

Ancient GM 161

Chapter 161: Crushing Defeat

How could Ye Wuque's victory be considered a fluke? That battle of his had obviously been won overwhelmingly.

Ranked fourth out of the ten prodigies, Qiu Mo hadn't been that different from Ye Wuque of the past. But now that Ye Wuque condensed his 3rd Astral Soul, Qiu Mo was left far behind.

Ye Wuque retreated out of the arena, only to see 1st Sword stepping up. A pressure caused by monstrous sword intent could be heard whistling around him.

Although Ye Wuque had also used swords for his attack, he wasn't a pure sword cultivator. 1st Sword was different; judging from the aura his body emitted, one could clearly feel that he was a powerful, pure sword cultivator.

The attacks of sword cultivators were absolutely dominating and incomparably sharp.

Rain slowly strode up the arena. She was clad in white and was young and beautiful, about 20 years of age. In the academy, she had plenty of suitors, but up until now, there wasn't a single person who had successfully wooed such a outstanding beauty.

"I await your guidance." 1st Sword bowed to Rain. Although these people were here for provocation, they still had their manners, giving no opportunities for others to castigate them.

"Please." Rain returned the bow, in a gentle and graceful manner. It was hard to imagine that such a beautiful woman like her was actually tremendously powerful in terms of combat ability.

1st Sword slowly walked forwards. In an instant, his Sword-type Astral Soul burst into radiance. It was a tri-colored sword, glowing with a dazzling light in mid air. It was incomparably resplendent, as though the brilliance it exuded wanted to blind the eyes of everyone in the crowd.

"3rd Astral Soul, All-are-Swords." The gazes of the crowd stiffened in surprise. No wonder he was the leader of the Three Swords of Snowcloud. His attachment towards swords was extraordinary.

The tri-colored Sword Astral Soul granted one of the highest strength boosts in terms of attacks.

Rain also released her own Astral Soul. Meteor showers suddenly fell from the skies.

"Her 3rd Astral Soul is actually from the 4th Heavenly Layer!" Voices filled with startlement rang out as surprise painted the countenances of the crowd. Especially on the faces of many from the Emperor Star Academy. They couldn't help but exclaim in surprise.

"Senior Rain is so powerful but so low profile."

"Senior Rain is many times more powerful than Qiu Mo. Qiu Mo had a somewhat undeserved reputation." Many people began discussing in low voices. Qiu Mo's countenance turned extremely unsightly as the sound of their discussions drifted into his ears.

Even more interesting was that Rain actually chose a Meteor-type Astral Soul. With her in the center, rains of meteor showers fell about her, creating an area-of-effect.

Simultaneously, a pair of pure white beautiful wings appeared on the back of Rain. At this moment, Rain seemed akin to an angelic being from the Heavens and was many times more striking compared to back when Ye Wuque revealed his wings.

“How beautiful...” A bunch of young girls exclaimed.

But there were also many who were worried for Rain. How could her attacks be powerful enough considering the types of her chosen Astral Souls?

1st Sword stepped forwards. Sword light slashed out, lacerating everything in his path. The tri-colored sword glowed with three stream of different coloured sword light as it slashed out towards Rain.

Rain’s silhouette flickered unceasingly as a rain-screen shrouded her within. As the three streams of sword light descended, she stood there within her rain-screen, unharmed.

“Her footwork.: Qin Wentian noticed that Rain’s legs was glowing with Astral Light. He had once attended a lecture by Rain. Back then, he discovered that Rain had many unique concepts when it comes to cultivation, and it was only after her lecture did Qin Wentian manage to comprehend the method of spitting out sword light and unleashing his palm attacks with his foot.

Seeing how ferocious 1st Sword’s attacks were and how Rain seemed to be invulnerable, Qin Wentian had a faint feeling that in this battle, Rain would most likely be able to emerge victorious.

Indeed, the attacks of 1st Sword got increasingly flustered, akin to a raging storm of wind and rain, pressing so intently towards Rain that she didn’t even have the space to breath. However, at the final moment, one of his attacks appeared as though it had finally successfully hit Rain. But soon after, he discovered that he was sorely mistaken. The body of the Rain which he had struck dissipated into motes of Astral Light as yet another figure appeared within that previous rain-screen.

“Is this a variant Illusion-type Astral Soul?” THE crowd had disbelief on their countenances as they witnessed Rain defeating 1st Sword. From the start to the end, 1st Sword seized the initiative and controlled the tempo of the match, but despite of this, his attacks did not manage to truly threaten Rain.

“I won by a fluke.” Rain retreated a few steps and politely added. Akin to Ye Wuque, her polite words also seemed to contained sarcasm within them.

Wasn’t these people very arrogant? They still lost in the end.

Wang Teng appeared on the arena as a terrifying aura gushed out from him. For this battle, his opponent was Lin Hua, leader of the Greencloud Association.

Qin Wentian had a pretty good impression of Lin Hua. Previously, if it were not for the appearance of Lin Hua, he might really have killed Qin Wentian. And if he really did so, based on the might of the Nine Mystical Palace, the academy wouldn’t have wanted to shield him.

But the moment he saw Wang Teng’s attacks, Qin Wentian already knew that Lin Hua would be defeated in this battle.

Qin Wentian wasn’t the only one who had this feeling. As the crowd witnessed the clashes, their hearts couldn’t help but shudder at Wang Teng’s combat prowess. He was akin to an immensely

powerful desolate beast, domineering, eradicating everything in his path. Finally, Lin Hua had no way to continue under the ever-increasing fury of Wang Teng's strikes and was defeated.

"This guy, it's as though he's a trump card prepared by Chu Tianjiao. If he fought, he would definitely win."

Qin Wentian gazed at Chu Tianjiao's incomparably calm countenance. Chu Tianjiao appeared free from all worries, as though success was already in the bag. Since he dared to come here today, he would surely not return in defeat.

The 4th battle, Wu Chong versus Du Yidao, leader of the Asura Faction.

Back then, Luo Qianqiu had also been a member of the Asura Faction. However, other than the Knight's Association, the students of the academy recognised and evaluated everything based on accomplishments, ignoring their status and position.

The Asura Faction placed an emphasis on insane training and obtaining strength regardless of all methods. They would unhesitatingly throw themselves in danger to grow stronger. But in such a scene, they would undoubtedly stand on the side of the Emperor Star Academy.

Wu Chong was a famous cultivator from the Godly General Martial Palace and had three different Beast-type Astral Souls, granting him an extremely high degree of augmentation in his attacks. However, Du Yidao wasn't that bad either. His attacks were all extremely vicious, and capable of ending a life with every strike. It was as though he fought with no regards to his life, the embodiment of the word ruthlessness.

However, Wu Chong's battle intent and ruthlessness didn't lose out to Du Yidao

The Godly General Martial Palace was situated in the depths of the Dark Forest. The people there were all talents nurtured by the military from a young age. Naturally, ruthlessness was already built into their character. The students there treated the Dark Forest as their training grounds and had life and death battles in their training sessions almost every day. Their cruelty in training didn't lose out in the slightest when compared to those from the Asura Faction.

Upon seeing the multitude of wounds appearing on both of their bodies as a result of the crazed and frenzied battle, several people in the crowd silently admired them.

And ultimately, with a roar of rage, Wu Chong finally suppressed Du Yidao with the flaring strength of his Beast-type Astral Souls, blasting him off the arena and claiming victory for the 4th battle.

In this case, out of the five battles proposed, the Royal Academy had already won three of them.

Their challenges resulted them in obtaining a glorious achievement.

From now onwards, people in the Royal Academy would say that the Royal Academy was stronger than the Emperor Star Academy.

This was their second objective in coming other than settling the matter of Xiao Lù and Qin Yao.

If the Royal Academy wanted to deal with the Emperor Star Academy, naturally they wouldn't brazenly wage an all-out war with it. They could only adopt a method like this, slowly peeling away the layers of perceived invincibility the masses had regarding the Emperor Star Academy.

It would be impossible to bring the Emperor Star Academy down overnight.

"Do we still need to continue with the last battle?" Chu Tianjiao turned his gaze towards the spectator stand as he calmly inquired.

The sound of his voice was extremely unpleasant to hear when it drifted into the eardrums of those from the Emperor Star Academy. Was there still a need to continue battling?

They had already won three out of the five battles. From a certain perspective, they were already the victors.

"Naturally, we will continue." The countenance of Old Gu was unsightly. The leader of the Heavenly Demon Association, Xanxus, walked up the arena.

Xanxus was a 3rd level Yuanfu Realm cultivator, and in the Emperor Star Academy, those who broke through to the next level had already left the academy.

From a certain perspective, this meant that among the students, Xanxus was the pinnacle of strength in the Emperor Star Academy.

For even stronger students, they had already left Chu in pursuit of higher cultivation.

Strictly speaking, this battle no longer held any significance in victory or defeat. He fought for the honor and glory of the Emperor Star Academy.

Xiao Lan strode up. This unknown cultivator had never appeared within the Royal Academy before. He lifted his head, gazing at Xanxus. His gaze gave off an extremely uncomfortable feeling to those who saw it, sharper even than the sharpest swords.

"You are not my opponent. Roll off the stage."

Xiao Lan calmly spoke, causing a glint of extreme coldness to flicker in Xanxus's eyes.

He was the leader of the Heavenly Demon Association. In the academy, his status and position was extraordinary. The Heavenly Demon Association was the first association to be formed after the Emperor Star Academy was founded, and could be considered a symbol of the Emperor Star Academy.

But now, they were actually being humiliated by others.

Not only that, for the five cultivators Chu Tianjiao brought here today, the four in front were all polite despite their high level of martial prowess. However, the 5th of them had a character that was completely opposite from the previous four.

Savage and arrogant. It was as though he had intentionally wanted to humiliate the Emperor Star Academy.

"We will only know after we battle." Xanxus voice was extremely cold as he replied.

BZZZZ! A raging wind billowed past as Xiao Lan's silhouette transformed into a stream of light. As their eyes met, Xanxus only felt himself falling into a mysterious reality. He couldn't even lift his hand to defend in the slightest.

In the direction of the Emperor Star Academy, someone stood up as astonishment clouded his features.

BOOM! A thunderous sound echoed, breaking apart the silence of the night. An instant later, Xanxus's chest was lacerated. Blood flowed out unceasingly.

"Scram!" Xiao Lan sent out a palm strike, blasting Xanxus off the arena. Old Gu's silhouette flickered as he appeared behind Xanxus, catching him before Xanxus was slammed to the ground. He asked, "Are you alright?"

"Teacher, I'm sorry, I made you disappointed." Xanxus apologetically gazed at Old Gu.

So it turns out that Xanxus, the leader of the Heavenly Demon Association, was actually a student of Old Gu.

"A loss is a loss, no big deal." Old Gu consoled Xanxus, but an extremely sharp light flickered in the depths of his eyes. Earlier, when Xiao Lan struck out, his attacks actually contained pressure that could affect one's consciousness. Such a person was indeed extremely terrifying.

At the very least, in the Emperor Star Academy, there wasn't a character such as Xiao Lan.

"So this is all the Emperor Star Academy amounts to." Xiao Lan icily stated, malice thick in his voice. But with such an ending, no one could dispute his words.

Four defeats in the five battles.

Today, Chu Tianjiao did his preparations well before coming over to provoke and issue challenges to the academy. If it wasn't for Rain winning a battle, their losses would have been even uglier.

But despite of her victory, their situation currently was still extremely embarrassing. Three of the leaders belonging to the four strongest student associations and faction had actually lost!

Such a pitiful ending would surely be extremely damaging to the reputation of the Emperor Star Academy.

Today, Chu Tianjiao had achieved his objective!

Chapter 162: Returning politeness for politeness

Chu Tianjiao stood up. Although his side just won a major victory, his countenance remained unchanged, with no hints of complacency. On the contrary, he bowed towards the Elders of the Emperor Star Academy as he stated, "Respected Elders, Chu Tianjiao of the junior generation has some things he wishes to say."

Old Gu gently let down Xanxus as he glanced at Chu Tianjiao. This person was neither proud nor hot-tempered and had great talent. Indeed, he could be considered a precious gem.

A pity, his ambitions were too wild. He wanted to swallow Chu whole, ridding it of all other powers, allowing the Royal Clan of Chu to cover the skies with one hand.

Without the Emperor Star Academy and the resistance of the Qin Clan, the imperial authority of the Royal Clan was absolute.

“Victory and defeat are common on the cultivation path. As for the battles today, the students of my Emperor Star Academy will bear this in mind and will continue to work even harder in their cultivation.” Regardless of what he thought in his heart, Old Gu wouldn’t allow the academy to appear as a sore loser. At the very least, Chu Tianjiao’s words were beautifully spoken, yet, everyone knew of his rapacious ambitions.

“Chu Tianjiao admires the vision of Elder Gu. But for the matter regarding Qin Yao, I have to stress it again and hope that Elder would reconsider allowing Miss Qin to accompany Crown Prince Xiao Lù back to Snowcloud.” Chu Tianjiao’s tone was polite, neither forceful nor overbearing.

“As long as the Elders of the Academy don’t obstruct us of the junior generation, we will take her back with us.” Chu Tianjiao spoke again.

“In this case, do you mean you will resort to force?” A glint of coldness flashed in Old Gu’s eyes.

“We don’t dare to. However, this is originally a matter among the junior generations, so it would be good if we handle it ourselves. Naturally, if the Elders of the Emperor Star Academy shameless make use of their numbers to obstruct the path of the junior generations, I have nothing else to say.” Chu Tianjiao placed an extremely huge hat on the head of the Emperor Star Academy. Everyone on the scene understood his intentions.

it was as though he was intentionally provoking the academy now after the Royal Academy obtained victory in the previous battles. This wasn’t about the matter of the academy blocking his path to Qin Yao, but rather the students of the academy were useless and had to depend on their seniors to bully them, the members of the junior generations.

“The logic of the 3rd Prince really made me unsure of whether should I laugh or cry.” Old Gu remarked sarcastically. “Based on your logic, after you won the battles, this gave you the right to forcibly snatch Qin Yao Away? And if the Emperor Star Academy interferes, this meant that we the Elders are bullying the junior generations? WHAT DO YOU TAKE THE EMPEROR STAR ACADEMY AS?” Old Gu roared.

“If Elder insists on understanding it this way, Chu Tianjiao has nothing more to say. If the Emperor Star Academy still insists on their stance, I can only leave. However, wouldn’t the reputation of your academy be besmirched?” Chu Tianjiao smiled.

“You merely won a few deliberately pre-arranged battles. Why do I feel as though the Royal Academy is already standing on the Emperor Star Academy’s head?” Qin Wentian couldn’t bear it and stepped forth. Chu Tianjiao looked humble on the surface but in reality, each of his words and actions were deliberately forceful and extremely overbearing.

