Han royal family were said to have been looted by the killer.

The whole murder and even the theft of the royal treasury ended up being pinned on the fifth princess, who people knew was the only survivor but didn't know that she died a couple of years later.

Dai Ya assumed that the rumor being spread was a ploy made by the Chu family to discredit the fifth princess in front of the masses by accusing her of regicide, patricide, and the murder of her whole family. With such a reputation hanging over her, her odds of trying to seize back the throne would be lessened.

Even though Dai Ya was incensed by the ploy, she finally gained a clue as to the death of the Han royal family, which could have been due to their cultivation art. While she didn't know the particulars of the art, she did know of its name, which the fifth princess excitedly mentioned to her when she was told she had met the qualifications to cultivate it.

The art was called the hearthfrost spear dome. She had also heard from her that the art was just but a part of an art known as the Frozen Serenity Scripture. The founder of the Han family found the hearthfrost spear dome art through a lucky encounter and he who was once a servant for some mercenary organization rose up to create the Han family and later the Han Kingdom.

All the success he achieved was thanks to that cultivation art, and the Han maintained its hold over the Han Kingdom later thanks to that cultivation art.

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Other than that the only thing Dai Ya knew was that it was guarded securely even from the royal family members themselves. The only way to see it was to exhibit a certain level of aptitude for cultivation. Not every Han clan member was able to cultivate it.

She did try to dig further into potential suspects, but the means and reach of the Mulberry Sect were limited, and whoever the killer was, they were capable enough to slaughter the entire Han family which by itself had enough power to overturn the Mulberry Sect.

This fact slowed down her progress as she had to be careful with it and there was also the fact that her investigation into the Frozen Serenity Scripture opened her eyes to just how many powerful organizations out there had ties to it. Over the past decade, she had even given up on trying to dig further, and it was only when Xia Ting made her way to the doorsteps of her sect did she talk about the matter for the first time in so long.

Next to her, the man who had come in with her also had a similar story. He looked to be in his late sixties with a head of grey hair, mixed in with some white however his skin was firm and young. He was missing his left eye which looked like a flame had scalded his eye off and extended to his cheek and forehead.

The elderly man was a quasi palace stage cultivator and didn't seem to be far away from reaching the palace realm, and had on black robes with the emblem of a falling star and an array below it. He was an elder of the Falling Star Array Pavilion, a rank 3 organization that focused on formation arrays.

About 974 years ago he was the chief disciple of the Echo Resonance Sect, a sect that specialized in formation arrays and their maiden array was the frozen echo resonance array. An array that had the capabilities of slaying even an early-stage palace realm expert. Cold energy was transmitted in everything from the qi to the air currents down to the sound waves, all with the express purpose of immobilizing the target and freezing them solid to their death.

However, 900 years ago even with such an array, his sect still got destroyed. A rumor started circulating that the Echo Resonance Sect had found a purple fog flower. The news created mayhem among the organizations that were around them, and it continually spread outwards.

The purple fog flower was known around the continent as the palace flower. This was because the fog it produced along with the petals had the ability to increase the odds of a cultivator breaking through from the core formation realm to the palace realm. The odds were astronomical to the point there was a saying that if you had a 10% chance of reaching the palace realm, if you had a purple fog flower in your hand before you did anything else with it, the odds shot to 50% and after you consume its petals and refine the fog it produces, your odds instantly sky rocket to 90%.

With the flower, you couldn't fail even if you wanted to, and it didn't just stop there. It could even shorten the time taken to break through in the palace realm as long as it was within the first four stages. Past that, it had no effect but within the first four stages, if one was to take 20 years, if they consumed the flower they could shorten that time to 11 years.

Therefore when news broke that the Echo Resonance Sect had the flower in their possession, friend and enemy alike instantly targetted. The sect tried to disprove the rumors, but no matter what they did, no one would believe them because who would admit they had the purple fog flower if they had it? Them denying it, only increased the odds that they had it.

The final nail in the coffin was when the purple ray that is produced when the flower blooms appeared in their sect. Chaos broke that same day, and the sect was besieged right, left, and center.

The frozen echo resonance array was deployed in full force and its brilliance was revealed to the world but ultimately it still fell to the constant besiegement especially since there was no palace realm cultivator at the sect to man it.

If it did, the Chief disciple, Gong Renshu felt their chances of survival may have been higher. But all that was wishful thinking because in that chaos, he saw a cloaked woman mix in and attack his master who was the sect master along with a few elders. Within minutes they had all been incapacitated, which

came as a shock to Gong Renshu since his master was a quasi palace stage cultivator and the elders next to him were all late stage core formation experts.

However, in ten minutes or less, they were all defeated, and the cloaked woman went on to interrogate them about the frost echo resonance array, and its original blueprint.

Gong Renshu managed to get away with his life when his master deployed a taboo art that gave him enough power to crush a teleportation talisman that he used to get Gong Renshu and himself away. The talisman would transport them to a random location within the continent.

While they managed to get away, it wasn't without a cost. While they were making their getaway, the cloaked woman attacked, which other than making the spatial tunnel they had created unstable, the attack tore through his master, and a bit of it fell on him, taking his eye.

By the time he made it to the other end, his master had already died. There were no farewells, all he got was the dismembered body of his master. He went into hiding for months before he finally resurfaced, and joined the Falling Star Array Pavillion. Lucky for him, the teleportation talisman had transported him a fair distance away from his former sect.

The Echo Resonance Sect was destroyed and the purple fog flower was never found, and whatever Gong Renshu saw that day was only revealed today. The Frozen echo resonance array they had was also from the frozen serenity scripture, though the blueprint that their sect had was of the secondary array, and from the descriptions left in the blueprint, there were three other secondary arrays, and one primary one.

The five arrays combined together to create a top-tier gold-grade art known as the Frozen Temporal Seal Array.

At his former sect, they all liked to daydream about seeing that array in action just once, sadly all who shared that desire with him, died.

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"I think with all the testimonies we have heard, along with the evidence presented, I believe we have sufficient information to make a judgment.

