

Ancient GM 301

Chapter 301: Gazing Dragon Mountain Rampart

As the sun rose, Shu Ruanyu could be seen sitting cross-legged, leaning against a wall in the cave dwelling. Her eyes were lightly shut as her arms clasped around her body protectively. Even as she rested, she was still in a state of vigilance.

Although Qin Wentian had undone the formation he placed on her yesterday, allowing her to absorb Astral Energy once more, she still suffered from some restrictions in the cave.

“Pitter, patter!” A crisp sound echoed in the dwelling. Shu Ruanyu opened her fatigue-filled eyes and to her surprise, she discovered that there was no one else in the cave dwelling right then.

“Mhm?” Shu Ruanyu instantly stood up. She stealthily approached the cave’s entrance and peered outside. Other than a foggy mist formed by the condensation of last night’s rain, there was no one else outside as well.

“Time to escape.” Shu Ruanyu let out a long sigh of relief. Finally, she didn’t have to worry about that damnable fatty ever again. But then again, throughout her past few days of captivity, Qin Wentian did keep his word. Other than placing that formation on her, he hadn’t done anything else.

“Qin Wentian, I won’t forget this,” Shu Ruanyu icily commented. After speaking, her silhouette flickered as she rose up in the air.

Qin Wentian and his group had long departed since early this morning. As promised, he released Shu Ruanyu. Back then, because of his actions, Bailu Jing and Bailu Yi were implicated despite them having nothing to do with it. As long as Shu Ruanyu returned safe and sound, Yang Fan wouldn’t do anything to Bailu Jing and Bailu Yi. The White Deer Institute could also be considered a major power in the Moon Continent, even though the scope of their combined forces couldn’t be compared to a transcendent power. The Star-Seizing Manor would definitely not go all out to start a war by allowing Yang Fan to kill the Bailu siblings.

Because of the need to maintain absolute secrecy of his whereabouts, Qin Wentian had to leave the mountain range they were in, lest Shu Ruanyu brought back reinforcements to capture him.

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Qiyun Country was right alongside the boundaries of the Azure Continent and was a country under the administration of the transcendent power—the Ouyang Aristocratic Clan.

The Ouyang Aristocratic Clan was a clan and not a sect, however, in order to expand even further, they were careful not to neglect the recruitment of fresh blood and new talents. Although the new recruits might not be of their bloodline, they would still do their best to nurture the chosen ones, thereby ensuring that their power wouldn't wane.

There was also an extremely famous mountain named Gazing-Dragon Mountain outside the borders of Qiyun Country.

This mountain was renowned for the various innate techniques engraved on the stone walls, and anyone was free to study them for their own comprehension. It was rumoured that Qiyun's past generations of Heavenly Dipper Sovereigns had spent their time and effort into engraving their comprehensions onto the mountain rampart, leaving this priceless treasure behind for the Stellar Martial Cultivators of Qiyun Country.

To a small country, stepping into the Heavenly Dipper Realm was already the pinnacle. If they didn't wish to stagnate, they would surely roam the Grand Xia. But some of these Heavenly Dipper Sovereigns loved their countries dearly, which inspired them to leave something behind for future generations, resulting in the current popularity of the Gazing-Dragon Mountain.

In front of the rampart, there were many stone platforms layered in the region around. Every day, there would be several cultivators visiting the mountains, trying their best to gain comprehensions of the innate techniques depicted.

And right now at this moment, there was a young man with a herculean figure standing atop a stone platform, relentlessly brandishing a huge axe. His movements did not have Astral Energy embedded within, yet the power behind them was strong enough to cause a massive wind to kick up.

This herculean figure had skin the color of bronze, his entire frame was ripped with muscles and an explosive strength could be sensed within each of his movements. He didn't look too old, around the age of 24 to 25, but even more interesting was that he'd been brandishing that gigantic axe of his for a total of seven days and hadn't stopped for a single moment. He also didn't seem to be bothered by the spectators watching him.

“Feel the wind from his strikes, I wonder how heavy that Axe of his is?” Somebody among the spectators laughingly commented.

“I would venture a guess at around 500 jin, this person seems like a barbarian and has boundless brute force.” Another person replied.

“Why doesn’t he get fatigued despite the increasingly profoundness of that axe art he’s practicing? How strange.”

“Well, there are many bizarre people all around the world. Look over there, there’s even someone who’s just been sleeping the past few days.” One of the spectators pointed to a stone platform not far away from the herculean young man. There was a youth quietly lying there, sleeping in peace or so it seemed, in a world of his own where outside matters couldn’t reach him.

“Two idiots.”

Yesterday, in the midst of a raining thunderstorm, that herculean young man continued practicing with the axe while the other young man continued sleeping there. Their actions had no common-sense to them.

What was even more bizarre was that beside the sleeping young man, a snowy white puppy pranced around, its adorable appearance instantly drawing the attention of many.

“Little fellow, come here!” At this moment, a young lady with a fresh and pure countenance, called out to the adorable snowy puppy.

The little snowy puppy gave a bark that sounded of laughter, and momentarily leapt onto the bosom of the young lady, causing her to giggle in happiness as she stroked its fur and patted it on its head.

This little fellow appeared to be enjoying itself immensely, much to the irritation and jealousy of several others in the crowd.

“Your owner is too lazy, doesn’t he care if you’re hungry or not?” The young lady glanced at Qin Wentian as she commented. She had been interacting with Little Rascal for the past few days and often stopped by to hug the little fellow. But this fellow on the stone platform, had always been sleeping every time.

“Ye Xi, you’re here again.” From afar, a slightly plump figure walked over. The young lady glanced at this new comer as she smiled, “What are you doing here again?”

“Well, I’m the buddy of that little shithead’s owner.” Fan Le laughed. The young lady snorted, before looking at Little Rascal that was contently sitting on her bosom, “Is he really?”

“Little Rascal, come here!” Fatty called out to the snowy puppy only to see the snowy puppy confusedly staring back at him, appearing as though it had never seen Fan Le before. After a few moments, it acted bored and started snuggling its head into Ye Xi’s bosom once more.

“See? It doesn’t know you.” Ye Xi glared at Fan Le. Fan Le rolled his eyes, damn that little lecherous wolf in puppy clothing.

Fan Le sat down with boredom, glancing at the sleeping young man before turning his gaze onto that herculean figure who was still wielding his axe. They had already arrived at the Qiyun country for a period of time, and Qin Wentian wished to make a breakthrough and up their power levels before they ventured into the Azure Continent.