“The Emperor Star Academy wasn’t prepared while you guys somehow gathered a few unknown experts whom nobody has ever heard of and deliberately chose who to challenge. Do you also consider this a victory? Today, the Royal Academy paid a visit that we will return it ‘politely’ sooner or later. And with regards to the Emperor Star Academy, most of our Yuanfu Realm students have already graduated, so battles at the realm of Yuanfu don’t really hold much persuasiveness.”

Qin Wentian slowly spoke, causing the countenance of the crowd to freeze. According to Qin Wentian, it was as though he was preparing to counter with a challenge to the Royal Academy. Even the eyes of Old Gu shone with a luster after he heard Qin Wentian’ words.

“On the contrary, for martial academies in Chu, Arterial Circulation cultivators are the most numerous. Don’t you feel that battle challenges at the Arterial Circulation Realm would be more appropriate? Five days from now, there will be five students at the Arterial Circulation Realm from the Emperor Star Academy paying a visit to the Royal Academy. I can guarantee that these five students are definitely not outsiders we hired from outside and would certainly be people that the Royal Academy knows.”

Qin Wentian was undoubtedly hinting that the Emperor Star Academy wouldn’t be as shameless as Chu Tianjiao, hiring experts from god knows where to fight their battles.

Old Gu casted a glance at Qin Wentian and laughed. Today, the Royal Academy’s visit was to smack their faces and to destroy the reputation of the Emperor Star Academy. Qin Wentian’s suggestion was excellent, provided that they won.

After all, there were bound to be many elites after the merger between the Royal Academy and the Godly General Martial Palace.

“This suggestion is excellent.” Old Gu spoke, “The majority of our Yuanfu students have already graduated and left the academy. Indeed, there isn’t much to compare here. However, I believe that both our academies would have a huge number of those at Arterial Circulation.”

“As for the matter regarding Qin Yao, what is the stance of the Emperor Star Academy?”

“Qin Yao currently is a student of my academy. If 3rd Highness dares to say that if our Emperor Star Academy wins the battles five days from now, we would have the rights to snatch any beautiful female students without us facing interference from the Royal Academy, I have nothing else to add.” Old Gu coldly laughed. Based on Chu Tianjiao’s status, there was no way he would make such a ridiculous decision.

Chu Tianjiao went silent. He knew that he had no hopes of bringing Qin Yao away today. Naturally, he already knew before he came that it would be impossible, but still, some words had to be said on the surface. Not only that, they already achieved their objective to place the Emperor Star Academy in an embarrassing position. News of such matters would surely be spread swiftly to the entire Royal Academy, thus affecting the reputation of the Emperor Star Academy.

However, Chu Tianjiao had never expected that Qin Wentian would actually issue a challenge to the Royal Academy instead.

“Farewell.” Chu Tianjiao bowed once again before he turned and departed. Those around him mirrored his actions and strode away.

“Would the Royal Academy accept our challenge five days from now?” Qin Wentian stared at the departing back view of Chu Tianjiao as he inquired.

“Anytime, whenever you are ready.” The sound of Chu Tianjiao’s voice drifted over. Old Gu’s countenance turned heavy as he spoke to Qin Wentian who was standing beside him, “Wentian, after the merger of the two academies, in addition to them seeking help from external experts, this matter is not going to be so simple to handle.”

“Today, they were the guests, so out of politeness, we followed their rules. Five days from now, we will be the guests instead and will set rules of our own. Why do we need to battle separately?” A sharp glint of light flickered in Qin Wentian’s eyes, causing the countenance of Old Gu to freeze. After which he patted Qin Wentian’s back. The little guy’s pressure was going to be exceptionally great.

The crowd gradually departed. And just as Chu Tianjiao had predicted, news of their Royal Academy’s previous challenge erupted and was swiftly spread to the entire Royal Capital.

The newly emerged Royal Academy wanted to make good use of their limelight after the merger to suppress the Emperor Star Academy, becoming the number one martial academy in the Royal Capital.

Indeed, this caused the hearts of many younger talents to waver. Initially, the majority of them had intended to enroll in the Emperor Star Academy a few days from now. Did they have to change their decisions?

However, there was another piece of news being disseminated. The Emperor Star Academy felt that their losses were unjust and reissued another challenge to the Royal Academy.

And the person who issued the challenge was none other than the champion of the Jun Lin Banquet—Qin Wentian.

With Qin Wentian’s combat prowess, it was indeed tough for him to find a match at Arterial Circulation. However, what about the rest? Would the odds be in the favour of the Emperor Star Academy?

Currently, Qin Wentian was in closed door seclusion again. After Francis received his letter, he followed Qin Wentian’s instructions and handed the Divine Inscription Painting over to the Divine Weapon Pavilion.

The Divine Weapon Pavilion, using its fastest speed in addition to paying an astronomical price, put together all the things that Qin Wentian needed and delivered them to the Emperor Star Academy.

Among the items he needed, there were several demonic cores and an immense amount of demonic-yuan energy Yuan Meteor Stones as well as other resources that stored demonic essence. Just this batch of items that were delivered over could be said to be priceless.

However, this was merely sufficient to cultivate the Fiend Transformation Art to the first level.

And not only that, these amount of resources were insufficient for him to reach the pinnacle of the first level. To achieve the complete mastery of the first level required even more resources.

And with regards to Demonic Emergence, the second level of the Fiend Transformation Art, not only would he need astronomical amounts of resources, he would also need to condense powerful Beast-type Astral Souls before he could cultivate it.

But that was something Qin Wentian only needed to worry about after he stepped into Yuanfu, and opened his 3rd Astral Gate. The current him only wanted to focus on cultivating the first level—Demonic Body.

Qin Wentian immersed himself within, completely ignoring the matters of the outside world.

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And as for the three greatest companies within Chu, other than the Sky Transport Network and Heaven's Wonder, the remaining one was the Heavenly Treasure Tower.

The Sky Transport Network was the greatest delivery and transport power of Chu, Heaven's Wonder was the greatest gambling establishment, while the Heavenly Treasure Tower was the biggest place where precious treasures were transacted.

There were some similarities with the Divine Weapon Pavilion and also some differences. The main component of goods the Divine Weapon Pavilion was in the market for was the sale and buying of Divine Weapons. However, the Heavenly Treasure Tower focused more on transactions of rare oddities and precious treasures.

And thus, the Heavenly Treasure Tower was also Chu's grandest auction house.

There were three levels in the Crystal Jade Auction House sanctioned by the Heavenly Treasure Tower. The entire building was bathed in resplendent light, emitting a sense of luxuriousness.

Today, regardless of whether was it the first, second or third level of the Crystal Jade Auction House, all of the seats were filled to the brim. Because, earlier, the Heavenly Treasure Tower had release a piece of news that there was going to be an item of extraordinary value up for auction. Such a news inevitability stirred the curiosity of the masses.

For items that were able to be sold in the Crystal Jade Auction Hall, there was no need to doubt their value. And hence, there were many aristocrats here today.

Zuo Yin and Murin was here, and so was Orchon. Ye Zhan also brought Liu Yan here. Autumn Snow and her friends came as well. They wanted to see the treasure that the Heavenly Treasure Tower wanted to auction away today.

Only to see that on the first level of the Crystal Jade Auction Hall, a beautiful maiden clad in transparent robes were standing atop a gigantic crystal lotus. Her beauty could only be described as stunning, and she was a feast for the eyes for the crowd.

The crystal lotus slowly rose into the air and began to hover. The beautiful girl smiled lightly, charisma gushing forth from her. "Today, the item being auctioned is an item that came from one of the most outstanding youths in the history of the Emperor Star Academy. If it were me, however, I'd remove the section 'one of' from that youth's description."

As the sound of her voice faded, astonishment and awe could be seen on the faces of the crowd. The most outstanding youth in the history of the Emperor Star Academy? Such an introduction really did cause the crowd to be in suspense.

"When he was 16, he hadn't stepped on the path of cultivation yet. Him at that moment, had his marriage engagement forcibly called off and was humiliated by others. However, he wasn't dispirited and chose to give up on himself. On the contrary, when he stepped onto the pathway of cultivation, the first Astral Soul he awakened hailed from the 3rd Heavenly Layer, while his 2nd

Astral Soul was from the 4th Heavenly Layer. Using only the short span of a year of time, he stepped into Arterial Circulation and even created a miracle by becoming the champion of the Jun Lin Banquet, defeating Luo Qianqiu and Sikong Mingyue.”

The pupils of the crowd widened. By now, they had already guessed the identity of the person the host was describing. The countenance of Autumn Snow went pale white. That sentence, “his marriage engagement forcibly called off”, wasn’t that referring to her? At this moment, she only felt a burning sensation on her face.

“Not only that, he is also one of the most elite Divine Inscriptionist in Chu, creating a Divine Imprint that even caused a Heavenly Dipper Sovereign to hold him in awe. That was a 3rd-level Divine Inscription, and not only that, it was in the form of a Human-Type Divine Inscription Painting, never before seen in Chu.”

The maiden laughed, and the crowd sighed. Qin Wentian was outstanding indeed. Autumn Snow was thinking in her heart, if everything that happened back then didn’t happen, the guileless and pure youth back then would still be together with her.

“As for the Human-Type Divine Inscription Painting earlier, the Heavenly Dipper Sovereign Gongyang Hong spared no efforts to obtain it and even granted a promise to Mu Rou. And today, this is the second Human-Type Divine Inscription Painting created by Grandmaster Qin. The painting in my hands is a masterpiece that is unique and unmatched, even exceeding his apex creation in the past. Perhaps this will obtain the recognition of Heavenly Dipper Sovereigns once again.”

The female host continued smiling as she gazed at the crowd. Just a few words from her had successfully ignited the passion and excitement of the crowd, causing the blood of many to surge. With the tagline of ‘obtaining recognition from Heavenly Dipper Sovereigns’, this was already sufficient to drive many into a frenzy, despite her not mentioning the auction cost of the painting.

Upon seeing the female action host’s performance, An Liuyan, who was in one of the seats, had a smile on her face. It seemed like the decision to auction the painting away in the Heavenly Treasure Tower was the right decision!

Chapter 163: Airborne

On top of the transparent crystal lotus, the young maiden clad in transparent robes left little to the imagination as her actions caused many males in the audience to be palpitating with eagerness. But despite that, the moment she unfurled the painting in her hands, the attention and focus of everyone was instantly shifted to the Divine Inscription Painting.

Once again, this was a Human-type Divine Inscription Painting so vivid that it seemed incredibly lifelike and appeared to be in motion. The concept hidden within the movements caused people to be immersed in it, as though they too were in that wondrous state, their consciousness comprehending the concept.

“Yet another heaven-defying creation. It seems like Qin Wentian really is an unrivalled genius. One might argue that the first Human-type Divine Inscription Painting of his was obtained through good

fortune or exceptional circumstances, created that through a stroke of luck, but upon seeing this second Human-type Divine Inscription Painting, all suspicions regarding the first painting can be scrapped away. Evidently, one can see similar traces of the first painting within the second, possessing the same kind of charm. Not only that, the sense of concept contained within this painting is even stronger when compared to the first.”

A burst of noise could be heard from a certain direction within the private room. The maiden turned her head over in the direction as she smiled, “Vice-president Zuo has good judgement. After missing the chance to obtain the first painting, I’m sure you won’t miss this chance again.”

“Vice president Zuo Yin from the Star River Association.”

On the first level, in a random corner, a young lady gazed at Autumn Snow who was currently extremely pale. “Autumn Snow, is it true that you reneged on the marriage agreement with Qin Wentian?”

Autumn Snow’s countenance was exceptionally unsightly. Based on Qin Wentian’s current status, he was not someone she could be compared to.

Not only that, the Royal Clan of Chu were waging a war against the rebels right now. But who would be the ultimate winner? If the rebels won, Qin Wentian’s status would surpass that of the current Chu Tianjiao because everyone knew that the mastermind of this rebellion was none other than the Qin Clan!

Liu Yan, who was sitting together with Ye Zhan, also felt extremely complicated in her heart. Back then, Ye Zhan had told her that she and Qin Wentian was destined to be people belonging to different levels. This actually became a reality, but the roles were reversed. How many people in the Royal Capital knew of Ye Zhan and yet how many people in the Royal Capital didn’t know of Qin Wentian?

And as for Murin, because of the matter with Qin Wentian, he had become a thorn in the eyes of Zuo Yin. Zuo Yin’s dislike could also clearly be felt by Murin. In turn, deep in his heart, he also hated this old fellow. Since Zuo Yin resented him because of a mere Qin Wentian, then Zuo Yin shouldn’t blame him for being ruthless. Of course, this was something that Murin wouldn’t display out in the open. On the surface, he appeared always to be smiling, bowing frequently in apology.

And ultimately, the painting was successfully auctioned away. The winner was none other than Zuo Yin, who spent a terrifyingly astronomical price to bid for it. As the Vice President of the Star River Association, he would naturally have countless innate techniques as well as Divine Weapons. In the face of his considerable wealth, it wasn’t a problem for him to obtain the painting through bids.

The act of placing Qin Wentian’s Divine Inscription Painting up for auction triggered enormous waves in the hearts of many. There were actually numerous people with extraordinary backgrounds competing for it.

And just thinking of this, Autumn Snow dejectedly left the Heavenly Treasure Tower. It was a lie if she were to say that there she had no regrets. After all, Qin Wentian had never once looked down on her. It was all her fault; because of her, and Bai Qingsong’s greed, everything that could have once been hers had all dissipated into the thin air. Even more important was that her current lifestyle

wasn't that good. How she longed for the simple days she once had with the unsophisticated youth from back then.

And there was another reason. The current gulf was so huge, so huge to the extent that she couldn't even muster the slightest bit of jealousy.

"The hatred he feels now towards me as well as towards my Bai Clan should be so deep that it already seeps into his bones." Autumn Snow gave a self-mocking laugh. Time and experiences were extremely marvelous things. In the short span of just a year, her entire attitude actually underwent such a huge transformation. Previously, this was something that she would have never expected would happen.

And as for Qin Wentian, he didn't know of the things that transpired in the auction house. Since he gave the Divine Weapon Pavilion free rein and allowed them to handle things on his behalf, he relinquished all control of this matter totally. In any case, there was no way the Divine Weapon Pavilion would mistreat him or try to cheat him of his profits. What he needs to do is to focus his all on cultivation now. Only with power would one have status, resources, and authority.

In order to cultivate the Fiend Transformation Art, Qin Wentian was practically undergoing self-torture. These past few days, he spent all his time in frenzied cultivation, using all sorts of torturous methods to push himself further. But precisely because of this, the results he obtained were extremely astonishing. His physique unceasingly grew stronger, and his life force was many times more powerful when compared to the past. Each and every breath he took was filled with vitality.

In the blink of an eye, five days passed. Currently, in the open plaza region of the Royal Capital, tens of thousands of youth gathered. All these young talents were here to choose a martial academy to enrol into.