Are we all in agreement?" Yang Qing asked his compatriots on the panel.

"We are.."

"Then let's put it to the vote.."

Chapter 403 Judgment Vote (1)

"By the way before that, Yu Gen, Xia Ting, did you try to sneak in there?" asked Dai Chen.

"We did, but we only managed to penetrate the outer periphery of the sect, the core areas had a much more powerful array guarding it.

Any interference on our part and we risked alarming them.." answered Yu Gen.

"I guess the part you had access to, didn't reveal much.." said Mo Liwei.

"What is it Xia Ting?" asked Yang Qing when he noticed the slightly hesitant look on the gluttonous thick-skinned soup fanatic.

From their brief interaction over the last couple of days, he didn't peg her for the reserved type. She was the kind to speak her true thoughts before even thinking about them, but he still wasn't sure if it was her true character or another one of their masks.

"I may be off but I felt something dangerous and ominous coming from the core region of the sect. It was only for a quick second and then went back to normal.

I could be off about it since it isn't the first time I have gotten such a sensation wrong with the nature of our work we spend so much time being hyper-alert and anticipating attacks that it sometimes warps our senses after doing it for so long.

I may have been overly sensitive, especially with the information we dug about them weighing over my head, it may have influenced my senses for a second.." answered Xia Ting.

Even though she said that, her facial expressions showed she truly believed what she sensed even if it was just for a brief second.

"Yu Gen, you were with her at the time, did you get the same feeling as her?" asked We Ying.

"I did not, though that doesn't mean her judgment may be wrong on what she sensed.."

"Occasionally there have been moments when one of us has sensed something the other hasn't, and what we sensed ended up being a tangible threat.." Yu Gen added after a pause.

"As per the records we have, the person with the highest cultivation base from the sect should be Zhao Ju, the current sect master, and she should be at the third stage of the palace realm.

How recent was this assessment?" asked Mo Liwei.

"As per what we have, the report is about 10 years old," answered Yu Gen.

"I assume you already checked in with the Shadow Hawks?"

"We did, and while they did do an evaluation about 4 years ago, the findings from 10 years ago are still the same.

They have seven palace realm experts and the person with the highest cultivation base still remains Zhao Ju, at the third stage of the palace realm..."

Yu Gen's answer drew contemplative looks from the five judges. They could now understand why Xia Ting was hesitant and doubtful about the feeling she got.

Both Yu Gen and Xia Ting were at the third stage and second stage of the palace realm respectively.

If the person with the highest cultivation base in the Ice Emerald Sect was at the third stage, that was insufficient to make Xia Ting classify the feeling as dangerous. I think you should take a look at

The one minor level gap between the two was insufficient to threaten her. When it came to a fight between the two, the odds were even in Xia Ting's favor.

While level skipping fights got harder the higher up the cultivation realms one moved, the degree of difficulty only became prevalent in the domain realm where the gulf between the first and the third stage was so huge that a third-stage domain expert could effortlessly defeat a first stage domain expert with half his energy left to spare.

However, even with the strictness of the domain realm, there were exceptions that were brought about by the quality of the domain, which was why someone like Meng Chao who was at the eighth stage of the domain realm during the besiegement of the Crystal Jade Palm Sect, was able to witness the whole fight a fair distance away, when other domain experts were afraid of being swallowed in the aftermath of the attacks of the fight.

Quality always helped to a point, especially when the quality was extremely superior which was why Yang Qing could wallop the three palace realm experts, and the same could be expected of Xia Ting who would have been given the best training and the toughest at that as a roaming inquisitor.

As long as the opponent was within the first four stages of the palace realm, also known as the early stage, she should be able to handle her own against someone at the fourth stage. The same was expected of Yang Qing and the rest.

As long as it wasn't someone from the Order with similar foundations or some legacy disciple from the top tier rank 1 organizations and holy lands, they should be able to guarantee their lives against anyone within the same stage. It was par for the course, so Xia Ting saying she felt a dangerous threat from the Ice Emerald Sect, was highly suspect considering the strength of the sect in comparison to her, and there was also the fact that Yu Gen didn't sense anything.

Yang Qing's eyes flashed with a thought as his gaze alternated between Yu Gen and Xia Ting.

"Senior Gen, Senior Ting, there is something I'd like to ask if you don't mind?"

"What is it?" asked Yu Gen with a curious gaze.

"Do the two of you have natural alignments to certain elements, if so, which?" asked Yang Qing.

"Though you can decide against answering, it's okay.." added Yang Qing with a light smile.

Even though they were from the same organization, Yang Qing was cautious in the question he asked, since what he was asking touched upon things that could be termed as a cultivator's secrets and arsenal.

The rules of the cultivation world still needed to be observed within the walls of the Order. As cultivators, they kept certain things to themselves such as their trump cards.

The question Yang Qing asked could very well be misconstrued as him searching for their weakness or looking for clues to their trump cards which was why he opted to ask for natural affinity rather than outright ask if they had special physiques.

His relationship with them was still new, unlike the one he had with his team or with Dai Chen and the rest where they basically dissected each others' special physiques and moves. Caution and respect for bounds had to be observed.

"What are you being all wishy-washy for? We already shared soup, in my book we already have a bond..." Xia Ting said as a greedy glint flashed in her eyes.

"I'm attuned to fire, and his is water.." she added.

"It's as she has said, no need to be reserved.." said Yu Gen with a smile.

"Thank you for your trust, seniors.."

"No problem, though why did you ask that?"

Chapter 404 Judgment Vote (2)

"Well, I recently had an intriguing experience when I was passing through Summerfield kingdom that reminded me of something.

I am sensitive to places, or objects that have a yin-yang nature to them, which is why I'm able to find morning lilly heartseeds easily.

I have the same amount of sensitivity to places or objects that are purely yin or purely yang, however, my greatest sensitivity is to things that are in contrast to my nature, such as the imbalance Li Shu was suffering from would be easily detectable to me than a flower field filled with morning lilies.

A while back when I got in the superior core courts I had the chance to get in one of the treasure vaults of the Order.