And at this moment, Qin Wentian who was sleeping, suddenly sat up. The silhouette of Little Rascal instantly transformed into a white beam of light as it dashed towards the bosom of Qin Wentian. It let out a few delighted barks and kept trying to lick Qin Wentian on his face, indicating the closeness of the bond they shared.

“Boss, you finally woke up.” Fan Le’s eyes shone as he continued, “Boss, this lady is Ye Xi, a good friend of mine. She’s very familiar with Little Rascal, but that little shithead kept ignoring me in her presence, pretending that it didn’t know me. How maddening.”

“Hmm, who are you talking to?” Qin Wentian acted as if he didn’t know this fellow at all... he glanced at Ye Xi while silently condemning Fatty with contempt in his heart.

This fatty, was the epitome of the concept, ‘universal love’.

“Nevermind, you just won.” Fan Le was totally speechless.

“Wow, how rare, that Sleeping God actually woke up,” somebody exclaimed in surprise.

“This fellow really has a talent for sleeping.”

“Sleeping God, are you here to sleep or to cultivate?”

“Sleeping God?” Qin Wentian grinned as he heard his title. In fact, he hadn’t stopped cultivating for a single moment ever since he arrived here.

After that last battle back in the Moon Continent, the Astral Energy within his three Yuanfu had completely dried up, and in addition he’d been seriously injured. After he recovered, and absorbed enough Astral Energy to fill his Yuanfu again, to his pleasant surprise, he discovered that his Yuanfu receptacles had actually expanded in size—he had actually made a breakthrough to the fifth-level of Yuanfu.

“Fatty, this rampart is truly fascinating, you should meditate on it if you have the time.” Qin Wentian tried to persuade Fatty into working harder.

“Don’t worry boss, with my good brains I can easily understand the comprehensions and innate techniques engraved upon it. Look at Big Bro Mang, if even he could understand, it’ll be a snap for a great genius like me.”

Qin Wentian turned his gaze onto Chu Mang, the movements of his axe seemed extremely ordinary and without fanfare, yet upon closer observation, they contained within them a marvellous intricacy, moving in a strange trajectory.

“It’s that technique?!” Qin Wentian’s eyes brightened. There was a set of exceedingly profound axe-type innate techniques depicted on the mountain rampart. The illustrated strikes appeared extremely chaotic, yet learning the technique allowed one to circulate the qi in one’s body in a certain direction. This was in accordance to the movements of the axe techniques, achieving the realm of uniting qi and innate technique as one.

“Is he a friend of you guys as well?” Ye Xi wondered, as Qin Wentian nodded his head.

“A bunch of weirdos.” Ye Xi smiled with no hints of rudeness, while some of the spectators also laughed along, “Hey Sleeping God, are you bragging? Telling others to meditate on the depictions while you snore, you mean you’re studying all these marvellous techniques in your sleep?”

Qin Wentian glanced at the crowd, the majority of people here were at the Yuanfu Realm. Occasionally, there would be some cultivators at the Arterial Circulation Realm as well.

Laughing nonchalantly, Qin Wentian didn't deign to give an explanation and continued cultivating quietly.

In the blink of an eye, winter came. The chill of winter's frosty wind, as well as the blanket of snow, caused the number of visitors to the Gazing-Dragon Mountain to lessen.

Amidst the drifting snow, Qin Wentian stretched out his hands, watching as a snowflake landed on his palm. He inclined his head and gazed in the direction of the Moon Continent.

Another year had passed, was Qingcheng still doing fine in the Pill Emperor Hall?

His father, Qin Chuan, Sister Qin Yao, Teacher Mustang, Senior Luo Huan, were all still in Chu. He wondered if they were doing fine as well.

He missed them all, he was already nineteen. Although these three years had passed by in a flash, he had experienced too much, way too much.

"Hey the weather is cold, you should eat these pastries I've brought to warm yourselves up, they're piping hot." At this moment, a young lady carrying a basket walked over. Inside the basket were goodies of all kinds, and when she saw the expressions of wistful longing in his eye, she gently smiled, "Brother Wentian, are you thinking of the girl you love?"

Glancing at the young lady's guileless smile, Qin Wentian stretched out his hands and tousled her hair. Due to their daily interactions during this period of time, he was already very familiar with Ye Xi.

"Wow, what's this delicious thing I smell." Fatty sidled upwards, grinning as he grabbed a few steaming buns from the basket and started wolfing them down. Although Stellar Martial Cultivators had no need to consume food, it still felt good to satisfy their desire to eat.

The three of them sat down on the stone platform, laughing and joking about, painting an extremely harmonious scene.

And right at this moment, a white beam of light flashed past. Turning their gazes in the direction of the beam, they only saw Chu Mang brandishing his gigantic axe as the snowflakes surrounding him were controlled by his qi flow, gathering together to form a snow dragon flew through the air, all in accordance to the intricate dance Chu Mang was moving in.

“How beautiful.” Ye Xi’s own gorgeous eyes flickered.

Qin Wentian’s eyes also lit up as a smile appeared on his face. Chu Mang had broken through!

“Excellent!” Qin Wentian laughed—currently their respective levels of power had all taken a step forwards!

Chapter 302: Ye Xi’s story

After a final slash, Chu Mang finally stopped. He inclined his head, looking up towards the Heavens and bellowed, “How satisfying, haha!”

Chu Mang at this moment, felt that his entire body was in a very ‘relaxed’ state. The column of snowflakes spiralled around him, directed by the unconscious flow of his qi.

“Big Bro Mang, come and have something to eat. You must be thoroughly worn out after all these days of practice,” Qin Wentian called out. Chu Mang’s gaze shifted over in the direction of Qin Wentian and Fan Le as he heartily agreed.

With a single step, Chu Mang traversed the distance between them and landed on the stone platform. An expression of puzzlement appeared on his face as he glanced at Ye Xi, “Who’s this little sister?”

“Hi Big Bro Mang, my name is Ye Xi.” Ye Xi smiled as she greeted in a sweet voice. Chu Mang rubbed the back of his head and laughed, “Ye Xi, are the goodies made by you? I must definitely try them.”

“Yeah, her pastry-making skills are really excellent.” Qin Wentian laughed.

“Ah, it’s snowing again. I wonder how my big brother is doing now?” Chu Mang stared at the drifting snowflakes as he mumbled.

“Don’t worry, Brother Wuwei will definitely make Chu even more prosperous than before.” Qin Wentian’s thoughts shifted to Chu Wuwei as well. That incomparably calm and serene Emperor of Chu that was always in control.

“Mhm.” Chu Mang heavily nodded his head as his eyes turned slightly red. He truly missed his big brother.

“Ye Xi, where is your family?” Qin Wentian gazed at Ye Xi as he inquired with a smile.