These young elites came from everywhere in Chu, their presences adding to the 'color' of the capital, causing the atmosphere to be even more lively.

Around this time every year, the Royal Capital would be bustling with noise and excitement. Regardless of the current times being a chaotic warring period, it was unable to affect the hot bloodedness of youths determined to pursue their martial paths. All of them wanted a better future for themselves.

However, those who were more observant would realized that the number of youths here today was actually lesser when compared to the past.

Because today was also the day when the Emperor Star Academy would 'pay a visit' to the Royal Academy.

Five days ago, the visit paid by the Royal Academy to the Emperor Star Academy rocked the entire Royal Capital. The fact that the Emperor Star Academy lost four of the battles became hot topics of discussion among everyone in the capital. And when Qin Wentian returned their 'politeness' with more 'politeness', suggesting that the Emperor Star Academy would visit the Royal Academy five days later, this caused many people to pay even closer attention to this matter. What type of response would the first place in the Jun Lin Banquet, Qin Wentian, have in regards to this?

And what preparations would the new Royal Academy make in order to face the proclamations of challenges.

It definitely wasn't going to be so easy if the Emperor Star Academy wanted to win. So what if Qin Wentian won his fight, what about the four other battles?

And currently, within the Emperor Star Academy, Qin Wentian, Old Gu, Mustang, Elder Thousand-Hands and a few others were all present in a discussion.

"This is such a headache. Which five Arterial Circulation Realm students should we send?"

Old Gu was massaging his temples in a bid to alleviate his headache. Qin Wentian, Luo Huan and Mountain were three of the most outstanding Arterial Circulation Realm cultivators currently in the academy. These three would definitely be part of the five challengers.

The Jun Lin Banquet was already the stage for the pinnacle of those at Arterial Circulation. Qin Wentian and Luo Huan both obtained excellent results while Mountain's performance wasn't too bad. Currently, he had broken through to the 9th level of Arterial Circulation.

However, Old Gu still had a headache. The Emperor Star Academy had such an outstanding record in the Jun Lin Banquet because of Orchon and Luo Qianqiu. Currently, Luo Qianqiu has already left, and the Ou Clan obviously supported Chu Tianjiao. Orchon also chose to disappear quietly, so how could he aid the Emperor Star Academy in disrupting Chu Tianjiao's plans?

And as for those who were in the top nine rankings, only Qin Wentian and Luo Huan belonged to the Emperor Star Academy.

After the merger between the Godly General Martial Palace and Royal Academy, they had Chu Chen and Hou Tie. They also had others such as Shi Jun of the 10 prodigies as well as Leng Ya. Although the latter two didn't get into the top nine, Leng Ya's martial prowess couldn't be underestimated.

"I'm afraid that Chu Tianjiao will find an excuse that allows Sikong Mingyue to battle. If that's the case, their team formation would be really powerful." Old Gu was worried.

Sikong Mingyue and Chu Chen obtained the 3rd and 4th rank, respectively. Hou Tie was 6th. And if Chu Tianjiao used his underhanded methods, sneaking in an unknown Arterial Circulation Realm from the Nine Mystical Palace, things were really going to be hard to handle indeed.

"Our team formation is not weak either." Luo Chen approached from a distance as he nodded to Qin Wentian. "Back then in the academy, I was played by you and 7th Night. But after witnessing your strength, I admit my inferiority. I would have lost nonetheless."

"If there's a chance, let's exchange some pointers." Qin Wentian smiled. He knew that beautiful and polite words were useless to a cultivation-fanatic like Luo Chen. Instead, Luo Chen preferred to hear words of sparring and exchanging of pointers. He lived to accept challenges.

"Okay, I will definitely do so." Luo Chen nodded and smiled. "Are all the five challengers ready?"

"Currently, we only have four. I'm still thinking who should be the last challenger." Old Gu grimaced.

“Hi, what about me?” A weakly sounding voice drifted over. The gazes of the spectators froze when they saw a fatty silhouette walking over, a shameless light flickering in his eyes.

Qin Wentian blinked as he stared at this person. Fan Le, it was actually Fan Le. He actually took the initiative to participate in this challenge.

“He should be able to make the cut.” Mustang’s eyes glowed with a bright light. These few days, Fan Le had always been under his guidance. As for where Fan Le’s true capabilities lied, Mustang couldn’t be clearer.

“He stepped into the 8th level of Arterial Circulation a few days ago. Although his cultivation base is somewhat lacking, with the power of his bloodline and extraordinary talent could mitigate it. Not only that, he had the power of psyche force, using his will to power his telekinesis, and is exceptionally suitable for team battles.” Mustang touched his chin and laughed, causing Qin Wentian to be somewhat startled. Fatty actually already broke through to the 8th level of Arterial Circulation. Such an improvement speed was extremely terrifying indeed.

Seeing the thunderstruck expression on Qin Wentian’s face, Fan Le frowned, “Hey Boss, this fatty is also a genius.”

“This fellow is really a genius, and his speed of cultivation is extremely fast. I don’t know where he got his hands on so many Yuan Meteor Stones. He actually ignored the dangers and madly absorbed the Astral Energy within, forcing himself to cultivate until he broke through to the 8th level.” Mustang laughed. Qin Wentian also nodded in response. Fan Le’s talent was indeed extraordinary, the only bad point about him was that he was just too lazy.

After Fatty had been ‘abducted’ by Mustang, other than cultivating, the rest of his time was spent following a strict schedule Mustang arranged for him. Even the numbers of hours Fan Le was allowed to sleep had been clearly indicated.

“Since we already have five, let’s move out.”

Old Gu let out a shrill whistle as he glanced in the air. Shortly after, a gigantic griffon swooped down from the skies, appearing in front of the crowd.

Old Gu as well as the five challengers mounted the griffon, and together they soared into the skies.

And because of the lack of Luo Qianqiu and Orchon, this team formation couldn’t be considered the pinnacle of what the Emperor Star Academy had to offer. But despite of this, their combat prowess couldn’t be belittled.

Qin Wentian was the champion of the Jun Lin Banquet, and Luo Huan was the 9th ranker. Luo Chen was slightly unlucky but his combat prowess couldn’t be doubted. Mountain broke through to the 9th level while Fatty’s bloodline and talent were spectacular as well. Now, they could only see what the Royal Academy had to offer.

The speed of the 8th-grade griffon was terrifyingly swift. After just a few moments, they had already arrived in the airspace of the Royal Academy.

Countless people in the Royal Academy raised their heads as their hearts trembled. The challenges from the Emperor Star Academy, has arrived!

The Royal Academy, similar to the Emperor Star Academy, had a central arena that was used for important battles. The griffon landed in the center of the arena, Chu Tianjiao and the rest were already there waiting.

“Chu Tianjiao respectfully welcomes the arrival of Senior.”

Chu Tianjiao gave a bow in the direction of Old Gu. Beside him was Xiao Lù and behind him were five other silhouettes.

The five silhouettes are: Sikong Mingyue, Chu Chen, Hou Tie, and Leng Ya. And as for the last person, the six from the Emperor Star Academy involuntarily let out a gasp of surprise as they saw who their last opponent was. Their last opponent was actually an exceptionally pretty girl who was clad in white, appearing elegant while projecting a sense of nobility.

“The little princess of Chu.” An extremely sharp glint of light abruptly flashed past Old Gu’s eyes. Chu Tianjiao really held nothing back, even managing to invite the little princess to help them out at the cost of tremendous effort.

Although the little princess rarely appeared in the eyes of the crowd, Old Gu was very clear of her abilities. If she had attended the Jun Lin Banquet back then, she would definitely be one of the top nine rankers!

Chapter 164: 10 Men Group Battle

All the princes and princess of Chu were extraordinary. Other than the Eldest Prince being unable to cultivate, all of the rest had outstanding talents.

And as for the little princess of Chu, her talent in cultivation clearly far surpassed the norm, but not many people knew of this. With the status of a princess, she rarely showed her face outside the palace, and thus many did not know of her.

“Their team formation is really powerful.” Worry could be seen reflected on Old Gu’s face.

Sikong Mingyue, Chu Chen, Hou Tie, Leng Ya, and the little princess.

The combination of the five of them was clearly stronger when compared to the five from the Emperor Star Academy.

And almost immediately, expressions of interests appeared on the countenance of those from the Royal Academy. The Emperor Star Academy lost both Luo Qianqiu and Orchon, while the Royal Academy merged with the Godly General Martial Palace, with both the little princess and Sikong Mingyue in their team. They really couldn’t imagine how the Emperor Star Academy would be able to get back the face they lost.

“Ten man group battle, we will decide the victor and loser in one match.” Old Gu replied, causing the expressions of the crowd to slack. So the strategy of the Emperor Star Academy was to make use of Qin Wentian’s overwhelming strength to mitigate the other factors.

Even if it was a ten man group battle, the crowd still felt that it was dangerous for the Emperor Star Academy.

Qin Wentian, Luo Huan and Luo Chen wasn’t weak, but Mountain hadn’t really performed well at the Jun Lin Banquet. As for Fatty, he didn’t even participated back then.

Currently, Qin Wentian and his party walked up the stage, casting their gazes at their opponents.

Sikong Mingyue and the four others from Royal Academy also slowly ascended the stage, standing in a formation. It was as though they were long prepared.

Chu Tianjiao's countenance was incomparably calm. He had already expected that the Emperor Star Academy would choose this method of battle. But if they really did so, comparing the strength of their team formations, the Emperor Star Academy would lose without a doubt.

The ending result this time around would be an even louder slap on the face of the Emperor Star Academy.

"Please." Qin Wentian and the rest serenely stated. However, flames of battle intent could already be seen surging in their eyes.

RUMBLE! Sikong Mingyue stood right in front of their formation. His ancient slaughter word imprints manifested and gushed out at a crazy speed.

Hou Tie and Leng Ya stood to the left and right of Sikong Mingyue while the little princess and Chu Chen stood behind the three of them, seemingly well prepared.

In the direction of the Emperor Star Academy, Qin Wentian stood at the very front. Luo Chen stood on his left, facing against Hou Tie while Mountain stood on his right, dealing with Leng Ya. Luo Huan and Fan Le, both stood at the back.

Both parties were using the same type of team formation, with three fighting in the front and two supporting from the back.

Sikong Mingyue and Qin Wentian were once again facing each other. Two overwhelming auras frenziedly clashed against each other, opposing each other with equal harshness.

Atop the stage, a hurricane was actually born from the collision of impacts. The wind force being generated fluttered Qin Wentian's robe as an expression of steel-like determination could be seen on the face of the youth.

This battle was for honor and glory. Defeat was not permitted.

Today was the day of registration and enrolment for all the martial academies in the Royal Capital. Countless eyes were watching this battle. They could not afford to lose.

Two other terrifying aura blasted out. The owner of these auras were none other than Chu Chen and the little Princess. The power of both of their Bloodline Limits was being released.

This was the Bloodline Limit belonging to the Royal Clan of Chu. At the same time, both their Purple Amethyst Astral Souls were also released, both scepters shining with a resplendent glow. At this current moment, the two rearmost fighters were actually the most dazzling.

The purple radiance emanating forth from both the scepters, developed Sikong Mingyue, Hou Tie and Leng Ya. An instant later, their auras explosively surged.

"The Purple Amethyst Astral Soul bestows amplifications. It is extremely terrifying when used to support." Excitement flickered in the eyes of the crowd as both Chu Chen and the little princess used their Bloodline Limits in conjunction with their Purple Amethyst Astral Souls to amplify the strengths of their three other party members. In a single breath, the two others and Sikong Mingyue's strength, jumped up to the next level—half-step Yuanfu.

“I’m afraid the Emperor Star Academy has to return with their tails in between their legs.” Someone from the Royal Academy sarcastically remarked. Today, this was their home ground.

The Royal Academy had been suppressed for many years by the Emperor Star Academy. Currently, after merging with the Godly General Martial Palace, they could finally expel this breath of resentment that was lingering in their throats. If they won again in this battle, the reputation of the Royal Academy would instantly skyrocket to above that of the Emperor Star Academy.

Old Gu had a heavy countenance on his face. The strength of their enemies had just risen by terrifying proportions.

In the direction of the Emperor Star Academy, the power of a Bloodline Limit similarly erupted forth. Fan Le’s bloodline of the Empyrean Flames started to blaze.

“Bloodline Limit.”

Qin Wentian’s traits underwent a transformation. His long hair turned black, akin to wind blades fluttering in the air. His whole person emitted the air of a godly monarch, and his presence made people wanted to submit to him. He was the king.

“There were actually also two people who could use the power of bloodlines in the Emperor Star Academy.”

The crowd was almost salivating in anticipation. A battle on such a grand scale was rare, not to mention that the participants of the battle were all extremely talented geniuses at the peak of the Arterial Circulation Realm.

“Senior Sister and Fatty, control Sikong Mingyue; Luo Chen, Mountain, both of you deal with Hou Tie. Fatty, also pay attention to the sneak attacks of Chu Chen and the little princess.” Qin Wentian intoned in a low voice, and the four of them nodded in agreement. It was as though Qin Wentian was the pillar and leader of their team formation.

Sikong Mingyue took the lead and stepped forward in response. Abruptly, the four others mirrored his actions. Although they were stronger when compared to the team from the Emperor Star Academy, they didn’t dare to be careless. After all, their opponent was none other than Qin Wentian, champion of the Jun Lin Banquet.

“Control me? I really want to see how you do that.” Sikong Mingyue coldly laughed. His attacks had always been extremely hegemonic. And currently, after the amplifications to his abilities, he wasn’t even the slightest bit afraid if he had to clash directly head-on with Qin Wentian. How could Luo Huan and Fan Le even hope control him?

“COME!” Sikong Mingyue roared in anger as his Astral Soul was released. Not only him, all the nine other cultivators on the stage, with the exception of Qin Wentian, had released their Astral Soul. Momentarily, the blinding Astral Light originated from the release of the various dazzling Astral Souls inundated the stage with a flood of starlight.

The view was incredibly magnificent. All these people, none of them had an Astral Soul from the first Heavenly Layer. At the very least, the 1st Astral Souls of these nine cultivators were condensed from the 2nd Heavenly Layer.

Sikong Mingyue strode towards Qin Wentian, his battle intent soaring to the skies. In his eyes, his only opponent today was Qin Wentian.

“Do it.”

Qin Wentian shouted coldly. An instant later, he swapped positions with Mountain while numerous long vines flicked out in the direction of Sikong Mingyue simultaneously, appearing akin to tens of thousands of tentacles.

Sikong Mingyue laughed coldly. Amusement was apparent in his eyes as he directly grabbed at the long vines with his hands. However, his smile froze in the next instant. Sounds of powershots rolled forth as Fan Le, who was standing unmoving at the boundary of the stage, shot out a string of arrows that glowed with golden light, piercing right into his eyes.