Within that vault, there was a treasure of the ascendant grade whose nature was Yin-Yang, however even when I was told that, I couldn't detect it, despite holding it in my hands.

Things that are similar to you are able to hide from you more easily than things that are in complete contrast to your nature since the former knows your workings and can easily fool your senses.

I think the same thing may have happened at the Ice Emerald Sect. Whatever Xia Ting had detected may have avoided Senior Yu Gen's detection because it and Senior Yu Gen have similar attributes thus it could hide from him better than it could Xia Ting who has a contrasting attribute to it.

But if my guess is right..." Yang Qing paused as he eyed all the members present in the room.

"Then it means whatever it or who it was, may have already alerted the sect that they had been infiltrated.

The sect may already been on high alert and considering the nature of the activities they have been engaged in all these years, they're even more so.

What we have going for us is that they don't know who is looking into them yet and I trust the two seniors' capabilities in covering your tracks during the investigations.."

"We were careful. Besides, if they knew the identities of the survivors of their activities, they would have already acted, I doubt they would have left them alive all this time..." answered Xia Ting.

"I have no doubt. But I think with them being aware we will need to act fast to avoid unforeseeable events.

While we know the Ice Emerald Sect is the culprit behind all those heinous events, we still don't know why they did it.

We do know the kidnappings and killings began as far back as 40,000 years ago which was about the time they changed the operation of their sect to be an all-female sect.

Before 40,000 years ago we can say they operated differently, so what happened back then that made them change?

The only female admissions that they made back then is highly doubtful if it was because of their legacy art the emerald frost flow veiled scripture.

Why are they kidnapping people with yin-related physiques? They seem to have actively targeted them over the years, and it's more likely that those victims ended up the same way as Shu Wen.

That fruit that we saw being produced after she disappeared, as per my guess may be the crystallization of her physique after it has been extracted.

How is a sect at the level of the Ice Emerald Sect able to pull that off? As far as I can tell, I've never heard of something like that even from the Order. I think you should take a look at

Have any of you guys?"

At Yang Qing's question, those present nodded their heads sideways. Physique extraction was something unheard of. If it was rumored to be possible, a lot of cases of people with physiques being kidnapped would have already flooded their doorsteps.

Of course, there were cases of those with certain physiques being kidnapped like the crystal heart glazed physique that Yu Mei had, but in such cases, it was because the physique offered something to other cultivators.

For example, the heart of someone with a crystal heart glazed physique could help a cultivator increase their chances of breaking through to the domain realm hence the increased cases of kidnapping.

What they required was the heart itself and not the physique.

What happened to Shu Wen, while it was pure conjecture on Yang Qing's part, the rest all agreed with his hypothesis about the fruit, otherwise why would they be actively targeting those with yin-related physiques?

"Them stealing arts related to the Frozen Serenity scripture is about the only thing that makes sense, but then in those 40,000 years, the organizations that they have destroyed some were more powerful than what they presumably were before 9,000 years ago.

How did they pull it off? Was it outside help or have they been hiding themselves? and it wasn't 9,000 years ago that they first had a palace realm expert within their sect.

There are a lot of unanswered questions surrounding them and their actions. The Ice Emerald Sect we see now may all be a cover, but for now, what matters to us is their guilt and proof of it.

This is why I Yang Qing, judge of the outer palace court find them guilty of kidnapping, wanton murder, and massacre of millions over the years and hereby exercise my vote as part of the panel and vote for the sect's entire demotion.." Yang Qing said as he ignited a talisman that burned in a red flame filled with glyphs.

The flame slowly rose up to the ceiling of the courtroom.

"I, Dai Chen, judge of the outer palace court also find the Ice Emerald Sect guilty and vote for the entire demotion of the sect.."

Just like Yang Qing, he ignited a talisman in his hand that burned into a red flame filled with glyphs that rose to the ceiling next to Yang Qing's.

"I, Zhang Qingge, in my capacity as a judge of the outer palace court find the Ice Emerald Sect and hereby exercise my vote in favor of the sect's entire demotion.."

"I, Wei Ying, as a judge of the outer palace court find the Ice Emerald Sect guilty and label them a heretic sect, and warrants the full punishments of one. I vote for the sect's entire destruction..." as Wei Ying said this the talisman in her hand ignited with a red flame that had tinges of violet in it.

"I, Mo Liwei as a judge of the outer palace court find the Ice Emerald Sect guilty and label them a heretic organization that warrants immediate destruction. I vote for the destruction of the sect.." Mo Liwei coldly said as he ignited his talisman which shone with the same color as Wei Ying's.

The five flames formed a circle and the glyphs within combined and immediately lit up. Yang Qing and the four judges removed their gold eagle medallions which gently floated and blended with the red flames above.

Immediately after the connected glyphs opened a portal to two places. One was a green bamboo courtyard and the other was a mountain filled with white mist.

Chapter 405 The Three Vice Presidents

The images formed were a bit hazy at first but were soon filled with high clarity.

Yang Qing and the rest quickly recognized the image with the courtyard and bamboo around it, because at some point they had all visited that location, especially as part of their induction.

Yang Qing had even been there, just a month ago when he was going to the Requiem. The courtyard with the green bamboo had an ancient wooden plaque hanging above it with the name 'Judicial Review Committee' and in front of the courtyard were five elders in pure white robes with an image of a hammer and a podium embroidered on it.

Three of the five elders, Yang Qing had met on his way to the Requiem. They were; Long Enlai, one of the five soul formation experts in the Judicial Review Committee, Jiang Heng and Jia Bohai who were late stage domain experts.

As for their exact level, Yang Qing had no idea. He only knew they were at the seventh stage or above. Even Lei Weiyuan who regularly got in trouble with, despite being nemeses for all these while, Yang Qing still didn't know his exact cultivation base.

All he knew was Lei Weiyuan was a late-stage domain expert skilled with the sword, who had excellent stalking abilities and more than likely had a charm on him that warded off curses, otherwise with how diligent Yang Qing had cursed him over the years, there was no way he would have left unscathed without the assistance of an object known to ward off curses.