Ye Xi’s smile instantly faded, but she quickly recovered and forced out a joyful look as she replied, “They are in the Royal Capital of Qiyun Country.”

“Then what are you doing here?” Chu Mang was slightly more clumsy and often blundered his way through things that needed diplomacy. He didn’t notice Ye Xi’s expression and hence, he straightforwardly asked the most direct question.

“I didn’t like it there so I ran out.” Ye Xi’s smile was extremely strained.

“Okay.” Chu Mang nodded somewhat stupidly.

“I’ll talk to you guys next time, I suddenly remembered that I have something to do.” Ye Xi took up her basket and frantically walked away. Staring at her departing view, Qin Wentian shook his head. He knew that this little girl had worries in her heart.

Yes, that’s right, a sixteen year old young lady coming to the Gazing-Dragon Mountain every day, yet not for cultivation. There should be a special reason behind it.

“Wentian, when are we leaving for the Azure Continent?” Chu Mang asked.

“I’m currently at a bottleneck, give me a few more days. I want to see if I can make a breakthrough before we enter the Azure Continent.” Qin Wentian smiled. He had already been stuck at the bottleneck at the fifth-level of Yuanfu for quite some time.

“Okay, I will go look at the rampart and see if there are any innate techniques suitable for me to practice.” Chu Mang nodded.

The snow fell with greater intensity and lasted for a total of seven days. After that period of intense snowy weather, the warm rays of the sun felt brimming with warmth and vitality. The last vestiges of snow melted, as the myriad of living things on earth rejoiced, the beautiful landscape resurfacing once more.

The number of visitors to the Gazing-Dragon Mountains increased once again, returning back to the same period of hustle and bustle before the winter.

Chu Mang was still immersed in his cultivation. Although he wasn't intelligent, he was a cultivation fanatic, he could spend the whole day in his own world, practicing the same move over and over again. This was also the reason why back then, he was ranked first amongst the ten prodigies of Chu.

And because of this particular personality trait, Chu Mang's rate of cultivation was many times faster than the ordinary cultivator.

And Fan Le, although he appeared extremely lazy on the surface, had put in effort during cultivation as well. The word 'hardworking' was gradually imprinted into his bones as well.

"Hey, come and enjoy these delicacies."

The voice of a young lady drifted over. Momentarily, Qin Wentian turned over and stretched his back, having just woken up from sleep.

"Morning, Ye Xi," Qin Wentian greeted.

"Morning? Brother Wentian, the sun's rays are already shining on my bum, it's almost noon already." Ye Xi rolled her eyes and laughed.

"Hehe, Ye Xi, come let me take a look at your bumbum." Fan Le grinned, his words causing Ye Xi to redden. She glared at Fan Le and mimicked Qin Wentian's tone as she scolded, "Damn Fatty."

"HAHAHA!" Fan Le laughed uproariously when he heard Ye Xi's reply. He stuck his hands on his hips, "Ye Xi you better make things clear, which ounce of this esteemed genius's body is fat?"

“Nope, not fat at all.” Ye Xi played along and laughed. Little Rascal had long snuggled its way onto Ye Xi’s bosom. The four of them and an adorable little puppy, the scene was like something out of a sit-com. Comment by M Biscuit: can change to play? I just realized how anachronistic this word is Comment by Lord Bluefire: wow anachrosnistic LOL i dun even know whats that haha but ok change to play

Throughout those days, Ye Xi would always deliver delicacies over to them. And because Qin Wentian, Fan Le and Chu Mang would endlessly praise her pastry-making skills, Ye Xi felt extremely encouraged. Somehow, being in this group of ‘weirdos’, made her experience once again the feeling of family warmth. Ye Xi felt extremely relaxed when hanging out among them, greatly loving this atmosphere of joy. In any case, since she had to come to the Gazing-Dragon Mountain Rampart every day, she didn’t feel it was a chore to prepare delicacies for them to enjoy after they ended their training.

“Little lady, why are you so friendly with the Sleeping God, Axe Demon and that fatty? Come make us something nice to eat as well,” someone in the crowd jested good-naturedly. Sleeping God was the title they gave to Qin Wentian, while Axe Demon was referring to Chu Mang.

“You are not good-looking enough.” Ye Xi laughed, her cute manner of refuting instantly caused everyone in the crowd to break out in laughter. The person continued, “But this older brother is very powerful oh, I’m definitely stronger than Sleeping God and Axe Demon.”

“Bleh, who knows.” Ye Xi stuck out her tongue. That person laughed again, “I’m an expert that has a cultivation base at the third-level of Yuanfu, my combat prowess isn’t something that Sleeping God, who spends his days in slumber would be able to match. Why don’t you come and be my little wifey instead?”

Ye Xi rolled her eyes, and ignored him. When that person was just about to speak again, abruptly he closed his mouth as his gaze became fixated in a certain direction.

Ye Xi noted his countenance as she too, turned her gaze over that direction. Momentarily, the smile on her face vanished as her countenance turned pale white.

“Ye Xi, what’s wrong?” Chu Mang inquired. Qin Wentian followed Ye Xi’s gaze and saw a group of silhouettes making their way over to them. The person in the middle was clad in luxurious gold-colored robes, an indication of his status and position in that group. The rest of them appeared to be his bodyguards, except for a few that gave a similar air as the golden-robed leader, albeit of a lower rank.

Qin Wentian took note of their cultivation bases. These people were all at the Yuanfu level, the young man in the middle at a cultivation base at the fifth-level of Yuanfu. As for those standing by his side, the weakest among them had a cultivation base at the third-level while the strongest was at the seventh-level of Yuanfu. One had to know that Yuanfu cultivators were already almost at the peak in small countries such as Chu, Snowcloud and of course, Qiyun.

These people definitely had an extraordinary background in Qiyun.

These group of people instantly appeared in front of the mountain rampart, and the young man in the centre cast a glance towards the surrounding region before smiling, “The citizens of my Qiyun are truly hardworking, not bad at all.”

“We greet young lord.” Many people approached, while bowing to the young man.

“Mhm.” The young man lightly nodded in response. “Fine weather after the snow, the High Princes will come here tomorrow to comprehend the depictions on the rampart. The whole lot of you at the front of the rampart better wise up, and give up your space for them.”

“As you command.” The crowd all nodded, they knew the background of this youth, hence they were all willing to obey.