In response, Sikong Mingyue blasted out with the ancient slaughter words imprints powered by his incredible strength, wanting to eradicate everything in his path. However, the arrows abruptly shifted in mid-flight and changed their direction, flying to his side. In a blink of an eye, the crowd only saw golden streams of light dancing about on the stage, beautiful but deadly. Although the power behind the arrows wasn't that strong, it was still fatal if they pierced through the eyes, head, or throat of their intended victims.

And now, it was as though the arrows had eyes of their own. The moment they were careless, the arrows would deal critical injury or even death.

“What a beautiful picture.” Someone exclaimed in awe. The countenance of Sikong Mingyue was ugly to behold as he swiftly summoned even more slaughter imprints, but to no avail—the speed of the arrows were even faster when compared to his attack speed.

At the exact moment when Sikong Mingyue was encircled by the arrows, Luo Chen and Mountain was already clashing with Hou Tie.

Hou Tie's attack power was terrifying indeed. But despite of this, Luo Chen's saber attacks were even scarier, seeking to deal death with every strike. After Mountain's breakthrough, his defense had become exceedingly tough. There was no way for Hou Tie to gain any advantage when faced against the two of them.

These happenings caused the faces of Chu Chen and the little princess to stiffen. It seemed like their plan to merely use the amplification effects of their Astral Souls to win the battle wasn't going to succeed, not when their opponents also had two masters of control within their party.

Also at the same moment, Qin Wentian also dashed towards Leng Ya. His strategy was simple: divide and conquer.

How swift was Qin Wentian's Garuda Movement Technique? When he appeared in front of Leng Ya, Leng Ya couldn't help but shiver when he saw how sharp the expression was on Qin Wentian's slightly devilish handsome looking face.

Qin Wentian initiated by sending out a palm attack. This palm attack was none other than his Falling Mountain Palms. Currently, Qin Wentian was getting increasingly proficient with this innate technique. As he blasted out, the pressure of a mountain peak smashed downwards, its might further enhanced by Qin Wentian's strong physique. Just with a single attack, any of Leng Ya's attempts at

counterattacking were all smashed into nothingness. At the very moment of contact, he already understood that when it came to pure brute force, Qin Wentian was far above him.

The aura that erupted forth from Qin Wentian had too many force augmentations. Even if the proficiency of using innate techniques wasn't taken into account, just with the augmentation granted to him by his higher layered Astral Soul as well as the Mountain-type Divine Yuan Energy, his Demonic Body, and his Bloodline Limit, he completely overwhelmed the so called 'expert' acknowledged by many others—Leng Ya.

A thunderous sound rocked the stage. Leng Ya gave a dull shout as his body was capulated through the air before slamming onto the ground below the stage. Spitting out mouthfuls of fresh blood, his arm felt as though it was already crumbled to pieces, and his internal organs shook violently. He had no more strength to attack.

Qin Wentian sent him flying with only a single strike. From this, one could see how great the disparity of strength was between them, how strong the champion of the Jun Lin Banquet truly was.

Upon seeing how Sikong Mingyue, despite his power, was being controlled, Chu Chen and the little Princess knew that they couldn't afford to wait any longer. Locking gazes for a single moment, Chu Chen's silhouette flickered as he dashed towards the direction of Luo Huan and Fan Le.

This disgusting fatty only had a cultivation base at the 8th level of Arterial Circulation; he was only strong in restricting and controlling techniques, like how his arrows were capable of changing direction in mid-flight. As long as they eradicate this fatty, Sikong Mingyue would be able to focus his all and deal with Qin Wentian. If not, they could only wait and be wiped out by Qin Wentian one by one.

"I'll block him, Wentian, finish the rest quickly." Luo Huan's silhouette flickered, and she appeared in front of Chu Chen.

Fan Le's restrictive power was too strong; he could actually hold Sikong Mingyue back for a period of time.

Sikong Mingyue kept trying to get close to Fan Le, but Fan Le dodged relentlessly. The arrows in the air interweaved in a beautiful dance as they zoomed repeatedly towards Sikong Mingyue. It was as though this rain of arrows would never stop.

Qin Wentian appeared in front of the little princess. Demonic light glinted in his eyes when he locked gazes with the little princess. That demonic presence of his caused the heart of the little princess to shudder involuntarily. This was the first time she met such a character. In front of Qin Wentian, she couldn't help but feel that she was lesser than even a speck of dust. Even Qin Wentian didn't know that at this moment, his aura was so stifling that he was unconsciously emitting a forcefield of absolute obedience.

Chapter 165: Complete Victory

Qin Wentian naturally knew that he had to finish his opponents quickly. Executing the Garuda Movement Technique to its utmost limits, he transformed into a stream of light as he blasted forth with the Forgotten Imprint, his palm imprints overshadowing everything. The little princess lifted

her arms in defence, as she too, struck out with her own palm-type innate techniques. The power contained within her palms could be considered devastating, but despite of this, it was still insufficient to match up against Qin Wentian's domineering attacks.

BOOM! A surge of remnant Qi fluttered the little princess's hair as pride and arrogance shone in her eyes. She was even stronger when compared to Leng Ya, but despite of this, she was forced to retreat several steps.

However, her opponent was Qin Wentian!

As the sound of spitting echoed, Qin Wentian's spat out a sharp beam of sword light at an extremely close distance. This caused the beautiful countenance of the little princess to change for the worst. She ducked her head downwards, narrowly avoiding the sword beam. Qin Wentian sent out yet another palm strike, forcing her to retreat as he moved in closer with astounding speed. When the little princess looked up, Qin Wentian's hands were already choking her neck.

This fellow was really ruthless enough.

"Get down." Qin Wentian threw the little princess unceremoniously off the stage. They could not afford to lose this battle, hence, he naturally wouldn't hold back just because his opponent was a female.

"This bastard." The little princess involuntarily screamed as her hands were clenched in shame. Gritting her teeth, she glared upwards at Qin Wentian.

Qin Wentian didn't have time to bother with her. As of this moment, Sikong Mingyue, was trudging forwards with immense force. He was already in front of Fan Le as the ancient slaughter word imprints exploded forth.

"Fatty, give up now!" Qin Wentian shouted. However Fan Le didn't seem to be worried at all. With a wide grin on his face, he jumped down from the stage immediately, as though his actions were all planned beforehand. He had already bought enough time for Qin Wentian to eliminate the little princess and Leng Ya, so his mission was already accomplished.

"F*CKER!" Sikong Mingyue roared in rage, his killing intent boiled to the max. Ignoring the fact that Fan Le had already given up, he channel his Qi forwards, causing the word imprints to fly towards Fan Le. Fan Le's expression was exceptionally ugly to behold. He didn't think that Sikong Mingyue would still struck out despite him already being off the stage.

"Scram." Fan Le shot out multiple astral arrows, using the force from firing the arrows to aid him in his retreat. Despite his efforts, the remnants of the slaughter Qi's shockwaves still landed on his body, causing him to be slammed to the ground as his inner organs trembled violently from the impact.

Sikong Mingyue didn't continue to care about Fan Le because he felt insane amounts of killing intent erupting from behind him.

As he turned back, his heart involuntarily lurched with terror as the pressure of Qin Wentian's aura assailed him. Especially now, without the amplification effects of Chu Chen and the little princess, he would definitely not be able to stand against Qin Wentian.

It was all the fault of that damned fatty. If it was not for Fan Le holding him back, Qin Wentian wouldn't have had the opportunity to eliminate two of their numbers.

Qin Wentian took a step forwards, Sikong Mingyue's knees went weak as they involuntarily trembled. The Qin Wentian currently felt many times more...demonic? When compared to the past, this aura of absolute obedience was even stronger!

How imposing had he been originally? Now, Sikong Mingyue was suppressed to the point where he had none of his imposing and haughty manner.

Rumble! A terrifying palm strike blasted forwards, as Qin Wentian executed the Falling Mountain Palms of his to its utmost limits.

Sikong Mingyue gave a roar of rage, as his ancient slaughter word imprints struck out with a power so mighty that it was able to overturn oceans and topple mountains. However, each and every of his word imprints were effortlessly shattered by the pressure of the palm strike. Qin Wentian's palm was already right in front of Sikong Mingyue.

With praiseworthy reaction speed, Sikong Mingyue caused his slaughter word imprints to integrate together, revolving in a circle around his palms as he chose to meet Qin Wentian's palm strike head on. Qin Wentian's palm wavered continuously in the air, causing numerous superimposed palm imprints to appear and slam towards Sikong Mingyue.

Kacha! Sikong Mingyue felt as though his arms were about to crumble into pieces. His arms were bounded into a lock by Qin Wentian. He saw Qin Wentian's slightly demonic features up close.

"You must really want to court death." Qin Wentian's icy cold voice was akin to a god of death. With a ferocious squeeze, one of Sikong Mingyue's arm was broken into pieces. Simultaneously, Qin Wentian sent out another palm attack aiming for the chest of Sikong Mingyue.

However, Sikong Mingyue wasn't flung through the air, for his right arm was bound in a vice-like grip by Qin Wentian.

Vomiting out large amounts of fresh blood, Sikong Mingyue gasped for mercy, "I concede." His countenance was bloodlessly white; at this moment, he felt true terror.

As the sound of Sikong Mingyue's voice rang out, all those from the Royal Academy had disbelieving expressions on their faces. In this ten man group battle, Qin Wentian alone turned the tides, overwhelming his opponents with pure strength. What sort of character was Sikong Mingyue of the Duo Prides, how superior and arrogant was he? But at this moment, he was slaughtered like an animal, choosing to utter the words 'I concede' to save his very life.

Qin Wentian wasn't done yet. Wavering his palms, he blasted three more palm imprints onto the body of Sikong Mingyue. Sikong Mingyue's countenance turned ashen when Qin Wentian finally released him. It was unknown how many of his arterial pathways and meridians Qin Wentian had destroyed as Sikong Mingyue was blasted down the stage.

The moment Sikong Mingyue was blasted down, the results of the fight was already apparent.

Currently, Qin Wentian was even stronger compared to the time when he had obtained the championship of the Jun Lin Banquet. Sikong Mingyue wasn't even able to withstand a single attack of his, let alone Hou Tie and Chu Chen. Not only that, on the side of the Emperor Star Academy, other than Fan Le, the rest of their team was still on the stage.

Hou Tie and Chu Chen didn't choose to continue battling. Instead, they lengthened the distance between them and Luo Huan. Turning their heads back to gaze at Qin Wentian, a sense of helplessness filled their hearts. Although they had predicted the Emperor Star Academy would use the team formation battle as their strategy, they had underestimated Fan Le's control as well as Qin Wentian's real strength. As a result, the 'flawless' strategy they had prepared was easily broken.

"Scram." Qin Wentian took another step forwards as he swept his gaze at Chu Chen. That savage-looking silhouette as well as his demonic countenance caused Chu Chen not to have even the slightest notion of resisting.

Chu Chen's features stiffened unnaturally. He walked down the stage, coldly snorting.

Qin Wentian then turned his gaze at Hou Tie, only to see Hou Tie laughing bitterly as he shook his head. If he refused to battle, wasn't it the same as admitting defeat? But if he persisted on, wasn't that merely seeking humiliation for himself?

The students of the Royal Academy stared at the four silhouettes from the Emperor Star Academy on the stage. Fan Le also climbed back up, as he swept his gaze around the crowd with hints of provocation in his eyes.

Qin Wentian's eyes were extremely sharp. He didn't say a word but looked at Old Gu instead.

Old Gu smiled as he flew the griffon over to the stage. An instant later, Qin Wentian and the rest mounted the demonic beast and soared up in the skies, their silhouettes disappearing quickly over the horizon.

Without any words of arrogance or humiliation, they directly left. The remaining students of the Royal Academy were dumbstruck. If Qin Wentian had provoked or humiliated them, they would be able to give vent to their hatred and anger. But now, with no outlet, they could only hold this bout of negativity in them, causing them to feel extremely dissatisfied.

In the air, the griffon was flying. Mountain laughed uproariously, "Seeing that expression on Chu Tianjiao's face was priceless."

"Your defense is really praiseworthy." Luo Chen laughed. Mountain's two Astral Souls were all defensive in nature. If it were not for Mountain defending, Luo Chen would have never been able to deal with Hou Tie's violent attacks.

"Your saber attacks are monstrous as well." Mountain smiled, "However, Junior Brother Qin is still the most powerful."

At this moment, Qin Wentian had already retracted his aura. Currently, he had a look of peace on his face, and was the image of a sunshine youth. Who would have thought that such a guy would be capable of unleashing such a terrifying aura?

"Senior Brother Mountain, don't praise me anymore." Qin Wentian shrugged his shoulders and smiled.

"Why not? Do you still remember the scene when Luo Huan and I went to rescue you back in the Sky Harmony City? During that time, you were pursued by Ye Clan's men left and right, but I could sense the resolution in your eyes. At that moment, I already knew that you would become somebody great in the future, but even so, I would never have expected that you only took such a short period of time to surpass both me and Luo Huan."

Mountain had a straightforward expression on his face as he patted Qin Wentian's shoulder. He truly admired this junior brother of his.

Reminiscence flashed in Qin Wentian's eyes. Indeed, time passed by so swiftly. In just the short span of a year, he felt that his temperament had undergone so many changes.

“Junior brother, when you have many accomplishments in the future, remember to come back to the academy to see me, okay? Don't pretend that you don't know me at that time.” Mountain laughed.

“Does senior brother intend to stay within the academy?” Qin Wentian inferred the meaning behind Mountain's words. In any case, he wasn't someone that the sort of person to forget past debts of kindness even if he did become famous.

“Yes, I know myself well. Most my absolute limits would be the peak of Yuanfu. After I step into Yuanfu, I will stay in the academy as a guest Elder to guide the younger generations. I hope that I would have a chance to meet someone as talented as you.”

Qin Wentian also didn't want to influence Mountain's decision. Looking at the honest and straightforward senior in front of him, he laughed and replied, “If I really do have grand accomplishments out there in the future, I will definitely return and pay a visit to senior.”

“Okay. Remember your promise. I have very thick-skin, so I won't forget what you said.” Mountain replied.

“Why are you acting like this, it's like Junior Brother Qin is already leaving us.” Luo Huan glared at Mountain, causing Mountain to rub his head in response. He continued, “Isn't it because that you, Junior Brother Qin, Yu Fei, and the rest are already about to step into Yuanfu? Sooner or later, you guys would leave the academy.”

Luo Huan's beautiful eyes flickered with a strange glow. She would never have expected the clumsy looking Mountain to think about such matters.

“Don't worry, even if this sister leave the academy, when there are chances, I will still come back to visit you.” Luo Huan laughed.

The griffon descended downwards. Below them, there were already many silhouettes gathered. Countless youths with expressions of envy in their gazes raised their heads as they gazed at the descending griffon.

This place was the enrolment grounds for the Nine Great Martial Academies. Looking at the pure gazes of the crowd riveted on him, Qin Wentian sighed. Wasn't the state of their hearts now the same as him back then when he just entered the Royal Capital?