Other than the three, there were two faces next to the Judicial Review Committee members who were not there when Yang Qing came by.

One of them was a lady with light purple hair that was neatly braided to her back and had a purple gem on her forehead. It looked like it had been embedded there. She looked to be around 40 years old, with breathtaking beauty.

She had a genial smile on her face as she looked at Yang Qing and the rest, like that of a grandparent looking at their grandchildren.

It might as well be true since just like Long Enlai and the other two judges, she was among the original judges when the Order was founded. Going by that timeline, she was at the very least 1,000 years old, which was old enough to be their ancestors, which Yang Qing would not dare mention.

Next to her was a middle-aged man with hair that was a mix of red, black, yellow, blue, and green. His irises had the same coloring pattern. Instead of a single color, it was a swirling mix of the five that extended to his pupils.

His name was Tao Wen and of the seventeen members of the Judicial Review Committee, he could be considered the most recent addition, and unlike the others wasn't a judge beforehand but was a requiem guard, who moved over 200 years ago.

From what Yang Qing heard, he had a special physique that was similar in nature to the five-colored deer which gave him proficiency over the five elements, which was why he was able to become a gold-grade alchemist and formation master, and rumor had it soon enough he might be the next soul formation expert of the Judicial Review Committee.

In the other image, the mist cleared up and revealed two people. One of them was a nine-year-old with purple eyes that were filled with a cluster of stars, and the other was a scholarly-looking man with snow-white hair tied in a half bun, a young-looking face that made him look like he was in his late twenties, which was narrow, and an ethereal charm to it. His eyes, however, showed the vicissitudes of time in them.

He had on apricot robes.

Of the two people, one was the Chief Justice Lai Ning, as for the other, Yang Qing didn't seem to know him and when he looked at the others, they didn't seem like they knew him either. Yang Qing could only guess maybe he was another member of the Spirit Council.

"Seems like we have another destruction on our hands.." the man with snow-white hair calmly said.

"Mmh, it seems so.." muttered Chief Justice Lai Ning as he munched on a crispy brown biscuit that was packed in a wooden bowl before them. Next to it was a white porcelain tea set and kettle.

Yang Qing ended up taking a gulp as his eyes narrowed on those biscuits, that just seemed to draw him in, along with the wafting smoke from the kettle.

"Are those biscuits normal?" he muttered in greed.

Everything within him wanted to rush over there. He had had his fair share of biscuits before, and while he liked them, it wasn't to the point that they could affect him as they did now.

"Little Qing don't be greedy. If you had even a shaving of this, you'd likely explode. If you reach the middle stages of the domain realm, maybe you can handle half of it.." Chief Justice Lai Ning said as he gingerly grabbed another and bit into it, with Yang Qing licking his lips like he was the one who took the bite.

He immediately shook his head to clear his head of the greedy desires slowly welling up.

"Just what are they made of?" he wondered.

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"Now for the matter at hand, we have heard the case put forward, and it is a compelling case. Thank you for the efforts you have put into it.." said Long Enlai.

"As for the decision of the panel, three have put a vote for sect demotion, while two have put a vote for its destruction.

"The five votes are essentially the same at its root with one slight difference which I will get to.

But first, let's get our own votes out of the way. What do you think Chief Justice Lai Ning, Vice President Tao Wen?" Long Enlai asked as he conferred the question to the two people in the other image.

The five-panel judges, along with the two roaming inquisitors all had looks of shock when they heard the words 'Vice President Tao Wen.'

The three vice presidents were just as elusive as the president and the chancellor. They were rarely seen and in just under a month, Yang Qing had seen two of them.

There was Mo Ye who appeared during his promotion ceremony which had a lot of surprises including the arrival of representatives from the two holy lands and now they got to meet another one.

While information about the three vice presidents was usually scant, those at the Order knew a bit about them such as their name, and their moniker or epithets.

Vice President Mo Ye was known as the eagle's wing, Vice President Tao Wen was known as the eagle's talon, and the last one, Vice President Zhu Bai was known as the Eagle's eyes.

Chapter 406 Unanimous Decision By The Seven

Their epithets described their roles, which didn't explain much as far as Yang Qing could tell. But he could infer a few things from what he saw during his promotion ceremony.

Vice President Mo Ye purposefully appeared in his ceremony because of the representatives of the two holy lands. Maybe as the eagle's wing, his job was to be a representative of the Order to outside forces, more so in situations that require a high-ranking figure from the Order to be present.

As for Vice President Tao Wen's epithet as the eagle's talon, Yang Qing could only assume his role was combat related like the special inquisitors who were sent after targets that had extreme danger levels. If his guess was true, then that meant the Vice President before them, likely had one of the highest combat abilities in the whole Order.

When his thought reached this point he couldn't help but re-evaluate the thin scholarly-looking man with snow white hair and a genial harmless smile on his face.

"Dean Chu Zhen was right, people like him are the most dangerous," thought Yang Qing as he recalled the various aspects of things to look out for in the survival and adaptability course.

As for the last vice president, Vice President Zhu Bai, as the eagle's eye, Yang Qing could only surmise he was an overseer of some sort. Maybe he oversaw the running of the entire Order or was some fate seer who guarded against enemies that targeted the Order.

He couldn't make heads or tails about it since this vice president was the most mercurial among the three since there was barely anything about him floating around.

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"I have no problems with it, Judge Long Enlai," Vice President Tao Wen gently answered as Chief Justice Lai Ning nodded in agreement to Long Enlai's suggestion along with the other judicial review committee members at his side.

"Okay then. I find that what has been presented in the case has sufficient basis and has thus met the threshold for the extreme measures to be taken as judgment.

On my authority, I support the demotion of the sect with the intent to destroy.."

"I vote in favor of the suggestion," said Jiang Heng

"I vote in favor of the suggestion," said Jia Bohai

"I vote in favor of the suggestion," said Xu Biya who was the purple-haired lady with the purple gem embedded in her forehead.

"I vote in favor of the suggestion," said Li Han who was the the judicial review member with five element colored hair, iris, and pupil.

"I vote in favor of the suggestion," said Chief Justice Lai Ning.