Every year during this period of time, a group of High Princes would come over to study the depictions engraved on the rampart. The Emperor would then personally examine the High Princes to determine which of them had made the most progress on their comprehension. Needless to say, the one that comprehended the most would often receive the highest amount of recognition from the Emperor and hence, this period of time was highly regarded by the High Princes. Of course, they did not stipulate that someone would need to clear the path for them, however this young man in the golden robes took it upon himself to do just that, as a way to express goodwill with the High Princes.

The background of this young man was extraordinary as well. He was the second son of a conferred King, hence he naturally wanted to form good connection with the various princes.

The young man’s gaze slowly surveyed the area, before eventually landing on Ye Xi. He then coldly remarked, “Ye Xi, regardless of your attitude, you are still of noble birth. What are you doing hanging out with this bunch of riffraff every day? Are you doing this to commemorate that cheap slut?”

Ye Xi turned even paler at the young man’s words. She angrily retorted, “You are the cheap slut.”

“Hehe, Ye Xi, if it were not for the kindness of his highness, you would have been punished long ago. And if you continue with your insolence, then don’t blame me for not being polite,” the young man spat. After which, he turned his glance towards Qin Wentian, Fan Le and Chu Mang who stood at her side. “I don’t want to see your faces here tomorrow morning.”

After speaking, he flicked his sleeves and left. “Remember, everyone, when the princes are here tomorrow, the front-most stone platforms are to be left for them. No one, I repeat, no one must occupy it.”

After speaking, the whole group of them departed, leaving behind a pale-faced Ye Xi.

The crowd all walked away from the aforementioned platforms, opting to choose one at the more remote corners. They couldn’t afford to antagonise the Royal Clan of Qiyun.

“Ye Xi, what’s wrong?” Qin Wentian asked in a low voice as he saw how strange she looked.

At this moment, Ye Xi eyes were brimming with tears, appearing extremely sorrowful.

“Nothing.” Ye Xi shook her head.

“If you want to cry, just cry. In front of your Bro Wentian, there’s no need to restrain your emotions,” Qin Wentian gently spoke, as he patted Xi Ye lightly on her shoulders.

Ye Xi collapsed onto Qin Wentian, slightly leaning against his shoulders, her last line of defenses crumbling away. Only now did her tears fall freely.

“Brother Wentian, do you know why I come here so often? Because my mother died right in front of this mountain rampart,” Ye Xi sobbed uncontrollably, as she told her story.

So it was revealed that Ye Xi’s father was a lord that was conferred Kingship of Qiyun Country. But because he preferred to be unfettered, and not bound by imperial authority, he would often roam about instead of working for the imperial court. Eventually, during one of his jaunts away, he met Yet Xi’s mother on of his journeys, a meeting he would always feel extremely blessed to have had. Ye Xi’s father’s talent in cultivation was pretty good, and he would often come to the mountain rampart in a bid to comprehend the teachings of the past Qiyun Country’s sovereigns.

One day, the elder brother of the wife of another lord in authority that was conferred Kingship, met Ye Xi's mother by chance over at this mountain rampart. Because of her beauty, that man lusted after her, constantly teasing and humiliating her with words. Conflict arose soon after and during an exchange of blows, he accidentally slayed Ye Xi's mother.

When Ye Xi's father rushed to the scene, he killed that man in a fit of rage. After which, he slaughtered his way to the mansion where the lord in power was staying, wreaking havoc all around. Eventually, he was seriously injured during the skirmish, and he was forced to retreat while in hot pursuit.

That conferred King was none other than the father of the young man earlier. And as for the person who slayed Ye Xi's mother, it was none other than the uncle of that young man.

Ye Xi's father, that unfettered King, had been stripped of power and was currently being hunted everywhere. Only when one of the High Prince laid down a command to stop the hunt, recruiting Ye Xi's father as his personal bodyguard instead, did this matter come to an end.

Hence, Ye Xi would often come before the Gazing-Dragon Mountain Rampart.

When she ended her story, Qin Wentian gently hugged her, while lightly patting her shoulders, trying his best to console her.

Chapter 303: The strength of Fatty

Chu Mang was boiling with anger when he heard her story. Ye Xi's father didn't like the shackles of power and hence chose to be unfettered, yet such a thing still happened to him.

Fan Le narrowed his eyes, "Ye Xi, the King's Consort's older brother, does he know the identity of your mother?"

"I'm not very sure about that." Ye Xi shook her head, as Fan Le's eyes shone with a strange glow. Fan Le then continued, "Back then, I'm sure your mother would have revealed her identity, yet, the elder brother of the Conferred King's consort still did what he did. I think, things might not be as simple as what you've always imagined."

"Are you saying that man might have done what he did because he was under the orders of King Yi? But... that man was eventually killed by my father." Ye Xi wiped her tears away, bitterly smiling as she shook her head. "I'm sorry for breaking down like that. Bro Wentian, Big Bro Chu Mang and Fan Le, you guys better leave this place. You might get caught in the middle of this conflict between my family and theirs. That young lord just now was the second son of King Yi."

“Silly girl, don’t worry, your Big Bro Chu Mang is also a High Prince. His older brother is the Emperor of a country.” Qin Wentian smiled. Qiyun was only a small country that was under the administration of the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan, and so Qin Wentian did not place much importance to it.

Even the most casual factions of power from the Moon Continent could completely eradicate a small country like this with ease.

Ye Xi glanced doubtfully at Chu Mang, “Big Bro Chu Mang, is that true?”

“Yeah, Wentian gave the ruling authority to my elder brother, and my elder brother commanded me to roam the world,” Chu Mang straightforwardly replied. Ye Xi felt slightly confused when she heard his words but didn’t probe further. And as the four of them continued chatting, the atmosphere soon lightened up again.

Qin Wentian, Chu Mang and Fan Le actually all seemed very ordinary. Qin Wentian was gentle and quiet. Fan Le loved to joke around with his somewhat shameless personality, but at heart, he was a good person. Chu Mang was honest and uncomplicated, giving people the feeling that he was a big softy. It had been too long since Ye Xi laughed so much in the company of others.

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The rays of the sun cascaded onto the great earth, heralding the coming of a new dawn. The weather today was extremely fine as well, and at this moment, there were already a few people standing guard at the front-most stone platforms in the Gazing-Dragon Mountain Rampart. The others in the crowd stood to the side as the place was drowned by all the voices deep in discussion.

“Brother Wentian, let’s leave.” Ye Xi pulled on the sleeves of Qin Wentian, yet he continued sitting there. He then smiled at her, “Ye Xi, is your father coming here today as well?”

“Yeah, for his safety, his highness allowed him to be his personal bodyguard and has treated him very well. I’m sure he’ll be here today as well.” Ye Xi lightly nodded her head.