"Is that one of the Elders as well as some students from the Emperor Star Academy? Indeed, their demeanor and bearing are all extraordinary." Someone whispered in the crowd below.

"Hehe, don't all of you know? The youth in the middle is none other than the champion of the Jun Lin Banquet, Qin Wentian."

"What, that's Qin Wentian? The most outstanding youth from Chu last year?"

"Grandpa." At this moment, a white crane gave a shrill cry that resounded through the air as it flew to the side of the griffon. The crowd raised their heads, and upon seeing the owner of the silhouette on the crane, their stares froze in reverence and wonder.

"How beautiful."

"This is the number one beauty of Chu, Mo Qingcheng."

"Lass, you're here." Old Gu laughed.

"Aren't you the one who ask me to be here, saying that our academy would definitely win the showdown with the Royal Academy?" Mo Qingcheng inquired.

"We won, and we won it beautifully." Old Gu was elated. A brilliant glow flashed in Mo Qingcheng's beautiful eyes as she stared at the group of people standing beside Old Gu before her gaze finally landed onto Qin Wentian.

"Hey."

"I have a name okay." Qin Wentian shrugged.

"Dumbo, right?" Mo Qingcheng gave a laugh filled with charm.

"Okay, enough of this. I shall leave here. You guys shall be the enrolment officers responsible for our academy this year."

After both the griffon and white crane landed, Old Gu commanded them to take off immediately. Upon landing, Luo Huan shot a stare at Qin Wentian as she immediately told Mountain and Luo Chen go to the side, causing Qin Wentian to be speechless.

When the champion of the Jun Lin Banquet stood together with the number one beauty of Chu, it immediately constituted a beautiful scene that captured the focus and attention of others, causing many to involuntarily approach the area of the Emperor Star Academy.

Not long after, the news regarding the loss the Royal Academy suffered was disseminated. This caused many youths who had wanted to enrol in the Royal Academy to abruptly pause as they reconsidered their options.

Chapter 166: Xiao Lan

As the news of Royal Academy's defeat was disseminated, the crowd quickly realised that their earlier victory over the Emperor Star Academy didn't really count for anything.

The Emperor Star Academy was still the first among the martial academies of Chu. Their number one position was unshakable.

Qin Wentian and Mo Qingcheng stood at the registration area demarcated for the Emperor Star Academy, and upon seeing the faces of the youngsters filled with vitality and excitement, both of their faces had exceptionally radiant smiles on them.

"Do you still remember what happened last year when you came to enroll?" Mo Qingcheng turned her head sideways and smiled at Qin Wentian.

"Mmm." Qin Wentian nodded his head. He still remembered that it was exactly at this location last year when he wanted to enroll in the Emperor Star Academy that Mo Qingcheng and Nolan's carriage had passed by. Back then, Mo Qingcheng lifted the curtains of her carriage and smiled in his direction. Thinking of this now, he wondered, was Mo Qingcheng really smiling at him back then?

Perhaps in the entire Chu Country, only Qin Wentian would have such preferential treatment.

"Am I very old now?" Qin Wentian grinned.

Mo Qingcheng's beautiful eyes glanced at Qin Wentian as though she was seriously contemplating the question. Qin Wentian's eyes now were still as clear as before, but his disposition, when compared to the past, had already undergone a complete transformation. He no longer had the feel of an underripe fruit. The harrowing experiences of the past year had done much in tempering him, causing him to mature faster. Not only that, in the past, Qin Wentian's eyes would always clearly express whatever he was feeling, but now, it was hard to tell what his feelings were just from looking at his eyes.

Qin Wentian fidgeted slightly after being stared so hard by such a peerless beauty. Traces of shyness could be seen in the sun-like smile on his face.

Upon seeing this, Mo Qingcheng involuntarily called out 'Dumbo' in her heart. She was so close with Qin Wentian, not because he was the champion of the Jun Lin Banquet, but rather because in him, she could see a kind of simplicity and honesty that couldn't be found in other talented youths within the Royal Capital.

“Cough cough. My lovely future junior brothers and sisters, come and enroll over here.” Qin Wentian panicked slightly after being stared at so hard by Mo Qingcheng. Why was he always being teased by her?

Mo Qingcheng felt that it was extremely laughable when she saw how Qin Wentian was behaving. However, in front of others, she had remarkable self-restraint and didn't allowed her laughter to show. After all, there were too many people focused on her at this moment.

She didn't like this kind of crowded environment, but since her grandpa wanted her to come, she could only acquiesce to his demands. But seeing Qin Wentian, this dumbo, she was still quite happy about it. After all, she was a girl in the prime of her youth, and normally her life was pretty dull and boring. Her only close friend was Nolan.

“Senior brother Qin.” At this moment, a youth ran forwards in Qin Wentian's direction. Mountain tried to block the youth, but the youth's movements were extremely nimble, and he successfully dodged Mountain.

“Damned brat.” Mountain scolded in a low voice, but he had an expression of laughter on his face, apparently not blaming the youth.

“Senior brother? You haven't even passed the examination. Are you sure you will be able to enroll in the Emperor Star Academy?” Qin Wentian had a warm and gentle smile on his face as he stared at the youth, who was about 15 years old. This youth was even younger than him back then when he had enrolled into the academy.

The youth had a head full of frizzled hair and was dressed in common attire. His eyes were big but pure and filled with spirit. Reverence could be seen in them as he stared at Qin Wentian.

“Naturally. I want to be the same as senior and become the champion of the Jun Lin Banquet a year from now. How can I fail the enrollment examination to enter the Emperor Star Academy?” The youth grinned.

“Keep boasting.” Mountain walked over and gave a rap on the youth's head, causing the youth to stare earnestly at Mountain after he recovered. “It's true, Senior Mountain. Since Senior Brother Qin could do it, why can't I?”

“Alright, I believe you.” Qin Wentian was feeling exceptionally happy. To think that finally, there would be someone addressing him as Senior Brother.

“Junior Brother Qin, this fellow is named Zi Jun, and he's the same as you, from Sky Harmony City. His first Astral Soul was condensed from the 3rd Heavenly Layer, and he's already on our shortlist. But to think that this little rascal would be so unbridled.” Although Mountain's words had a scolding tone to them, the twinkle in his eyes portrayed his real emotions. After all, such a genius like Zi Jun was indeed extremely rare.

No wonder this fellow worshiped him so much. It was because he was also from Sky Harmony City.

“Little fellow, work hard.” Qin Wentian ruffled the hair on Zi Jun’s head. Mo Qingcheng, who was at the side, broke out into laughter as she saw what Qin Wentian was doing. This fellow could also still be considered young, but he purposely acted like an adult in front of Zi Jun. The sight of this filled her with laughter.

“Er...” Qin Wentian cast a side glance at Mo Qingcheng. Couldn’t she give him some face in front of his junior brother?

“Ah, this beautiful sister must be the girlfriend of Senior Brother Qin, right? How beautiful.” Zi Jun had a look of admiration on his face as he stared at Mo Qingcheng. He had never seen such a ravishing lady before.

Qin Wentian’s eyes flickered, after which, he also stared at Mo Qingcheng in silence without blinking. This time around, it was Mo Qingcheng’s turn to feel awkward. An expression of shyness could be seen on her face, more beautiful than one could imagine.

Upon seeing the expression on Mo Qingcheng’s face, Qin Wentian couldn’t help but think that she would also have this day coming, and he laughed involuntarily. As the corners of his lips curled up, he looked at Zi Jun and stated, “Hmm, yes, she should be mine shortly.”

Mo Qingcheng, who was standing at Qin Wentian’s side, couldn’t help but to blush upon hearing what Qin Wentian had said. She sneakily got closer to Qin Wentian and stomped her foot on his feet, causing Qin Wentian to silently curse at how ruthless she was.

Zi Jun’s spirited eyes flickered as he punched his fist into the air, “Senior Brother, work hard!”

“Yup, you too.”

“Come with me.” Mountain chortled as he led Zi Jun away. The little fellow didn’t forget to wink several times to Qin Wentian, which caused Qin Wentian’s countenance to be filled with laughter. He really hoped that Zi Jun would be able to retain this guileless heart of his.

“Shhii...” At this moment, Qin Wentian suck in a mouthful of cool air and lowered his head. He realised that Mo Qingcheng had stomped on his foot once again. Qin Wentian could only smile bitterly as he directed his gaze at her. Mo Qingcheng refused to lock gaze with him and was staring straight ahead, but her countenance was adorned with a cheeky smile.

Taking advantages of beautiful girls was really tough indeed.

Currently, in the direction of the enrolment area allocated to the Royal Academy, there were several silhouettes, including Chu Tianjiao, Ye Wuque as well as, Xiao Lan, Wu Chong, and those who had defeated the Emperor Star Academy’s Yuanfu Realm students. They all arrived personally.

Xiao Lan’s stare shot towards the direction of the Emperor Star Academy, as his eyes landed on Qin Wentian. He silently remarked in his heart, “This person can truly be considered a rare talent. Although he had some misunderstanding with Luo Qianqiu, there was no harm if I try to pull him into my camp. After all, this would be something that benefit myself. Since that’s the case, there’s no harm in giving him a chance.”

“Get someone to go over and tell him to get over here. I wish to have a chat with him.” Xiao Lan said in a low voice.

“Brother Xiao, are you referring to Qin Wentian?” Chu Tianjiao’s countenance stiffened slightly.

“Yes.” Xiao Lan nodded his head. “It would naturally be for the best if he could be obedient. This way, it would save us from dealing with plenty of troublesome matters.”

“I can understand Brother Xiao’s love for talent, but I only fear that Qin Wentian would be unable to appreciate it.” Although Chu Tianjiao felt unhappy in his heart, he quickly suppressed his feelings as a gentle smile appeared on his countenance. He was very clear regarding the status of the person in front of him possessed within the Nine Mystical Palace—his status was even higher when compared to Luo Qianqiu. Chu Tianjiao didn’t expect that when he had contacted the Nine Mystical Palace earlier, their response was actually to send Xiao Lan over.

“Wuque, make a trip over.” Chu Tianjiao stated.

The pupils of Ye Wuque contracted slightly, but eventually he nodded his head and strode towards the enrollment area allocated to the Emperor Star Academy.

Bewilderment painted Qin Wentian’s face upon seeing Ye Wuque approach him.

Ye Wuque first casted a glance at Mo Qingcheng, hints of adoration apparent in his eyes. He had always been interested in Mo Qingcheng. To him, he always believed that only a woman of such beauty like Mo Qingcheng could match up to him. Sadly, she was always cold towards him.

“Qin Wentian.” Ye Wuque’s gaze slowly shifted over.

“What’s the matter?” Qin Wentian stared right back. A cold glint of light could be seen flickering in his eyes.

“There’s someone who wishes to meet you. Come along with me.” Ye Wuque calmly stated as his finger pointed to the direction of the enrollment area allocated to the Royal Academy.

Qin Wentian’s eyes shifted towards the Royal Academy’s area, and he saw many pairs of eyes staring right back at him. There were Chu Tianjiao’s, Wu Chong’s as well as the eyes of that mysterious Xiao Lan.

He discovered that Xiao Lan’s gaze was the most indifferent and that Xiao Lan was standing right in the middle of Chu Tianjiao and the rest.

Qin Wentian suddenly recalled that back then when the Royal Academy issued their challenges, the first four were all extremely polite. Only Xiao Lan was exceptionally arrogant.

Overbearing and hegemonic on the stage, but the current Xiao Lan seemed as tranquil as water. Qin Wentian could faintly sensed that the person who wanted him to go over was none other than the mysterious Xiao Lan.

“Who is he?” Qin Wentian turned his head back, as traces of displeasure could be seen in his eyes.

These people were really haughty. They wanted to speak to him but actually still got Ye Wuque to take the initiative to get him to go over. Such an action apparently showcased their thoughts: they considered everyone to be beneath their attention.

He didn't know that in the eyes of Xiao Lan, this was giving him an opportunity.

Because of his love for talent, he gave Qin Wentian a favor. After all, Qin Wentian already had a grudge with Luo Tianya and Luo Qianqiu. Although the father and son duo couldn't represent the Nine Mystical Palace, they were part of the Nine Mystical Palace after all. Qin Wentian offended the Nine Mystical Palace and basically didn't have any more chance to be recruited in. Xiao Lan was giving Qin Wentian an opportunity, and he hoped that Qin Wentian would be intelligent enough to grab it!

"You have no need to know. What you need to do now is to go over there," Ye Wuque indifferently said. Qin Wentian had a faint speculation—to be able to cause Chu Tianjiao to show such degree of respect, as well as to be able to defeat Xanxus, the leader of the Heavenly Demon Association, this person most likely originated from the same place as Luo Qianqiu, the Nine Mystical Palace.

Mo Qingcheng frowned. This kind attitude really caused people to be pissed off.

"If he has something he wishes to say, he can come find me himself." Qin Wentian's reply caused Ye Wuque to be stunned. An extremely sharp glint of light flashed in his eyes as Ye Wuque let out a cold laugh. Qin Wentian truly wished to court death.

Ye Wuque returned to the area of the Royal Academy when Xiao Lan asked, "Why is he not here?"

"He said that if you have something to say to him, you can go find him yourself." Ye Wuque repeated Qin Wentian's words. Upon hearing that, a terrifying light flickered in Xiao Lan's eyes. In an instant, his previously tranquil expression disappeared, leaving behind smouldering anger.

Xiao Lan slightly raised his head as he casted his gaze once again over to the direction of the Emperor Star Academy, locking his gaze with Qin Wentian. Qin Wentian could clearly feel the cold and disdainful arrogance in Xiao Lan's eyes.

"I would never have thought that in a place such as Chu, I would still encounter such a matter," Xiao Lan thought in his heart. If it weren't for the fact that he received an unexpected piece of news—that the Azure Emperor left behind a terrifying secret within the Emperor Star Academy—he wouldn't have travelled thousand of miles over from the Nine Mystical Palace to such a small place like Chu.

"Handle the matter of the Emperor Star Academy quickly, I don't have much time." Xiao Lan stated to Chu Tianjiao. After which, he turned and departed. Even his back emanated pride and arrogance. Despite of this, however, he also kept a low profile. There was almost no one outside of this group who knew of the fact that he and a few other elites were from the Nine Mystical Palace. Perhaps this kind of inconspicuousness was already a very good indicator of his pride. He was Xiao Lan of the Nine Mystical Palace. There was no need to exhibit his status out here in such a small speck of country that was Chu.

Chapter 167: Tragic Roar

For this year, the location of the enrollment examination to recruit new blood for their academies was finally decided – it was the same as last year, an expedition into the Dark Forest.

Perhaps it was because paths of blood and danger were something that cultivators had to experience before they would grow, but all the martial academies jointly gave their approval. After all, the applicants were all youthful cultivators who needed to be bloodied before they could be considered to have met the bare minimum requirement of what it meant to be a cultivator.