"I vote in favor of the suggestion,,," said Vice President Tao Wen.

Yang Qing, Dai Chen, and Zhang Qinngee all had puzzled looks at the judgment. While in essence, it seemed to support their view, it also seemed to support the judgement of Mo Liwei and Wei Ying, which Yang Qing was still surprised by.

Yang Qing agreed that the sect had done despicable deeds and they must be brought into account for it, but only those who did it were the ones who should bear the consequence, and should not be a blanket punishment for all.

There were bound to be good people in there, maybe people like Ma Yuan's wife and there was also his daughter.

Yang Qing couldn't help but worry in his heart. From what he saw of the Shu family, specifically Shu Wen, he couldn't help but wonder if his wife and daughter had already suffered a similar fate.

An entire destruction would implicate everyone within the sect, which Yang Qing was a bit hesitant to do.

"Yang Qing, Dai Chen, Zhang Qingge, you all must be perplexed by the decision and why Wei Ying and Mo Liwei made the suggestions that they did.." Long Enlai gently said with a tone of an elder guiding the young ones.

Even though the trio didn't outright say it, the hesitation and the confusion in their eyes were as clear as day to a seasoned judge like Long Enlai.

Their reactions weren't exactly unique since it was a common one, especially in such a scenario.

"The decision they made was made in part because of the severity of the crimes of the Ice Emerald Sect, but it was also made in your consideration, especially yours Judge Yang Qing.."

Yang Qing had an even more confused look. He couldn't understand how the duo's votes were made in his best interest. What they suggested would essentially add more body count which made the difficult situation even more so.

Some part of him even regretted making them part of the panel when he heard their votes.

"Do you think the Ice Emerald Sect will let you just capture those involved and surrender themselves to their deaths? If they were such reasonable people then they would not have done what they did.

Then there's also the matter that whatever they have been doing, has seemingly been going on for 40,000 years.

How many of those from the sect, do you think are truly innocent?" Long Enlai said with a sight of pity as he looked at the trios changing expressions.

"That being said, just like you, we believe there are chances that not every member is involved and there are likely to be innocents involved.

If there is, then I hope they can be spared.

From the witnesses brought forward and the evidence gathered, it's enough for us to trace the karma of everyone who has ever been involved in those murders and kidnappings and any other nefarious deeds they may have done, along with the victims that may have not been presented here.

We have someone working on it already as we speak, and we will send you a verified list of every member involved.."

Yang Qing visibly heaved a sigh of relief when he heard this.

"But regardless of what we find out that doesn't change what will happen or lessen the ruling Judge Mo Liwei and Judge Wei Ying made..

The ruling we have just made will have to be personally delivered at their sect grounds by the five of you, specifically you, Yang Qing.

You will have to announce all their crimes before them and the whole continent before you pass down the sentencing.

When the sentencing part arrives, a choice will have to be presented to them.."

Yang Qing, Dai Chen, and Zhang Qingge pricked up their ears, paying attention to every single detail that came to this part.

Chapter 407 Will You Do It?

?

"The choice given only applies to those who are innocent, and the choice is simple they can leave the sect temporarily until the sentencing has passed or they can choose to face it with the rest.

Ultimately it is up to them. If they choose to remain, then regardless of their innocence in the matter, they will share the same fate as the guilty.

Wei Ying's and Mo Liwei's verdict was to help you come to terms with this eventual reality. You may give them the option to leave, some may take it, others may not, they may all take it or they may all decide to stay.

You therefore need to prepare yourself that you may indeed be forced to destroy the entire sect in the execution of the sentence.

As the judge in charge of this case, the burden falls on you first then to the rest. You cannot be half-hearted about it in the least.

You need to prepare yourself for that possibility is still there so it's safer to bring your mind to the odds that this may very well turn out to be an entire sect decimation..

and finally..."

Long Enlai's expression that was soft as he was explaining suddenly turned cold as an overbearing pressure emanated from him.

"You can not hold back in the slightest. The moment the execution starts it doesn't matter whether they are guilty or innocent, if they're a palace realm expert or a body refining expert. Everything and everyone that is within that area is to face your full wrath. Hold nothing back, destroy everything with your full force.

The Ice Emerald Sect has destroyed countless lives, for so many years, and for that, they must face the consequences, and their victims deserve the reprove.

The sentence is a punishment but also a deterrent to the rest of their continent, that should they do what the Ice Emerald Sect did, then they will share a similar fate. It also serves as a warning to the remnants of the sect, should there be some at the end of it from those found innocent and decide to not share the same fate as the sect.

This needs to be a permanent reminder, a traumatic one at that. They need to be traumatized to the point that internal demons that come from that event will halt any cultivation progress they may have.

To leave a lasting impact, the execution needs to be thoroughly frightening for all; those being charged, and those witnessing, and for that you need to prepare yourself now to destroy everything, in the most brutal and fearsome way you can think.

As cold as it may sound, it is the only way we ensure what happened, has less likelihood of happening later..."

"No matter how harrowing the experience may be, this is the burden you have to bear as a judge in the Order.

A burden others have shouldered, and continue to do so, a burden you will shoulder and continue to do so.

This may not necessarily be the only demotion and destruction you handle.."

"Yang Qing, Dai Chen, Zhang Qingge.." Long Enlai's gaze paused on the three, who despite trying to hide it, the overwhelming weight of the situation could be seen on their faces.

Their eyes flashed with disbelief, anxiety, and a slew of other complicated emotions. Their skin tones seemed paler, and some of their body parts could be seen shaking in some way. The lips, the eyes, and the hands.

"I don't envy you or wish it on you, but rely on each other, and your seniors which includes us. We will help where we can, and I won't lie, such an event will leave an impact, but it must be done so instances like what happened to the Shu clan don't end up happening again.

It is impossible to completely prevent such tragedies, but we must do what we can to reduce those odds as much as possible.

So please, do not hesitate."

"Will you do it?" he asked in a soft tone.

A long silence ensued before a response finally came.

"I will do it, but can I make a request?" Yang Qing asked with a heavy but firm expression.