“You will be able to see your father then, why do you want to leave?” Qin Wentian gently smiled, yet Ye Xi still felt a faint sense of worry.

“Sleeping God, better come over here. We are not allowed to stay near the front-most platforms.” Somebody in the crowd tried to persuade him out of a sense of goodwill.

“The whole lot of you better know what’s good for you. The High Princes come here at this time every year just to comprehend the depictions. This matter is extremely crucial to them, so if you offend them, the only path remaining is death.”

“Thank you for everyone’s kindness, but... isn’t that guy standing there as well?” Qin Wentian pointed to a figure not far away. The figure was a swordsman, who had a rusty long sword strapped upon his back. The swordsman sat quietly alone, immersed in his own comprehensions, with nothing else beside him.

The crowd rolled their eyes. Was Sleeping God still asleep? That swordsman was someone even the High Princes would show respect to, so it was laughable to even compare himself to such an esteemed character.

“Brother Wentian, his name is ‘Thirteen’, and he’s the number one swordsman in Qiyun. The Mandate he comprehends is the Mandate of Sword and it’s already at the Transformation Boundary of the first level,” Ye Xi explained in a low voice. Qin Wentian glanced at that young-looking swordsman in astonishment. Being at the sixth-level of Yuanfu wasn’t anything much, but his Mandate had already reached the Transformation Boundary at such a young age. How astounding.

“Not bad. He has a few shades of my talent but our levels are still far apart.” Fatty grinned. Ye Xi rolled her eyes, this fatty was only good at one thing—blowing his own trumpet.

Right then, a group of about thirty to forty people walked over to the stone platforms.

The second son of King Yi, which was the young lord from yesterday, led the way. However, a severe frown soon appeared on his face as he turned his gaze towards the mountain rampart, his eyes glinting with a cold light. Qin Wentian and the other riffraff were still hanging around, blatantly defying the orders he had given them yesterday.

“Didn’t I say that I didn’t want to see your faces here?” the young man shouted in a rage as killing intent gushed out from him. “Ye Xi, do you really think that because of his highness, I wouldn’t dare to kill you?”

“But, why can’t we stay here?” Fan Le asked in an innocent voice.

“If the High Princes weren’t here today, I would definitely slaughter the whole lot of you. Never mind, I’m feeling merciful. I shall give you all ten breaths of time, so if you want to live, you’d better get out of my sight,” the young man spoke, as a dangerous glint flashed in his eyes. After speaking, several of his bodyguards stepped forwards, surrounding Qin Wentian and the rest.

Soon after, the entire entourage arrived. The three High Princes stood in the middle of the protective guards, each of them exuding an extraordinary demeanor. At that moment, a middle-aged man left the side of one of the High Princes, walking out as he spoke, “Xi`er, what are you doing here? Leave quickly.”

“Father.” Ye Xi gazed at the middle-aged man, as she lowered her head. She then turned to Qin Wentian, “Brother Wentian, let’s leave.”

“Ye Xi, why do we need to move? Does this place have the name of its owner imprinted on it? Anyway, this place is the best spot for us to comprehend the depictions, so let’s just stay here instead.” Qin Wentian smiled at Ye Xi. His smile was exceedingly calm, as though he didn’t put the ire of the young lord in his eyes at all.

“You pieces of shit.” The young man’s eyes flashed fire as he stared at the group on the three front-most stone platforms. This bunch of riffraff was obviously intent on occupying the positions that were to be used for the High Princes.

Even the swordsman ‘Thirteen’ sat on a stone platform that was more to the side, indicating he was giving face to the High Princes of Qiyun.

“Brother Thirteen.”

At this moment, one of the High Princes called out. Thirteen shifted his gaze over and lightly nodded in response, “Your highness.”

“The effort Brother Thirteen puts in his cultivation puts me to shame. I’ll pray for your successful breakthrough to the Heavenly Dipper Realm.” That High Prince laughed, extremely courteous. Thirteen calmly replied, “I shall try my best, thank you for the well wishes.”

After which, that High Prince’s glance shifted onto Ye Xi as he spoke to Ye Xi’s father, “Uncle Ye, look how big Ye Xi has grown. Quickly, ask her to come over.”

Ye Xi's father hesitated slightly before calling out, "Ye Xi, come here."

Ye Xi cast a glance at her father before shaking her head and gesturing to those at her side, "Father, these are my friends, Brother Wentian, Big Bro Chu Mang, and Fan Le."

"Stop acting wilful," Ye Xi's father lightly berated. After which, he turned to Qin Wentian and the rest, "Friends, Ye Xi is too insensible, could you guys leave first?"

"Uncle Ye, the Gazing-Mountain Rampart is a place that's free for all to visit and there are plenty of stone platforms here as well, why do we have to leave?" Fan Le grinned.

"Don't hurt Ye Xi," that High Prince indifferently commanded. This undoubtedly meant that Qin Wentian and the others could be killed without mercy.

The young man nodded, he immediately understood what he should do. With a wave of his hands, three other silhouettes stepped out, their bodies radiating an ice-cold killing intent.

"I've already reminded you that the High Princes would visit the Gazing-Mountain Rampart today. Yet, you guys still persisted in courting your own deaths. Let me send you to hell then," that young man coldly stated. The three guards he sent out weren't weak, all of them were at the fifth-level of Yuanfu.

As for Qin Wentian's group, the three of them were all extremely young, Chu Mang was the oldest, about twenty plus of age while Qin Wentian and Fan Le weren't even twenty. It was more than sufficient to send out three cultivators at the fifth-level of Yuanfu to get rid of them.

The spectators at the side all felt that it was a great pity. This Sleeping God and Axe Demon were extremely humorous people throughout this period of time where they had cultivated together. They didn't deserve to die like this.

"Brother Mang, they're saying that we need to piss off during their visit. What do you think we should do?" Fan Le's fleshy face scrunched together as he continued grinning, yet his eyes flashed with a cold fire.

"Do you want to do it? Or do you want me to do it?" Chu Mang cut to the chase.

"Let me do it then, there's no need for you to act yet." Fan Le laughed, as his eyes lighted up. His Arrow-type Astral Souls were released, as a resplendent bow took form in his hands, coalesced from Astral Light.

“Huh?” The crowd were all dumbfounded by Fan Le’s action. That fatty wanted to fight them head on?

But he was facing against three cultivators at the fifth-level of Yuanfu.

“Courting death.” One of the guards instantly increased his speed, moving towards Fan Le. He slammed forth with his fist, the might of his strike was like a gigantic boulder rolling down the mountains. It was extremely terrifying.

However, at the same instant, a golden streak of arrow-like lightning, imbued with relentless flames, fired forth from Fan Le’s bow.