In this dog-eat-dog world where only the strong survived, since one had already embarked on the path of cultivation, one had to press forward relentlessly, survive through countless dangerous experiences and never look back unless they were willing to be just an ordinary human.

In the small town that was situated outside the Dark Forest, many adventurers and risk takers let out a burst of laughter as they saw the group of youthful cultivators coming their way. Days of living on a sabre's edge was horrifying, since no one knew which day would be their last. Seeing the appearance of these youths would always be able to bring light into their lives, albeit only for an instant.

In the boundaries of the Dark Forest, the group of prospective students of the Emperor Star Academy were led by Qin Wentian, Mo Qingcheng, Luo Huan, Mountain and Luo Chen. In addition, Rain was also accompanying Qin Wentian. Currently, Qin Wentian was already someone that the Emperor Star Academy had to protect at all costs. Because his radiance was too dazzling, there were many who wanted to kill him.

Although Gongyang Hong's deterrence made it so that not many would dare to strike out at Qin Wentian in broad daylight, he still had to defend against arrows fired at him in the dark. The assassination attempt by Janus was a very good example.

"Everyone, prepare yourself to enter the Dark Forest. Remember to be cautious in everything you do. If you are dead, you can't enroll in the Emperor Star Academy, can you?" Mountain turned his head back as he smiled to the prospective students of the Emperor Star Academy.

"Don't worry about us, Senior Mountain." The youth standing in front of the group grinned. This youth was none other than Zi Jun. Excitement could be seen flickering in his eyes as he jumped about animatedly.

"Okay, everyone let's enter." Mountain waved his hands while momentarily feeling an ambivalence of nervousness and excitement. The group from the Emperor Star Academy stepped into the Dark Forest.

A radiant smile could be seen in his eyes as Qin Wentian gazed at the madly galloping backs of the prospective students.

“Are you thinking of your own experience from last year?” Rain sat atop of a white horse as she gazed at Qin Wentian. Her gentle-looking countenance gave off a feel of warmth when looking at her.

“Yeah, and I was also wronged by someone.” Qin Wentian laughed.

“Hmph, who are you talking about?” At the side, Mo Qingcheng’s beautiful eyes glared at Qin Wentian, appearing extremely adorable.

“The person already knows who I’m talking about. Back then, that person was truly extremely cold in her attitude.” Qin Wentian continued.

“Didn’t I already apologize?” Mo Qingcheng felt wronged and glared at Qin Wentian.

“The two of you, stop bantering so flirtatiously.” Luo Huan giggled. She was someone who wanted the world to be in chaos.

“Sister Luo Huan, what are you saying?” Mo Qingcheng’s face burned.

“What am I saying? Junior brother Qin is so talented in all aspects, even I’m in love with him. If you don’t like him, give him over to this senior sister here then.” After speaking, Luo Huan crossed her arms, propping up her twin peaks. Luo Huan’s bewitching appearance was capable of ensnaring males, causing them to be dumbfounded. Qin Wentian had a bitter smile on his face as he regarded Luo Huan. This senior sister really wanted his life sometimes.

Upon seeing the expressions on Qin Wentian and Luo Huan’s countenance, Mo Qingcheng sniffed as she turned about and made her way rapidly towards the front, causing Rain as well as the others to burst out in laughter.

Rain silently thought, the relations between humans were extremely fascinating. The words of external parties could easily cause feelings of goodwill to build over between two people. It seemed like Luo Huan was really intelligent and obviously wanted to bring the two of them together.

Seeing Qin Wentian urging his mount forward, catching up to Mo Qingcheng, Rain couldn't help but to smile. Such a couple really made people like them.

The rest of them mounted on their horses and proceeded forwards. After seeing the group of prospective students heading into the depths of the Dark Forest, Mountain involuntarily called out, "I'll go and protect Zi Jun."

After which, he galloped ahead, into the depths of the Dark Forest.

If this were a year ago, Mountain would never have done this. But after the learning about the experiences Qin Wentian faced that year, as well as the current chaotic movements in the Royal Capital, Mountain didn't want to take any chances.

"Seems like Senior Mountain truly likes that kid Zi Jun." Qin Wentian turned as Rain, Luo Huan and the rest caught up.

"He's already thinking of being an Elder, acting like a teacher guiding his students." Luo Huan laughed lightly.

"Yes, you are right, Senior Mountain said earlier he was already prepared to remain in the Emperor Star Academy. Somehow, from his silhouette, I could see traces of Teacher Mustang." Qin Wentian murmured in a low voice. Every time Mountain was by his side, he would sense a protective aura akin to a big brother. Although Mountain looked slow, he was calm and unflustered.

"I think it has something to do with his past experiences. Mountain was an orphan entrusted to the care of Teacher Mustang when he was 10. After discovering that he has an aptitude for cultivation, Teacher began to instruct him in the path of cultivation, viewing him as his own son and guiding him with all his efforts. It's only natural that you could see traces of Teacher Mustang in Mountain. Other than talent, his decision to stay on behind as a guest Elder of the Academy after he broke through to Yuanfu was undoubtedly also because Mustang had a great influence on him."

Luo Huan seriously continued, and warmth could be seen in her eyes. She herself, as well as Mountain and many others, had grown up together under Mustang's care.

"So that's the case." Qin Wentian mumbled. He watched warmly as Mountain's silhouette gradually disappeared in the depths of the Dark Forest.

“Luo Chen, Fatty, come with me. Sister Rain, junior brother Qin and Miss Mo will form a separate group. Let’s split up.” Luo Huan spoke. Her group went on the left path as Qin Wentian’s group went towards the right. Although this was an examination, there was still a need for countermeasures in the case of unforeseen danger.

“You two can continue chatting, I’ll take a look ahead.” Rain spoke to Qin Wentian and Mo Qingcheng as she went ahead, leaving Qin Wentian and Mo Qingcheng alone.

This caused Qin Wentian to be speechless. How could he not understand Rain’s intentions?

In the quiet Dark Forest, Qin Wentian rode side by side with Mo Qingcheng, but for some reason, the atmosphere felt a little awkward.

Mo Qingcheng turned her gaze to Qin Wentian as she asked, “Dumbo, do you mind telling me about matters of your past?”

“What do you wish to hear about?” Qin Wentian replied, “Before I came to the Royal Capital, I virtually spent my entire life in the Qin Residence located in Sky Harmony City, with nothing noteworthy to mention.”

“Were you not together with Autumn Snow?” Mo Qingcheng mumbled in a low voice. It was as if she knew that she shouldn’t be asking this question, after which her countenance quickly turned red. She continued, “You don’t mind me asking this, right...?”

“Why would I mind? It’s all in the past.” Qin Wentian shrugged as he smiled.

“Okay then.” Mo Qingcheng smiled sweetly, “Anyway, you will be able to find a better girl, so there’s no need to be bothered about matters of the past.”

“Find a better girl?” Qin Wentian blinked. He gazed at Mo Qingcheng.

Speaking of a better one, the number one beauty of Chu right in front of his eyes surpassed Autumn Snow in virtually all aspects.

Seeing how Qin Wentian kept gazing at her, Mo Qingcheng's face grew red once again. She exasperatedly glanced at Qin Wentian as she remarked, "Rascal."

After which, she urged her horse forwards. Over the horizons, there was a white crane hovering in the sky above.

"Wasn't I 'Dumbo'? When did I become a rascal?" Qin Wentian rubbed his head as he smiled, gazing at the beautiful silhouette in front of him.

In the blink of an eye, more than ten days had passed since they entered the Dark Forest. The prospective students of the various martial academies tried their best to survive, hunting the demonic beasts. Only now did many of them understand the difficulties of pursuing the martial path.

At this moment, Zi Jun arrived at a thicket of trees. The long spear in his hands penetrated right through the head of a demonic bear, finally killing it after immense efforts. Digging out the demonic core in its head, Zi Jun placed the core into a pouch that was hanging by his side.

His shirt was all torn and tattered, and traces of blood could be seen on his face. But despite of this, he was brimming with smiles. He had already killed plenty of low-level demonic beast and had sufficient demonic cores to exchange for some Yuan Meteor Stones to cultivate when he returned to the Royal Academy. With Yuan Meteor Stones, his cultivation speed would increase.

And just thinking of this, Zi Jun would be extremely happy. His dream was to be like Qin Wentian. He wanted the glory of becoming the champion of the Jun Lin Banquet a year from now.

With such a dream, he naturally understood how much hard work he needed to put in. Even if there was danger, he would not hesitate.

A steel-like resolution could be seen written on his face.

Behind him, underneath an ancient looking tree, Mountain was watching over him with admiration etched on his face. In the future, if Zi Jun weren't as outstanding as junior brother Qin, his capabilities wouldn't be too far from the mark.

Zi Jun continued walking ahead. However, at this moment, a sharp glint of light flickered in his eyes.

Tossing aside the pouch filled with demonic cores, he brandished the long spear in his hands as whistling sounds echoed out in the air. Three terrifying arrows akin to golden lightning fired straight towards him.

Zi Jun continued retreating. The long spear in his hands danced about, transforming into a rain of spears as booming sounds rang out. At the moment of contact with the arrows, Zi Jun was forced backwards several steps by the impact, but he continued his defense.

However, at this moment, a long lance was shot through the air with terrifying speed, growing increasingly larger in his field of vision.

Puchi...

The long lance was flung out by someone possessing tremendous strength. Zi Jun's body was lifted up as the momentum caused his body to soar backwards, resulting in him being nailed to an ancient looking tree behind..

The previous smile had disappeared from his face. At this moment, only despair could be seen as he lowered his head, looking at the long lance that penetrated through his heart.

Why would there be someone so powerful here who wanted to ambush him?!

An instant later, his eyes lost their glow. But even in death, his eyes remained wide open giving testament to the fact that he died with a grievance. He had just taken his first step, hoping to accomplish his dreams, but even before he achieved it, everything had ended.

“NOOOOOOOO!” A voice filled with intense fear and anger shook the Dark Forest. Mountain released his Astral Souls as he frenziedly sprinted forwards. During the moment the arrows appeared, he was already filled with a terrible sense of foreboding and had already started rushing towards Zi Jun's direction. However, everything was too late.

Rustling sounds could be heard from a distance away. Pairs after pairs of eyes filled with terrifying coldness and killing intent appeared, staring at Mountain as though they were staring at their prey.

Mountain's roar was exceptionally ear-splitting. Nearby cultivators all sprinted over in his direction when they heard it.

By this time, Qin Wentian and Mo Qingcheng had already caught up with Rain. When he heard the deafening roar, he couldn't help but be filled with a sense of unease. That roar sounded exceedingly familiar to his ears.

Pssst! Qin Wentian dismounted from his horse as a pair of Garuda Wings appeared on his back, speeding forth with a speed as fast as lightning.

Mo Qingcheng gave a whistle, causing the hovering white crane to descend. Mo Qingcheng mounted the white crane, flying towards the direction of the roar.

Rain soared into the skies as she followed closely behind Qin Wentian.

The feeling of unease was getting stronger and stronger.

Chapter 168: Heartbroken

Near the thicket, several people had already gathered. They were all drawn here by the sound of the deafening roar. Currently, they all had wide-eyed expressions as though they had seen something extremely shocking.

Qin Wentian finally arrived at the area, his heart pounding madly.

In his heart, there was unease as well as terror. He feared that he would see something he didn't want to see.

His steps grew incomparably heavy as he walked forwards, heading into the crowd.

There was a lance embedded atop an ancient tree. Pierced through by the lance, a body hung lifelessly, pinned on the sturdy trunk of the ancient tree. Blood dyed his torn and tattered robes red. The body that hung there was long out of breath. His eyes were wide open in death, filled with unwillingness and depression. He was still so young and full of hope for the future, but he died here just like this, an ignoble death.

Boom. Qin Wentian's heart heavily pounded. His countenance was as white as paper. Wasn't the youth who died Zi Jun? What happened? He didn't die at the hands of a demonic beast for sure. The long lance that penetrated through him seemed to be a silent proclamation.

Mo Qingcheng and Rain also went pale white, their beautiful faces devoid of any traces of a smile. Instead, their countenances were exceptionally cold, like the deadly chill of winter.

Qin Wentian slowly continued forwards, his gaze unwavering as he stared at the body of his never-to-be junior brother. After which, he slowly turned his gaze and stared at the thicket of trees far up ahead. Over there, blood soaked the entire ground as a body quietly laid there, deathly still.

Mountain had been protecting Zi Jun in the shadows. When Qin Wentian saw the impaled Zi Jun, his heart had already been filled with pain, but he was still overshadowed by a heavy sense of foreboding. Indeed, what he feared finally came true.

Rustling sounds rang out as several shadows appeared. Luo Huan's racy figure was still extremely mesmerising, but her face only reflected icy coldness as well as sorrow.

She immediately lunged to Mountain's side and kneeled there on the ground. Reaching out with her trembling hands, she gently caressed Mountain's face as her tears fell down like rain from the Heavens.

Silent tears, yet nothing in the whole world seemed to be as loud as this. This was the first time Qin Wentian saw the happy-go-lucky Luo Huan in such agony, not to mention her unending flood of tears.

"AHHHHHHHHHHH..." Luo Huan raised her head as she screamed, filled with grief and anger, resounding throughout the Dark Forest. Anyone who heard that was able to sense the amount of sorrow and depression in her voice.

Luo Cheng, Fan Le and the rest arrived by Luo Huan's side as they too, knelt on the ground, with pain filling their hearts.

Qin Wentian's raised his feet, which suddenly felt as though they weighed 1,000 Jin, as he approached the body of Zi Jun, extending his hands to close his eyes shut.

After which, he pulled the long lance out and carried the body of Zi Jun before walking over to Mountain. Placing Zi Jun next to Mountain, he too knelt down as he silently stared at both of their faces.

"Junior brother, when you have many accomplishments in the future, remember to come back to the academy to see me, okay? Don't pretend that you don't know me at that time." Mountain's words still resounded in his ears. Mountain had already been at the peak of Arterial Circulation and was sure to step into Yuanfu by the end of this year. After he broke through to Yuanfu, he would undergo his preparations to become an honorary Elder, guiding the students in the Emperor Star Academy.

Mountain had a very good impression of the talented Zi Jun and had wanted to nurture a genius that could be comparable to his junior brother Qin Wentian.

His dream wasn't too farfetched. He only wanted to live a smooth and steady life in the academy, imparting his knowledge to the newer generations.

But now, everything had vanished into thin air.

He had passed on. The big brother figure, who had still been alive a few days ago, closed his eyes in the unending sleep of death.

Impaled in his body were a few long lances, indicating that his death was not caused by a single culprit.

Their deaths were premeditated, but the motives of the killers were unclear.