"What is it?" Vice President Tao Wen was the one to ask this.

"Can I be the only one to shoulder this, and they be excused from it.." Yang Qing said as he pointed to Dai Chen, Zhang Qingge, Mo Liwei, and Wei Ying.

No matter how thick-skinned he was, or afraid, with what he had heard, he couldn't in good conscience allow them to bear it. He started the whole thing with Ma Yuan, and he felt he should bear its consequences alone.

"If that is your wish, and theirs, I see no problem with it. How about the rest of you?" Vice President Tao Wen said as he redirected the question to the Judicial Review Committee members and Chief Justice Lai Ning.

"I see no problem with it either...."

Their responses were all more or less the same.

"Dai Chen, Qingee, I'm sorry for selfishly dragging you all into this. Please let me do this.." he said with an apologetic and guilty smile on his face.

"Are we friends?" Dai Chen asked.

"We are?"

"If we find who attacked Lai Lei, will you help me?"

"Of course.."

"Then don't look down on me or our friendship. What I said still stands, even now. I'm not weak or unresolved, that I would shirk on it. I'm in this to the very end. So stop. I'll be there, the same way I know when the moment calls for it, you'll be there for me.

Your refusing now, is what I'd consider being selfish.." Dai Chen said with firmness in his tone.

"Be the shameless Yang Qing we know. Being selfless doesn't suit you.." he added with a light laugh as he punched his shoulder.

"I..m n..o..t w..e..a..k e..i..t..h..e..r," Zhang Qingge meekly added with a stuttering voice as she threw a punch of her own. Though with how nervous she was, she didn't control her strength properly.

"Qingge are you trying to fracture my knee.?! " Yang Qing yelled as he cautiously took a step back from her. Immediately after the trio laughed.

"Seniors.."

"We are also in it to the end. We made that judgment knowing what we were in for.." Mo Liwei said showing a smile that contrasted the lethargic and serious undertone he had since they met.

"I promised Qingge, so I'm staying till the end," said Wei Ying.

The five nodded to each other as they all turned cupped their fists and answered in unison.

"WE WILL DO IT."

Chapter 408 Another Saint Grade Treasure

The seven elders looked ahead at the five young judges with looks of gratification on their faces.

"Good."

Long Enlai said only one word but one could detect the breadth of respect and pride it carried towards the five of them.

Yang Qing, Dai Chen, and Zhang Qingge still had some hesitation in them, and it wasn't only them because even Mo Liwei and Wei Ying were their seniors and had already mentally prepared themselves owing to the judgement they made and even one of them had done a demotion of his own, the weight of it was still as heavy to them as it was to the trio.

Xu Biya the purple-haired lady with the purple gem on her forehead then took over to explain the particulars of the process to be observed when executing the sentence since it wasn't something Yang Qing or the others knew about, and it didn't exactly operate the same way they were used to.

The explanation itself wasn't long as it only touched on a few key areas such as the announcement and the options afforded to those found innocent and wish not to get entangled in the mess, establishing the zone in which to conduct the sentence, and the prevention of interference by outside parties and the measures to take incase of interference, among other small details that may crop up before, during or after the execution of the sentence.

Yang Qing and the rest took everything in as they asked a few questions of their own here and there to ensure they were as prepared as possible.

...

"With that out of the way, you can have this..." Vice President Tao Wen said as he tossed over a 10-inch horn that looked to be from an eland.

It was white with tinges of brown and gold on it, with beautiful curlings on it that looked like rope carvings intertwined together had been crafted on it.

Yang Qing on grabbing it, could feel it was smooth to the touch, and for some reason, he felt he could hear a multitude of voices coming from it, along with the rain sounds.

"That horn is called the harbinger's call. It's a saint-grade artifact whose body was made from the horn of a storm bringer eland, along with other materials.

The horn has seals on it due to its abilities that don't make a distinction between friend and foe. And the artifact's spirit... well, let's say it's better for you that we put it to sleep in the duration that you will have it.

That is to say with the spirit sealed along with the seals in place, the horn will be working at 30% capacity, which is more than enough for what you need it for, which is announcing the verdict of the Ice Emerald Sect, along with their crimes, to both them and every other place within the continent.

Your voice should be able to reach every area around the continent except perilous areas, various mysterious realms, grottos, and areas covered with top-tier gold-grade formation, other than them, you should be able to reach almost every living thing around the continent thanks to the horn's assistance along with various artifacts we have installed in every branch around the continent that will work in tandem with it by amplifying its effects through synergy.

The horn also has the ability to break down formations as another of its abilities. Even in its slumbered state, it should be more than enough to handle whatever formation the Ice Emerald Sect has covering their sect..." Vice President Tao Wen patiently explained.

Yang Qing's gaze got heated as he stared at the horn.

"A saint-grade treasure. Just how many of them do they have?" he thought greedily as he wondered if there was any way he could scam one from the Order.

With the way they kept throwing them around, surely they had more than enough to even give an impoverished palace realm cultivator one.

"I would advise you to put the horn away and seal it, immediately after making the announcement and breaking the formation.

The more you use it, the more likelihood the little fella in there will wake up. She is more trouble than she's worth, so please err on the side of caution and seal her immediately after.

You can use this..." Vice President Tao Wen said as he handed over a brown cloth that looked like it was the soft hide of some beast.

The cloth was the smoothest thing Yang Qing had ever touched, he couldn't help but wonder what material it was made of, and the potential uses of it.

"These stingy bastards really have the good stuff.." Yang Qing venomously thought as he put the horn and the cloth away.

"With this, I think we can draw the case to a close if there's nothing else..." Long Enlai was just about to end when he saw Yang Qing raise his hand.

"Is there anything you want to ask, Judge Yang Qing?"

"It's not a question but more of a request...The two techniques related to the Frozen serenity scripture, could I have a look at them?" asked Yang Qing

Even though he wasn't interested before, but with the things the Ice Emerald Sect had done over the years to get parts of the scripture, he might as well have a look at it.

The Order had two arts related to it. One was the frost fire art, which was a body and soul cultivation art, and the other was the Winter's embrace which was meditation art that could be used even by someone in the domain realm.