Swift, extremely swift. Like Chu Mang, Fan Le had already comprehended the first level of insights into the Mandate of Arrows, Insta-shot.

Insta-shot at the Advanced Boundary granted an ordinary arrow an increment of speed by a factor of four times.

Speed was also strength, and considering arrows were always unleashed during the instant of explosive momentum, how could archers not be tyrannical?

“Chi!” A crisp sound echoed, as the manifestation of that fist attack was shattered into nothingness. The arrow instantly reached the guard, whose countenance drastically fell when he felt the power of the attack. His Astral Soul then flared as his entire body gained stone-like properties.

BOOM! The arrow of Fan Le collided into his stonewall, driving him backwards. Fan Le actually succeeded in wounding the guard despite the guard’s heightened defense.

At the same instant, the second and third arrows penetrated through space, piercing right into the centre of the guard’s brow, activating a terrifying blaze that erupted into an inferno.

Describing the battle itself had taken time, but in actuality it happened in the blink of an eye. The other two guards stared dumbfoundedly as their companion burnt into ashes. How could Fan Le miss this opportune moment where their attentions were distracted? Grinning shamelessly, he immediately let go of two arrows. Two golden streaks of lightning zoomed past, killing the other two within a breath of time. Just like that, three cultivators at the fifth-level of Yuanfu had been slain.

Everyone in the crowd had frozen in shock while witnessing the entire scenario.

The strength of this fatty was also on the fifth-level of Yuanfu. But the will of his Mandate incorporated the power of his bloodline limit.

Fan Le didn't lower his bow. On the contrary, he nocked an arrow aiming straight at the young lord that was the son of King Yi.

A smile curled on his face, bringing to mind the sly smile of a devil. The young lord met his look and his face instantly paled!

Chapter 304: Cause

Qin Wentian had a smile on his face when he looked at Fan Le. This was the reason why archers had to be slain first during a battle. Fan Le not only had a cultivation base at the fifth-level of Yuanfu, but he also had an extremely powerful bloodline and had already comprehended three different kinds of Mandate.

Fan Le's three Astral Souls were: Bow-and-Arrow Astral Soul, Devil-Faced Astral Soul, and Blazing Flames Astral Soul.

The three Mandates he comprehended originated from his Astral Souls; first, the Mandate of Arrows, Insta-shot; second, the Mandate of Flames, Ignition; and third, the Mandate of Psyche-force, Control. The mandate of Psyche-force was extremely mysterious.; it was exceedingly rare and difficult to comprehend this sort of Mandate. It originated from Fan Le's second Astral Soul, the Devil-Faced Astral Soul. His Insta-shot and Ignition had already reached the Advanced Boundary but his mastery of Control still remained at the Initial Boundary.

And according to what Qin Wentian knew, the first level of insight of the Mandate of Psyche-force was Control, and as it leveled up, it was capable of a never-ending myriad of applications that would be terrifying to fight against.

And like Fatty's favorite line, this fatty was a genius. The will of the Mandate of Flames for Fan Le was many times stronger than ordinary Stellar Martial Cultivators because his Empyrean Flames Bloodline was a fire-attribute bloodline as well.

The strength of these three Mandates when fused together was a force to be reckoned with. Even three opponents at the same level of Yuanfu had no way of defending against his might.

And as for the young lord who was the second son of King Yi, the instant he was locked on by Fan Le, he could feel a sense of impending doom engulfing him. A wide smile beamed on Fatty's face—the smile of a devil.

Ye Xi's mouth was wide open. That shameless fatty was this strong?

She glanced at Qin Wentian, as she whispered, "Brother Wentian, that Fan Le..."

"Don't worry about him," Qin Wentian gently replied. Seeing the candid look in Qin Wentian's eyes, Ye Xi nodded, "Okay."

"I'm Ye Cheng from King Yi's Mansion. You'd better think carefully about what you're doing." The young lord glared at Fan Le. Although Fan Le was aiming an arrow at him, he didn't believe that Fan Le would dare to loose that arrow.

"Little lord, don't scare this little fatty." Fan Le's body began to convulse with fear involuntarily, and when matched with that mock terror on his face, many in the crowd couldn't help but perspire. This fatty was too amusing!

"This fatty shall court death then, but sadly, you won't be able to witness it." Fan Le's gaze abruptly turned cold as a golden streak of light fired off from his bow.

"Young lord, be careful!" someone at the side roared, but it was already too late. The arrow fired at a speed that seemed even faster than sound. Ye Cheng instantly died on the spot.

Even in death, Ye Cheng's eyes were still widened in disbelief. Fan Le fired with no hints of hesitation, killing him off directly.

Such a blatant and decisive attack, even the High Princes nearby felt their hearts involuntarily tremble at the sight.

Fan Le and Qin Wentian both matured through the terrifying tempest that had rocked Chu. The tyranny of the Nine Mystical Palace, Chu Tianjiao's schemes, the destruction of the Emperor Star Academy. The Fan Le today was no longer the same young fatty that traveled by Qin Wentian's side when they were taking the examination within the Dark Forest.

Hidden beneath that fleshy frame of his was a heart that had grown cold and decisive. To those who manifested killing intent towards him, he would not show the slightest shred of mercy.

This Fatty was also a genius at holding grudges.

“RUMBLEE~” A terrifying aura swept forth, Ye Cheng’s guards all released their Astral Souls as their killing intent surged forth in torrential waves. Their silhouettes flickered as they rushed Fan Le.

But in the next moment, they only felt an intangible sense of being locked on. They turned to see the herculean young man holding in his hands a bow as resplendent as that of Fan Le’s, but the aura he emitted was many times mightier.

“Buzz!”

Nine arrows split apart the air; each imbued with the will of Insta-shot, and at the Transformation Boundary they flew at an increment in speed by a factor of eight.

“Chi, chi chi!”

Ringling sounds echoed as body after body hit the ground. Of all the guards, only one remained alive. That Yuanfu cultivator stood alone in the air, trembling from a gut-wrenching fear, with only one thought running through his mind. Who were these monsters?

The strongest of Ye Cheng’s guards had been at the seventh-level of Yuanfu.

Yet the combat prowess of Chu Mang, who was at the same level, far exceeded their anticipations. His arrows instantly slew everyone, with no warning whatsoever.

“Too weak,” Fan Le snorted in disdain, “Big Bro Chu Mang, look at how terrified this poor guy is. Why not let him return alive?”

“Fine.” Chu Mang nodded before the astral bow dissipated from his hands.