“Sister Luo Huan.” Qin Wentian called out as Luo Huan looked at him. Previously, Qin Wentian had always referred to her as Senior Sister Luo Huan, but this time around, he actually referred to her as Sister Luo Huan

Qin Wentian reached his hands out, wiping away the tears cascading from her face.

There was a trace of crazed laughter in Qin Wentian’s eyes that seemed incredibly fiend-like. This was the first time Luo Huan had ever seen such an expression in his eyes. From this moment onwards, in her entire life, she would never be able to forget this look of laughter in Qin Wentian’s eyes. That laughter seemed to be tinged with madness, as grief, anger, agony, and determination all coagulated together, giving form to it.

“I know that no matter what else we do, Senior Mountain will never wake up again. However, I will ensure that the killers pay an excruciatingly painful price.” Qin Wentian slowly enunciated each word as he stared straight ahead with his haunted eyes.

Mountain wouldn’t have any enemies within the Emperor Star Academy. He entered the depths of the Dark Forest in secret to protect Zi Jun from danger, so there shouldn’t be any clashes between him and any others. His killers were obviously provoking the Emperor Star Academy on purpose.

If he were to guess, the suspicions of the Royal Clan being the one behind this incident would be the highest.

If it was indeed as he had guessed, he vowed that the imperial authority of Chu would surely change. Definitely. As long as he, Qin Wentian, was alive.

Luo Huan’s eyes were bloodshot as she heavily nodded her head. The culprits behind Mountain’s death definitely had to pay a heavy price.

“We have to inform all the prospective students of our Emperor Star Academy to evacuate this place. There’s a high possibility that this incident wasn’t aimed at Mountain alone but at the entire Emperor Star Academy.” Rain was also feeling terrible, but as the person with the highest authority, she had to remain calm.

“Other than the few of us, the remaining juniors are all still in the examination phase. If someone really wanted to target the Emperor Star Academy, their target would be us.” Luo Cheng was also exceptionally calm as he continued, “However, there’s no need for the examination to carry on. I agree that the evacuation plan is good, but we too must depart from the Dark Forest.”

Rain nodded her head in agreement; she knew that Luo Cheng spoke the truth, The enemy was hiding in the dark while they were all out in the light, making this an extremely dangerous situation. The prospective students of the Emperor Star Academy were spread out all over the Dark Forest, so it wasn’t feasible for them to find them one by one.

Rain soared up the skies as she stood in the air, howling out a command, “All prospective students of the Emperor Star Academy, immediately depart from the Dark Forest.”

Powerful sound waves resounded in all directions as Rain landed onto the ground. She could only do so much. Luo Cheng was right, the prospective students were just undergoing an examination. If there were people who wanted to target the Emperor Star Academy deliberately, they wouldn't attack cultivators who weren't part of the academy as of yet.

"Let us leave now." Rain stated to Qin Wentian and the others.

However, Qin Wentian replied, "Senior Mountain just passed away for a short period of time. I believe his killers couldn't have escaped too far. I wish to go take a look."

"Impossible." Rain directly rejected. Qin Wentian's safety was of the utmost importance.

If this was really done by the Royal Clan, on a certain degree, it means that the Royal Clan had already begun to take actions against the Emperor Star Academy.

Previously, both could co-exist peacefully. But once face was torn, there would no longer be any peace and quiet. On the contrary, when the time came, chaos would certainly erupt.

"I just want to see if there are any clues remaining. Senior Rain, don't worry, I won't be rash." Qin Wentian appeared exceptionally calm. Upon seeing his resolution, Rain could only concur, "You can only search around the vicinity and are not allowed to wander too far. I'll come with you."

"I'll go with you too. Let's go on my white crane." Mo Qingcheng spoke as she walked forwards.

Qin Wentian cast a glance at Mo Qingcheng. He nodded his agreement, "Fine, let's go now."

"I will bring the bodies of Mountain and Zi Jun back." Luo Huan remarked. Qin Wentian and the two ladies mounted the white crane as they tracked the trail of footprints through the air.

The speed of the white crane was incredibly fast as they flew straight ahead.

"Over there." Qin Wentian remarked when he saw the corpses of demonic beasts lying below them.

"There's a dense thicket of trees ahead, be careful." Rain stared at the densely clustered trees. It was a prime location for an ambush.

"There are people over there." Qin Wentian's gaze abruptly sharpened as he saw a group of silhouettes melding into the shadows of the forest, covertly retreating towards the direction of the dense cluster of trees.

"There's someone here as well." Mo Qingcheng spoke in a low voice as Qin Wentian's pupils contracted. Upon seeing the faces of the new arrivals, the look in Qin Wentian's eyes turned ice cold as a terrifying light flickered within.

"Ye Wuque, Wang Teng, Wu Chong."

These three were none other than the challengers from back then.

The three of them rose in the air, blocking the path of the white crane as they spoke, "What a coincidence."

"Get out of my way." Qin Wentian coldly stated.

However, the three of them continued to stand there calmly, as rustling sounds echoed in the air. Below them, several silhouettes cloaked in black were disappearing within the densely cluttered trees ahead.

The white crane gave a shrill cry of anger as it dashed forward, as though it wanted to clash against the three opposing cultivators. Rain faced against Wang Teng on the left while Mo Qingcheng faced Wu Chong on the right. Qin Wentian was face to face with Ye Wuque.

An incredibly demonic aura erupted forth as Qin Wentian sent out countless palm imprints, his arterial pathways howling as the energy within him was channeled to his arms. Blasting out with the Falling Mountain Palms with his left and Forgotten Imprints with his right, Qin Wentian wanted to decimate everything in his path.

Ye Wuque coldly laughed as he sent out both his palms to meet the attack. A monstrously sharp aura emanated from him.

At the moment of impact, Qin Wentian only felt that the energy of his opponent was like a continuous, uninterrupted flow of water. This was the level of Yuanfu. The vast and boundless amounts of Astral Energy stored within the body of a Yuanfu cultivator wasn't something an Arterial Circulation cultivator would be able to match up against. Qin Wentian's arms trembled violently as his body was flung backwards.

The white crane flew backwards, allowing Qin Wentian's body to land on it. Rain and Mo Qingcheng retreated as well. The last of the black cloaked figures had all already successfully retreated into the dense clusters of trees.

Blood seeped out of the corners of Qin Wentian's mouth. His eyes grew ice cold and incomparably demonic in this instant.

"Let's return." Rain intoned in a low voice. Mo Qingcheng also agreed; she knew that they would be in incomparable danger should they proceed forwards. However, as she glanced at Qin Wentian, she discovered that at this moment, Qin Wentian had undergone a complete transformation. His countenance was devilishly handsome yet extremely cold as his long black hair fluttered about with the wind.

"Ye Wuque, I will make you pay." Qin Wentian spat out. The white crane turned and departed, Qin Wentian's icy voice resounded through the air.

Ye Wuque furrowed his brows. The image of Qin Wentian's cold eyes floated up in his mind. At that moment earlier, Qin Wentian felt abnormally demonic.

Chapter 169: The Coming of a Violent Storm

The prospective students of the Emperor Star Academy departed from the Dark Forest. The news of Mountain's death was quickly spread throughout the Royal Capital and caused a huge commotion.

Although many knew of Mountain from the Emperor Star Academy, he was not that famous when placed in the perspective of the entire Royal Capital. As for why his death caused such a huge commotion, it was because currently, the relationship between the Royal Academy and the Emperor

Star Academy was as thin as a piece of paper. And now that a student of the Emperor Star Academy was murdered in the Dark Forest, how would people not speculate on the reasons behind it?

All sorts of rumors flew about, and ultimately, the spearhead of blame was pointed at the tensed relationship between the two parties.

Within Chu, the position of the Emperor Star Academy was always unrivaled. And with regards to entities with high positions such as the Emperor Star Academy, the Royal Clan always adopted a tolerant attitude. But now with the merger of the Royal Academy and the Godly General Martial Palace, their objective was to weaken the prestige and reputation of the Emperor Star Academy, causing the thin line of equilibrium finally shatter. Was the Royal Academy finally tired of tolerating the existence of the Emperor Star Academy?

The citizens of Chu naturally wouldn't know why the Royal Clan would choose this period of turmoil to strike out. Currently, the Chu Country was engulfed by the flames of war as

the rebels invaded the other cities of Chu steadily and surely, constantly pressing closer and closer towards the Royal Capital. This could be said to be one of the most trying times in the history of Chu.

There were rumors saying that the troops of Chu had pulled back long ago and were prepared to give up the control of half the country to the rebels. As the saying goes, strong when united, weak when divided. The Royal Clan had no choice but to give up and could only consolidate their power by giving up control.

At this moment, inside an exceptionally luxurious hall within the Chu Palace, there were several figures lined up on both sides. However, the person sitting on the master seat was actually not Chu Tianjiao but Xiao Lan instead.

Xiao Lan reclined comfortably on his seat, with both of his hands tapping on the armrests of the chairs according to an unpredictable rhythm.

"How goes the preparations?" Xiao Lan calmly inquired.

"There are no problems on my side, but when would the experts from the Nine Mystical Palace arrive?" Chu Tianjiao respectfully replied.

“Within two days, I guess.” Xiao Lan’s gaze shifted from Chu Tianjiao to Xiao Lù as he continued asking, “How about the side of Snowcloud?”

“Very soon, they will be here within three days.” Xiao Lù replied.

Only now did Xiao Lan nod his head as he closed his eye. It was only after several moments that he spoke again, “Xiao Lù, I have to trouble you this time around. If this matter is successful, I will report this back up the upper echelons of the Nine Mystical Palace. Your branch might be able to return.”

“Thank you, Elder Brother.” Xiao Lù’s face was full of smiles. There was almost no one who knew that the Royal Clan of Snowcloud was actually one of the branch families of the main Xiao Clan from the Nine Mystical Palace.

“Time is almost up. During these few days, I will send people to secretly provoke the Emperor Star Academy and force them to make their move.” Chu Tianjiao laughed. As to why would he chose to act against the Emperor Star Academy amidst this time of turmoil, it was because this was a godsent opportunity. The Nine Mystical Palace that had never once bothered themselves with regards to governing the countries under their administration wanted to move against the Emperor Star Academy.

Chu Tianjiao didn’t know what exactly was the reason. Xiao Lan was a descendant of the Xiao Clan, which was one of the three great factions within the Nine Mystical Palace. Since he came here, he definitely had it reason. Chu Tianjiao had no need to ask, and moreover he also knew that it was not his place to ask.

Although Xiao Lan appeared relaxed, he actually had a load on his mind. It was not so easy wanting to take down the Emperor Star Academy.

Back then in the past, Luo Tianya had wanted to do the same but didn’t succeed. Behind the Emperor Star Academy were the shadows of the Azure Emperor Palace. If the Nine Mystical Palace really did send their Heavenly Dipper Sovereigns to take action, the Azure Emperor Palace would definitely intervene.

Before this, Xiao Lan had never paid much attention to this. But now, he could faintly sense that there was a connection; it all pointed to the secret that the Azure Emperor hid in the Emperor Star Academy.

There were three sacred grounds within the Emperor Star Academy. The Heavenly Star Pavilion, Astral River Hall, and the Dreamsky Forest. In which of these three sacred grounds would the secret be hidden within?

Qin Wentian had already set foot on the 7th level of the Heavenly Star Pavilion. They had also once considered kidnapping him and using force to interrogate Qin Wentian but soon gave up the plan because of deterrence from Gongyang Hong. This wasn’t the time to antagonise someone at the Heavenly Dipper level. If they wanted to make a move against Qin Wentian, it would be best if there were no implications. After all, they were unsure how deep the relationship between Gongyang Hong and Qin Wentian was.

Although the main branch of the Xiao Clan wouldn’t fear Gongyang Hong, if a Heavenly Dipper Sovereign went crazy, their descendants of the other branches had a very high possibility of being utterly annihilated. It wasn’t worth it.

As for Mountain's death, they couldn't be bothered.

Although they wouldn't be bothered, the Emperor Star Academy took this matter very seriously indeed.

Today, the Emperor Star Academy intentionally erect a stone tablet for Mountain and Zi Jun. This stone tablet was erected underneath the Emperor Star Monuments. Although Zi Jun wasn't officially a student of the Emperor Star Academy, the introduction that was carved into the stone monuments introduced him as one of the most elite talented genius young students ever to be enrolled.

This was unprecedented in the history of the Emperor Star Academy. The Emperor Star Monuments were the symbols of the academy's glory and milestones throughout history, and never had a student's death been inscribed onto it, not even once.

However, this time around, the Emperor Star Academy made an exception and did so.

A cold wind billowed by, bringing with it a sense of desolation. There were several silhouettes standing in front of the Emperor Star Monuments, as well as many Elders. All of them had solemn expressions on their faces as they stared at the stone tablet.

The erection of the stone tablet was Ren Qianxing's idea. He wanted the Emperor Star Academy to carve this memory into their history. This wasn't a simple assassination, and it had a high possibility of being a silent declaration of war.

Perhaps a 1,000 years from now, if the Emperor Star Academy still existed, this piece of history would still be mentioned by the later generations. But if the Emperor Star Academy disappeared, then everything would not matter anymore.

So when Ren Qianxing brought up the suggestion, all the Elders had a surprising take on this.

They agreed on this decision unanimously.

Behind the Elders of the academy, many students gathered. They were all flabbergasted as to why Mountain as well as a yet-to-be-enrolled student would have their stone tablet erected underneath the Emperor Star Monuments, but after the explanations, all of them understood that this incident had a high probability of being a historical incident of the academy.

After this, violent storms of conflict would suddenly give rise to momentous incidents.

"The 3rd Prince of Chu, Chu Tianjiao pays a formal visit to the Emperor Star Academy." In the horizons, a voice echoed throughout the Emperor Star Academy, causing the crowd to make a clamor.

Very quickly, the silhouettes of Chu Tianjiao and a few others came into view. The arrival of these people caught the Emperor Star Academy by surprise. The crowd automatically opened up a path, as Chu Tianjiao and his people arrived in front of the Emperor Star Monuments.

The Elders of the academy slowly turned as they stared directly at Chu Tianjiao and his people.

Upon seeing Ye Wuque, Wu Chong, and Wang Teng among the visitors, an extremely chilly aura and killing intent emanated forth from Qin Wentian's body.

Beside him, a small and dainty hand slipped into his, gently touching his palms. Feeling the warmth of that hand, Qin Wentian froze for an instant as he turned and saw Mo Qingcheng smiling at him, as though she was telling him to be patient. Only then did he retract his aura.

Chu Tianjiao continued forward, walking towards the monuments. In front of them, a figure silently stood there with his back facing them, blocking their path.

This person was none other than Mustang.

Without a choice, Chu Tianjiao and his people bowed and pay their obeisance towards the stone tablet. They could not have predicted that the Emperor Star Academy would erect a stone tablet underneath the monuments solely for the sake of Mountain and Zi Jun.

The actions of the Emperor Star Academy gave them a tremendous pressure.