They were both blue-grade arts. With his station, he had the clearance to learn them, but it would take a few days before he got the approval, which was why he opted to use the assistance of the big figures present.

His guess proved to be right on the mark because after a few minutes, he was given copies of the art, which though Yang Qing appreciated it, felt it was kind of a letdown because he was hoping for the original copies.

Some part of him felt there might be something to the segmented arts of the Frozen Serenity Scripture, and having the original copies could help shed some light on that guess.

It was rare to find an art that had been cut apart the way the Frozen Serenity Scripture was done. It may have been done by the Frozen Serenity Sect, as for the why, while Yang Qing had no clue, this was the type of mystery he enjoyed digging over.

However, he would have to postpone the investigation until after the matter with the Ice Emerald Sect had been settled.

Chapter 409 Meeting Under The Wisteria Tree

Getting the original copy of a cultivation art required authorization from the president of the Order, and the Chief Librarian. Either that or the approval from the three vice presidents, and seven members of the spirit council, after which he would also need to sign a soul contract with a timed duration.

These measures were employed only when one wanted to take the original copy of the cultivation art out of the Main Library where they were stored. But if one wanted to read them there, the only thing required was for them to have clearance access to the level in which they were stored. They didn't require anybody's permission.

These measures were employed to preserve the integrity of those copies since there were treasures and artifacts in the library that were put in place to ensure it.

Cultivators could imbue their will, in the original arts hand-crafted by them, and they could hide other things in there too. As long as they were preserved, one always had an opportunity to discover them.

A gold-grade alchemy formula had once been found hidden within the texts of a top tier orange grade cultivation art, a cultivation art that appeared to be a red grade but it had a trigger and conditions to it, which when met, transformed the art into a blue grade art, a booklet containing a cultivation art that ended up gaining spiritual awareness.

Cases like these have been observed within the Main Library at the institute which was why the Order was very strict towards lending out of original copies.

After receiving the two copies, the portals leading to where the Judicial Committee members were, the Vice President, and the Chief Justice, immediately close up after they wished them well.

Yang Qing and the rest would act immediately after the report containing all the guilty members was provided by the Judicial Review Committee. In the meantime as they waited they all went to the administration hall, in the deployment department and filled out the required scrolls along with getting marked by the saint-grade artifact, the Spirit Calling Bell, which worked similar to a soul lamp, except in addition to notifying their status to the higher-ups, it also safeguarded their souls and had a teleportation ability attached to that protection

After they had finished with the administration hall, they all went their own ways to prepare themselves for what was to come.

Yang Qing sighed as he made his way out of the court building and walked in the direction of the Thousand Flavors Restaurant.

Despite being one of his favorite spots in the whole area, he had a hesitant and conflicted expression as he went there. His steps were slow, and a few times it seemed like he wanted to turn back. He didn't seem like he wanted to go there.

As he walked into the restaurant, Cai Ying was there to greet him like always, but he was surprised when he received a lethargic and absent-minded nod from Yang Qing.

Yang Qing ordered a few dishes with the same absent-minded expression and left, making his way to his abode, leaving a confused Cai Ying behind, along with other staff members who were used to a

boisterous Yang Qing, every time he walked in and left. The silent, slow-walking Yang Qing was new to them.

A few minutes later Yang Qing was in front of the entrance to his abode. He stood there for a couple of minutes before he let out a defeated sigh.

"It has to be done.." He muttered as he walked in, dreading every step he took toward his courtyard.

At the seats outside there were two people there. One was Zheng Hu and the other was Ma Yuan whose legs kept nervously tapping the ground over and over.

...

The core region of the Ice Emerald Sect,

"It seems there were intruders in here..."

"How?!.. I have been manning the array over the past month, and I haven't detected anything, and I didn't slack off either. Senior sister Mei can attest to that sect master.." "I think you should take a look at

"I'm not doubting you Zhilan. I didn't detect anything either. I was only just informed..."

Seven ladies of different ages, each with breathtaking beauty and matching cold temperament were seated in lotus positions beneath a 50-meter Wisteria tree that had pink purple radiance floating around it with faint mist being produced from its body. It had blue-black crystalline leaves, that added further glamor to the tree.

The seven ladies all had pure white robes and white jade milk smooth skin.

"Was it her?" one of the ladies cautiously asked directing the question to a lady who looked to be in her fifties and had smoothly flowing white hair and light blue eyes. She seemed to be the center of the group.

"It was.." the lady answered.

"For someone to be able to penetrate our defenses with none of us being able to detect it, even you sect master, that means they're pretty skilled in formations and powerful at that too..."

"Could it have been the ancestor of the Twin River Empire.." another lady chimed in.

"He is the only one strong enough to sneak right under our noses, and with his relationship with those lunar bug bastards, we know he has been eyeing our art..mmph, just because he is at the sixth stage, he thinks he can act as he pleases..." a murderous intent flashed in the eyes of one of the ladies as she said this. There was a small mole under her eye

"It's not him...There were two intruders... One was at the second stage and the other was at the third stage.." answered the lady in light blue eyes.

The atmosphere turned grim with complicated and wary looks being exchanged all around.

"You're sure?" asked the lady with the mole under her left eye.

"It's why I have gathered you all here. The situation this time may not be as simple. Two palace realm cultivators of unknown origins, who are just in the early stages of the palace realm just like us, were able to sneak past our formation and avoid the detection of seven palace realm experts..

Their origins are definitely not simple and as for their motives, it's still too early to tell, but we need to be prudent.."

"Why didn't the elder act?"

"She is at a critical juncture and can't spare the attention. We need to stop all activities outside and the sect needs to be on high alert.

I've already sent Fu Ning, Luo Jingfei, and Ma Song out to quickly bring back those outside, while we will join Zhao Shan in ensuring there are no intruders in the sect...

I will remain here to watch over the tree and the elder, while the rest of you handle the sect. Make sure you're alert and in constant communication, that is all..." the lady with blue eyes said as she dispersed them.