However, how could the crowd remain calm? The three High Princes all fixated their gaze onto Chu Mang. This young man had a cultivation base at the seventh-level of Yuanfu, but the will of his Mandate had already reached the Transformation level. He could easily slaughter those ordinary cultivators at the same level as him.

This meant that if Chu Mang wanted to kill them, he would be able to do so with ease.

“Still want me to scram? Those who do, speak out now.” Chu Mang gazed at the crowd as he coldly spoke. Everyone kept quiet out of fear; the entire area was so silent that you could even hear a pin fall.

The majority of the entourage were all at the middle tier of Yuanfu, their cultivation bases around the fourth to the sixth level. Only four were at the seventh-level of Yuanfu, and one at the eighth-level of Yuanfu.

After all, never would the three princes have expected to meet people behaving so audaciously towards them during this trip to the Gazing-Dragon Mountains.

And not only that, they were all young men with extremely outstanding talent.

They couldn't accurately gauge Chu Mang's combat prowess, but inferring from how easily he slew those cultivators at the seventh-level of Yuanfu, it was highly probable that he might even be able to fight evenly against cultivators at the eighth-level of Yuanfu. If they started a fight here, the best scenario would be that they subdued all three of them, but with heavy casualties on their side.

Not only that, if Chu Mang decided to 'lock on' a prince, there was no guarantee that prince might survive.

“You three don't seem to be the citizens of my Qiyun, where are you all from?” The High Prince beside Ye Xi's father spoke. His countenance was calm, totally devoid of anger. There was no way to tell what he was thinking.

“You don't need to know.”

Qin Wentian indifferently commented, “There are still many stone platforms here. If you wish to cultivate, go ahead, if you wish to fight, we will also be happy to play with you.”

That High Prince shifted his gaze to Qin Wentian. Qin Wentian's age was similar to Fan Le, both of them were younger than Chu Mang. The three of them were extremely good friends, but who was the leader among them? He had no way to deduce that. But in any case, the strongest of all three should be Chu Mang; there was no doubt about that.

"You guys killed the son of King Yi, so even if I don't send men to pursue this, King Yi would definitely do so. Have you all even considered the consequences? I don't think King Yi would be inclined to show mercy," the prince calmly continued.

Ye Xi's brows were furrowed, she knew that there were many experts in King Yi's Mansion. King Yi himself was at the eighth-level of Yuanfu, an extremely powerful cultivator in his own right. Although Big Bro Chu Mang was a formidable force, if faced against King Yi, he may not prevail...

"Seeing your group's extraordinary talent, I would like to extend an invitation to join my wing."

That prince wanted to recruit the three of them. As long as Qin Wentian and the rest agreed, he would intercede with King Yi on their behalf.

The hearts of many in the crowd trembled, they all knew that the second prince had a love for talent. Even in the face of King Yi's wrath, the second prince would still protect the talents under his wing.

An expression of disbelief appeared on Fan Le's face. "Being under your wing? You mean becoming your guard?" Fan Le sarcastically remarked, "Truly, you're good at overestimating yourself."

Qin Wentian completely disregarded that prince. He stared at Ye Xi's father, "Uncle Ye, I wish to ask you something on behalf of Ye Xi. Do you mind coming over here for a chat?"

Ye Zheng's eyes flickered with an unknown light when he heard Qin Wentian's words. He then glanced at the second prince beside him, only to hear the second prince laughing. "No problem, just go and listen to what he has to say."

Ye Zheng nodded his head, as he arrived at the stone platform Qin Wentian was at.

“Father,” Ye Xi called out, Ye Zheng glanced at his daughter before glancing at Qin Wentian and the rest. He wondered how his daughter had become acquainted with these powerful young geniuses.

“Uncle Ye, take a seat.” Qin Wentian smiled. After which, he took out a crystal pearl and channeled Astral Energy into it. An instant later, a bubble like substance enveloped them within, separating them from the world outside.

This item was something Qin Wentian had obtained as a spoil of victory when he had slain those fourth-ranked Grandmasters. Other than it being a defensive-type item, the bubble world could block out sounds as well.

“Uncle Ye, now our words can’t be heard by those outside.” Qin Wentian smiled, “I’ve heard Ye Xi speaking about the matter of Auntie Ye. No matter what, Uncle Ye, you are still a conferred King as well, don’t you feel that it’s weird? The fact that the elder brother of King Yi’s consort had done such a thing.”

He and Fan Le were filled with suspicions. Ye Zheng was no idiot; he should have found this matter queer as well.

“I’m not from Qiyun, I came here by chance and became acquainted with Ye Xi. She’s like a little sister to me, Uncle Ye, so if you have anything you want to say, you can just tell it to us straight. Maybe, I might be able to be of help,” Qin Wentian added.

Ye Xi also gazed at her father. Yesterday, Qin Wentian and Fan Le had already thoroughly analyzed this matter for her, but she wanted to hear the truth from her father.

“Father,” Ye Xi called out.

Ye Zheng sighed, “I’ve always known that there was something strange about the whole matter. It’s why I’ve always been by the side of the second prince, hoping to investigate this. However, the clues I’ve found have left me extremely disappointed.”

“The second prince is also in on the plot?” Qin Wentian asked, his statement causing a bright glint of light to flash past Ye Zheng’s eyes. This young man was extremely intelligent.

“Yes, the second prince might very well be the mastermind.” Ye Zheng nodded in confirmation, as an expression of agony could be seen on his face.

“Why?” Ye Xi’s countenance turned bloodlessly pale. Her family had no grudges nor vengeance with the second prince.

“Because of the Gazing-Dragon Mountain Rampart,” Qin Wentian explained. From Ye Xi, he understood that the High Princes would try their best to comprehend the depictions engraved on the rampart. This matter was an extremely crucial thing in Qiyun, it would determine their future rankings in the eye of the Emperor. And then there was Ye Zheng, a genius that had already comprehended several insights from the rampart, which resulted in him being so powerful.

“Yes, he had long been hinting for me to join him. Because I didn’t want power, I never agreed. Never would I have expected he would use such a ruthless method to bind me to him. And during this period every year, I’m required to explain to him the insights I’ve gained. This was the only way he could rise above the other two princes,” Ye Zheng stated, his fists tightly clenched.

“But why did you still teach him even though you already knew the truth?” Ye Xi couldn’t understand.

“Because I wanted a chance to take revenge, and also, because of you.” Ye Zheng gazed at his daughter, “Xi`er, your father is already on top of a raging tiger, it is difficult for me to dismount halfway. The second prince has always been on guard against me, giving me no chance to make a move. And I have to consider this, the instant I do something that defies his orders, what would happen to you then?”