This was a silent proclamation. Somehow, the death of those two became the glue that caused those at the Emperor Star Academy to be even more united. Chu Tianjiao turned his head back and swept his glance across the numerous faces standing in the crowd as he silently sighed in his heart.

“Respected Elders, Chu Tianjiao has something to say, I wonder if it’s suitable to say it?” Chu Tianjiao stared at the crowd as he inquired.

No one replied. The silence of such an atmosphere made it seem as though they wanted to crush him into pieces.

“Speak.” An instant later, Ren Qianxing coldly spoke.

“Currently, the Royal Academy of Chu has already merged with the Godly General Martial Palace, combining their influences. The Royal Clan wishes to create an even stronger martial academy and hope that the Emperor Star Academy would agree to our merger request.” Chu Tianjiao slowly continued, “In this way, the ultimate power that’s the consolidation between the three academies would be born. Regardless of teachers or resources, we would then have a nearly endless supply for the students. Not only that, I can promise to leave everything about the Emperor Star Academy untouched.”

Upon hearing Chu Tianjiao’s words, many had cold smiles on their faces. He wanted to devour the Emperor Star Academy? Was that even possible?

“As long as the Emperor Star Academy agrees, all teachers and students of your academy would be able to receive immense amounts of cultivation resources on a monthly basis.” Chu Tianjiao added, but just as before, only silence answered him.

“SCRAM.” A cold voice resounded in the stillness of the silent atmosphere. The person who spoke was Mustang. His back was still facing them, and he made no moves to turn to look at them. He was afraid that he wouldn’t be able to control himself and suppress the rage that was boiling within him.

Chu Tianjiao froze, but he soon recovered with a smile on his face. He bowed again to the Elders of the Emperor Star Academy as he replied, “Chu Tianjiao of the junior generation bids farewell.”

After which, Chu Tianjiao and the rest of the visitors prepared to depart.

“Hold on.” Ren Qianxing remarked, causing Chu Tianjiao to halt in his steps.

“From this moment onwards, the Emperor Star Academy is forbidden for any of you to enter. For those who trespass, we will kill on sight regardless of that person’s identity.” Ren Qianxing’s voice faded as a murderous intent resonated in the air. The coldness of the voice caused Chu Tianjiao’s heart to involuntarily tremble. But swiftly after, the corners of his lips curled upwards in a cold smile. He continued his steps, departing from the Emperor Star Academy.

The Emperor Star Academy didn’t directly act against Chu Tianjiao right now. Firstly, there was insufficient justification. Secondly, if they truly dealt with these people right here and now, the ones who would face a calamity would be the students of their academy. The other innocent students might be completely annihilated in cold revenge.

This was their bottom line. Even if war actually erupted, they would still hold onto this unless the bottom line of either party was already shredded into pieces.

Francis arrived at the academy, and knowing the relationship between him and Qin Wentian, they permitted Francis to enter and leave freely. This time around, he brought over all the cultivation resources that Qin Wentian had requested, which had been painstakingly completely gathered by the Divine Weapon Pavilion.

After receiving the resources, Qin Wentian began his cultivation. His heart was filled with bitter anger, but he knew that his current strength was still far from being enough.

In the few days after that incident, the Royal Academy felt extremely peaceful, but many knew that this was merely the calm before the violent storm.

Both the Emperor Star Academy and the Royal Clan did not make any moves; it was though both sides were waiting for something.

These few days, there was people flying over the airspace of Chu, directly to within the Chu Palace while at the same time, quite a number of people left the Emperor Star Academy. All these deserters were from the Knight’s Association. They had decided to shift their allegiance, and upon seeing these occurrences, other students of the Emperor Star Academy felt that indeed, a violent storm would be descending upon them momentarily.

Chapter 170: Incident

In the Emperor Star Academy, within the training grounds Qin Wentian was in, demonic Qi permeated the air. The towering amounts of demonic Qi formed swirls of demonic mist and was so abundant that it could be described as rushing up to the heavens. This entire space seemed as though it was inundated by the presence of terrifying demons.

Within the mist, Qin Wentian sat there cross-legged. At this moment, his countenance looked incomparably demonic as columns and columns of demonic light flickered incessantly. His body seemed to be relentlessly undergoing a transformation.

Abruptly, the swirls of demonic mist in the training grounds frenziedly gushed towards Qin Wentian. The columns of demonic lights around his body were as resplendent as the Astral Lights emitted from the constellations. Deafening rumbling sounds rang out, and in the space of a few breaths’ worth of time, the entirety of the demonic mist dissipated once it was all absorbed into his

body. Only now did the columns of demonic lights stopped flickering as they disappeared one after another.

“BOOM, BOOM, BOOM!” A thunderous pounding sound could be heard thumping according to a strange rhythm inside his body. This was the sound of his heart beating. At this moment, Qin Wentian could clearly feel the immense qualitative transformation of his own vitality.

His current vitality, when compared to the past, multiplied by manifolds.

As Qin Wentian opened his eyes, a glint of demonic light could be seen flickering within. His gaze was terrifyingly sharp, and that countenance of his was tinged with a hint of an overwhelming handsomeness that could only be described as demonically bewitching.

“Hu...” Qin Wentian exhaled and flexed his body. Crackling sounds could be heard from within as his bones shifted.

Abruptly clenching his fist, a loud booming sound echoed out. This was the feeling his body being completely filled with strength.

Currently, his physique could already be comparable to a demonic beast. If in the future he chose to condense a Beast-type Astral Soul for his third Astral Gate, he would then be able to advance the Fiend Transformation Art to the second level, obtaining an even more powerful demonic body.

As of this moment, Qin Wentian could feel that just with this, his strength level had soared tremendously. Even without using innate techniques, any casual strikes he made would pack a power that his opponent wouldn't be able to ignore. He was naturally exceptionally satisfied with the gains he made.

Standing up, Qin Wentian retracted his aura back as he walked out of the training grounds.

“Wentian.” Qin Yao, who was sitting in a nearby pavilion, ran towards Qin Wentian when she noticed that Qin Wentian has ended his close-door seclusion. Tenderly touching his face, she wiped the sweat away as she smiled, “You have to pay attention to your body condition even though you are cultivating. You are not allowed to cultivate 24 hours a day, okay?”

Qin Yao knew that Mountain's death had a great impact on Qin Wentian. Qin Wentian didn't have much friends within the Emperor Star Academy. Not to mention Mountain, Luo Huan and a few

others were the ones who had aided his escape from the clutches of the Ye Clan back when he had still been in Sky Harmony City.

“Don’t worry sis, the bodies of us cultivators only gets stronger and stronger the deeper our cultivation base is.” A gentle smile blossomed on Qin Wentian’s face. Qin Yao nodded in agreement as she continued, “True, but you have to know your limits.”

“I understand.” Qin Wentian knew that Qin Yao was worried about him.

“How’s the situation out there?” Qin Wentian asked.

“The wind is sighing and the cranes are calling. Everything is in a state of tension. The Royal Academy provoked us a few times but there haven’t been any major clashes yet. However, I fear that it’s only a matter of time.” One could tell that the war between the Royal Clan and the Emperor Star Academy would erupt at any moment from Qin Yao’s reply.

Currently, many of the nobility as well as other clans with sufficient power were all keeping a low profile and spectating from the sidelines. The intensity of the storm this time would surely be at an unprecedented level.

The Emperor Star Academy was akin to an extremely powerful prey that the Royal Clan wanted to swallow. However, it was exceptionally difficult to do so. Currently, there were many flying-type demonic beasts flying in the airspace of the Royal Capital. Only those at Yuanfu possess flying rights, and many of them flew directly to the Royal Palace. However, among the Yuanfu cultivators, there were also some alumni of the Emperor Star Academy as well as students

who had been out for cultivation. Upon hearing the news, those who valued affection and comradeship and weren’t too far away had all returned to support their alma mater.

“Mhm.” Qin Wentian nodded, “Sister, take good care of Father.”

After that, Qin Wentian walk towards the direction of the Heavenly Star Pavilion. In the Heavenly Star Pavilion, the Spirit Beasts Testing Grounds was on the 7th level, while the Fiend Transformation Art was on the 8th level. Then, what exactly did the Azure Emperor leave behind on the 9th level of the pavilion?

This time around, Qin Wentian wanted to unravel the mystery.

Entering the Heavenly Pavilion once again, Qin Wentian bowed low with respect as he stood before the decrepit-looking guardian.

“Do you wish to enter the last entrance?” The old man abruptly asked.

“Yes.” Qin Wentian nodded. If the guardian was willing to guide him, it would naturally be for the best.

“Consolidate your power, muster your strength and unleash the strongest strike you can. Your objective is to force the door to open. If you are unable to open the door before Yuanfu, you don’t need to come back here again after stepping into Yuanfu.” The old man calmly explained, causing Qin Wentian’s gaze to freeze slightly.

Everything the Azure Emperor left behind required one’s cultivation base to be below that of Yuanfu. The Jun Lin Banquet, the Spirit Beasts Testing Grounds, as well as the door to the last entrance. The prerequisite for all of these was for one’s cultivation base to be below that of Yuanfu.

Could it be that the ‘test’ on the last level would be even tougher compared to the Jun Lin Banquet as well as the Spirit Beasts Testing Grounds?

Besides, the current him had already cultivated the Fiend Transformation Art.

At this moment, Qin Wentian didn’t realize that a glow of light was flickering within the depths of the old guardian’s eyes. In these thousands of years, Qin Wentian was undoubtedly the one closest to completing all the tests set by the Azure Emperor. Currently Qin Wentian should have already cultivated the Fiend Transformation Art. If he still wasn’t able to succeed in opening the door the last entrance, no one knew how long it would be for another student to arrive where Qin Wentian was currently at.

Let’s hope the little fellow would succeed.

Qin Wentian stood before the door to the last entrance. It had already been sealed for over thousands of years, but despite this, the exterior of the door was spotlessly clean, dust free and even seemed to gleam with a light of its own.

Qin Wentian's arterial pathways were seething as the Divine Yuan within his body transmitted to his arms. Erupting forth with a pressure capable of toppling mountains, he slammed his fist into the door.

RUMBLE! A thunderous sound rang out, but that door didn't show the slightest inclination of being opened. Obviously, the power behind Qin Wentian's earlier strike was not enough.

A demonic Qi emanated forth from Qin Wentian's body. His aura transformed completely in an instant. Taking a step forwards, he smashed his fist into the door once again. However, the door still didn't waver in the slightest.

"Hu... how strong exactly is this door?" Qin Wentian's eyes were filled with resolution as his blood boiled in his body. His aura transformed yet again; the force field of absolute obedience was tinged with a demonic presence, as though he was a Paragon of all demons.

The Divine Yuan Energy within his body frenziedly surged as he stepped forwards yet again. His left palm executed the Forgotten Imprint while his right palm executed the Falling Mountain Palms .

BOOM! The impact was so great that the entire space shook, causing those who were browsing for innate techniques on the lower levels to stare up at the ceiling, wondering what the hell just happened.

Upon hearing the terrifying noises caused by Qin Wentian's powerful blow, the old man's heart trembled involuntarily. This indicated that Qin Wentian had a probability of opening the door to the last entrance.

However, Qin Wentian's eyes narrowed as his gaze turned incomparably sharp. Even when he output so much power, he still had no way of opening the door.

Clang, Clang...

At this moment, the sounds of a bell tolling permeated the entire Emperor Star Academy, causing Qin Wentian to frown. Ever since he stepped into the academy, he had never heard such a sound before.

Qin Wentian quickly departed the Heavenly Star Pavilion, only to see a crowd of students milling towards a certain direction.

“I’ve enrolled in the academy for three years. This is the first time I heard the bell for summoning all Elders and students of the academy ringing.” A voice sighed. All of the students who heard it could infer that an incident of terrifying proportions just happened.

Upon hearing the bell chimes, Qin Wentian’s eyes had an extremely cold light flickering within.

Is whatever that’s going to happen finally happening?

Qin Wentian followed the crowd and headed over in the direction of the Emperor Star Monuments. After a short span of time passed, crowds of people, numbered about several thousands, gathered underneath the Emperor Star Monuments and formed a magnificent sight.

“F*ck, that bunch of bastards from the Royal Academy are clearly and intentionally trying to stir up conflicts. If they want to fight, let’s fight. Do they think that our Emperor Star Academy is afraid of them?” Someone in the crowd shouted in anger.

“You’re right, the deaths of Senior Mountain and junior brother were most definitely caused by the Royal Clan borrowing the power of the Royal Academy. There’s no need for further proof.”

Very quickly, many voices of discussion rang out as the crowd gradually understood what had just happened.

So it turned out that today, there were a few students of the Emperor Star Academy having their meal in the Royal Capital. Among them, there was a pretty girl that had her liberties taken by someone from the Royal Academy.

The students from the Emperor Star Academy were naturally infuriated, and thus a conflict erupted between both parties. However, those from the Royal Academy obviously came prepared and subjected the students from the Emperor Star Academy to ruthless humiliation and even made their move against the female students. However, a student belonging to the Emperor Star Academy managed to slip away and immediately spread the news and notified the academy. From hindsight, it was obvious that the conflict that arose today was intentional.

The scope of this news got larger and larger and, more and more people from both academies got embroiled within the dispute as fights broke out. Not only that, the Disciplinary Elder of the Royal Academy as well as the members of their Disciplinary Committee actually also went to the scene and crippled the cultivation bases of the students from the Emperor Star Academy.

The students belonging to the Royal Academy naturally didn’t received any punishment.

Those with discerning eyes naturally understood that the Royal Academy was trying to ignite the sparks of anger within the Emperor Star Academy. They wanted to provoke the Emperor Star Academy into starting a war.

In addition to the deaths of Mountain and Zi Jun earlier, if the Emperor Star Academy still continued to tolerate these acts, they might as well forget all about it and disband the academy. If

they still took no action, it was highly probable that a similar incident of this nature would occur again.

All the elders stood at the front. The one in the lead was Ren Qianxing, who was seen turning as he faced the crowd. In an instant, everyone turned silent as they waited for Ren Qianxing to speak.

“Recently, many things have happened. I believed that all of you already know the gist of it. The Emperor Star Academy may be facing an extremely difficult and challenging period in the coming days. And thus, if there are students who wish to leave the academy, I won’t force you to stay. In the future, after all the wind and waves die down, you all can come back again. Also, for students whose cultivation levels are below the 5th level of Arterial Circulation, there’s no way for you to help even if you insist on staying within the academy.”

Within the academy, students were the majority. Many of the students didn’t have high cultivation bases and would be of little help in the upcoming war, and hence, the Emperor Star Academy wouldn’t force them to participate. Not only that, students below the 5th level of Arterial Circulation were also directly prohibited from participating.

If they participated, they would only be cannon fodder. The Emperor Star Academy didn’t need cannon fodder. All of their students were the talented elites of the future, and it would be too much of a pity if they died like this.