"Yaozu, stay behind.." she added, addressing a 30-year-old lady with smooth white hair and the only person from the group who wasn't a palace stage cultivator, but she didn't seem to be far off from it.

Chapter 410 Delivering The News To Ma Yuan

Yang Qing's courtyard

"Judge Yang Qing.." Ma Yuan on detecting the gaze of Zheng Hu looked behind him and spotted Yang Qing walking over.

He had been brought over by Zheng Hu who had been the person who had been feeding him the progress of the case during the past month.

However, the updates stopped almost a week ago when Zheng Hu disappeared, and the person from the administration department attached to his case, only gave him the barest of minimums.

Over the past week, he had not heard anything, and then Zheng Hu came out of the blue and told him Yang Qing wanted to see him later in the evening at his abode.

He had received that notice in the morning, and the whole day, he had been a bundle of nerves. He was anxious, excited, and filled with dread.

The seven-year-old nightmare was about to end. He guessed Yang Qing called him over to potentially tell him about the conclusion of the case. That news excited him but also terrified him.

On one hand, there was a chance he would finally be reunited with his wife and daughter, and on the other, he may get the news that he had half expected, dreaded, and buried in the deepest recess of his mind, the expectation that was so terrifying to him that it drove him to madness and despair that he tried to take his life.

That news was the confirmation that his wife and daughter were dead. Even though he tried to hold on to hope that they might be okay, he couldn't completely remove that conclusion from his mind.

He had seen how ruthless the world was, especially the cultivation world, and when Yang Qing helped him recall the memories of that night with the thought-clearing incense stick, he didn't only recall the events of that night, but he also managed to see his wife's look that night. She was abjectly terrified when the white-haired woman broke into their home and when she went for their daughter.

His wife always had a stoic face. While over the years he had learned how to tell if she was happy or mad, especially the latter along with an array of other emotions, those emotions were not clearly written on her face but that night, even a blind stranger could tell she was afraid.

His mind couldn't help but wander to dark places every time he remembered the fear she had and what potential future awaited them.

He had experienced and seen a lot of things as a rogue cultivator, so he had no shortage of ideas of how bad it could get, and those ideas terrified him. They terrified him so badly, that occasionally some part of him hoped they died a peaceful death seven years ago.

"Ma Yuan, thanks for coming.." Yang Qing said trying to pull out the most comforting smile he could.

Yang Qing wanted to unpack the dishes he had picked from the Thousand Flavors Restaurant, but he decided against it and instead took out a gourd that had a flowing blue mist emblem on it.

The gourd was a natural treasure. It was made from the tranquil mistgourd and had the ability to add calming properties to anything that was stored in it, along with chilling it. The gourd wasn't expensive, so Yang Qing used it to store his wines.

He decided to take out the spirit lake rice wine which had a mellow undertone that refreshed and renewed the mind, which added to the effect of the tranquil mistgourd, he hoped would be able to help Ma Yuan handle the news.

Yang Qing poured a cup for himself, Ma Yuan, and Zheng Hu, then sat down.

"Ma Yuan, we have made progress with your case, and we already know who has your wife and daughter.

The lady you saw is called Deng Yaozu and she is an elder of the Ice Emerald Sect. There's a high likelihood that your wife was a member of that sect too.

Though the name 'Shun Fei' you gave us, doesn't appear in the list of recorded members we have. Which is not strange as she may have changed her name when she left the sect..."

Ma Yuan's hand trembled as he held on to the wine urn which caused some to spill over. His eyes immediately became hazy, with his lips quivering.

"Are...are...are....they?" It seemed like it took every willpower he had to get those words out of his mouth. I think you should take a look at

Yang Qing and Zheng Hu, despite trying to hide their true thoughts so as not to startle Ma Yuan, couldn't help but sigh when they saw his current look.

"I can't confirm if they are alive or dead yet, but I can confirm they were taken by Deng Yaozu and more than likely the sect knew about it, and supported it. So it's very likely that they are there, as per their states, I honestly don't know..."

Yang Qing paused as his look turned sympathetic.

"There's something else I also need to tell you, and it's not easy..."

Ma Yuan who had been out of sorts immediately froze at Yang Qing's words as he looked at him.

"What?"

His gaze slowly moved to Zheng Hu who spotted the same look as Yang Qing. His stomach immediately churned, and he felt like his blood was freezing over by the second, and his tongue had a bitter aftertaste forming.

Even without them saying, he knew it wasn't anything good. His mind couldn't help but wander to those horrendous scenarios he had imagined happening to them over the years.

παΠδσNovel.com "What happened to your wife and daughter, it isn't the first time the Ice Emerald Sect has done this. It has been doing so for the past 40,000 years as far as we can tell.

And...."

Yang Qing felt his tongue get heavier, and whatever words he had rehearsed on the way over seemed to be quickly escaping him, but in the end, he steeled himself and broke everything to Ma Yuan.

While Yang Qing was mindful enough to leave out the gory details of how the sect conducted its affairs, the much he did reveal was enough to drain the color out of Ma Yuan's skin, and in the end, Ma Yuan couldn't take it as he laughed and cried hysterically, teetering close to breaking down.

When it seemed like he was about to lose it, Yang Qing swiftly knocked him out.

"Watch over him. He should be out for three days, by the time he comes to, all this will all be over. In the end, he will have a concrete answer, whichever it may be.." Yang Qing said with a tired sigh as he handed over Ma Yuan to Zheng Hu.

"When are you leaving?" Zheng Hu asked.

"A day from now. There's a report from the Committee I'm waiting on, and I also need a day to prepare myself.

We all decided to take a day for it.." Yang Qing said as his gaze turned distant.

Zheng Hu closed and opened his mouth a couple of times before he finally said,

"You're sure we can't come?"

"I appreciate the sentiment Zheng Hu, and I feel the weight would feel lighter if you were all there with me, but if I were to take you all with me as you are, part of my concentrations would drift towards your well-being..."

"But thank you.." he added with a gratified smile.

"Okay.." said Zheng Hu with complicated emotions flashing through his eyes as he clenched his fists as he walked away.