Qin Wentian nodded in understanding; the facts matched most of his deductions. Because he had always sensed that there were people following Ye Xi.

Before this, he thought that they were arranged for her protection, but now it seemed that they weren’t arranged for her sake, but rather, to monitor her movements.

“Uncle Ye, you don’t have to worry. Big Bro Chu Mang left one alive on purpose, just so that he could relay the news back to King Yi. This whole affair will definitely be concluded today!” Qin Wentian serenely stated, his words causing Ye Zheng’s eyes to narrow. He had divulged the truth to Qin Wentian all because he wanted to take Ye Xi away for her own safety. Only then would he be free to act without restrictions.

Yet, Qin Wentian was confidently declaring that this matter would be concluded this very day!

Chapter 305: Surnamed Ouyang

The High Princes all chose a stone platform and sat down, no longer daring to bother Qin Wentian. Their bodyguards all stood on the respective platforms their High Princes had chosen. Presently the entire atmosphere was a decidedly strange one to be in.

The spectators exchanged looks of amazement, unable to believe what they had just witnessed.

‘Sleeping God’, the sleepyhead who was perpetually dozing, the shameless Fatty, as well as the lunatic-in-training, Axe Demon; their true strength was quite frightening.

Not only that, they had guts. They directly slaughtered the second son of King Yi, completely disregarding the three High Princes who were present.

This caused the crowd to involuntarily marvel at their boldness. Not only that, it was obvious the three of them acted this way for the sake of Ye Xi. They obviously had nothing to benefit from helping her, yet they still went ahead, not caring in the least who they offended.

For old-timers in the Gazing-Dragon Hall, they all knew that the relationship between Ye Xi and the three of them was an extremely simple one. They met because of a chance encounter, and as they discovered that their personalities were compatible with each other, their friendship grew stronger as their interactions grew more frequent. The young lady would often bake delicious pastries for them, and after their training they would eat together, happily laughing and spending their days filled with merriment. Such a clean and simple relationship, yet the three of them were willing to offend the Royal Clan of Qiyun for her.

“They truly are a bunch of weirdos.” Many in the crowd mused. Their thoughts soon shifted to what would happen to the three of them once the powerful experts of the King Yi’s Mansion, arrived.

The gentle rays of the sun warmed the Gazing-Dragon Mountain, yet the people present could all feel traces of a chill in their hearts. From afar, a massive wind kicked up, a group of silhouettes could be seen flying over, as a powerful voice filled with surging killing intent resounded throughout the Mountains.

The person in the lead was an imposing-looking, middle-aged man. At this moment, his face was contorted into a rictus of wrath, and the amount of killing intent he was emitting left no doubts that this man, was King Yi.

A while later, the guards of King Yi all descended in front of the mountain rampart, their presence invoking a heavy sense of pressure that enveloped the entire surroundings. King Yi's eyes flashed with a cold fire as he icily stated, "Who?"

"The three of them." The guard Chu Mang released earlier pointed to Qin Wentian and the others.

"RUMBLE!" King Yi released his Astral Soul, a manifestation of a ferocious eagle appeared above him, emanating an extremely powerful demonic aura. He swept his gaze over to Ye Xi and Ye Xi's father before turning to the second High Prince, "Your highness, Ye Xi has caused the death of my son. I have to kill both her and her father today. I will seek your highness's forgiveness afterward."

The second prince cast a glance at Ye Zheng. Currently, Ye Zheng's value to him wasn't as useful as before, and why would Ye Xi's death bother him? He only wanted to use Ye Xi to control Ye Zheng, but since Ye Zheng had already outlived his usefulness...

"Very well, this highness shall not interfere with your vengeance." The second High Prince had no intention to step in.

"BUZZ!" A raging wind gusted, and King Yi made the first move himself. His actions mirrored that of an eagle hunting its prey as he lunged forwards. However, Chu Mang's silhouette flickered, landing before Fan Le, as that giant axe in his hands cleaved down with earth-shattering might. The terrifying will of his Mandate of Axe gushed forth, resembling a flood dragon bursting out of the sea.

King Yi transformed his five fingers into terrifyingly sharp claws. As he slammed forth his claws, both their attacks collided directly, the impact forcing them to involuntarily take a step back.

"How powerful." The crowd gasped when they sensed Chu Mang's Mandate. The first level insight into the Mandate of Axe, Beheader, was also trained by him to the Transformation Boundary. It made him powerful enough to clash directly against King Yi.

"Capture the rest, but Ye Zheng must die. Remember, I want Ye Xi to be alive, I will show her a fate worse than death!" King Yi bellowed as he rushed towards Chu Mang once more. His Valiant Eagle Astral Soul granted him powerful attacks and immense agility. Evidently, Chu Mang was not as nimble as King Yi.

Another cultivator stepped forwards, the aura he was exuding indicated that he was also at the eighth-level of Yuanfu. Ye Xi paled, this man, was the strongest guest elder in King Yi's Mansion and had fearsome combat prowess.

"I'll intercept him," Ye Zheng volunteered. Only he would have a sliver of a chance to fight against that man.

"There's no need," Qin Wentian calmly replied. As the sound of his voice faded, he stomped on the stone platform, instantly lighting up the surface of the ground. This radiance was the glow of Divine Inscriptions.

For an entire day and night, Qin Wentian had been inscribing Divine Inscriptions, waiting for the arrival of these people. Although this was a small country, Qin Wentian wouldn't overestimate himself thinking that he was powerful enough to rival them all without sufficient preparation.

The surging of a terrifying sword qi tempest took form as it quickly split into several miniature windstorms. The sword qi tempest was naturally a fourth-ranked combat-type Divine Inscription, but the miniature windstorms that were borne from it were all combat-type peak-tier, third-ranked Inscriptions.

"Wait, this is..." That guest elder at the eighth-level of Yuanfu stiffened when he saw one of the windstorms blowing his way. He immediately soared up into the air, wanting to escape. Yet, beyond his expectations, an array of terrifying swords manifested in the heart of that windstorm, transforming gales into a streak of white lightning, shooting towards him as a terrifying keen whistled.

Puchi...

A crisp sound drifted out as the eighth-level Yuanfu Cultivator was devoured completely by the windstorm. As for the other guards dashing towards Qin Wentian and Ye Xi, their bodies were all riddled with holes, slain with absurd ease in the span of a few seconds.

King Yi and Chu Mang paused their battle. King Yi was totally overwhelmed with shock and horror when he saw what just happened. His body involuntarily trembled when he felt the sword qi gusting his way. If he weren't careful, he would be the next to die.

"How is this possible?" The three High Princes and their guards all had thunderstruck expressions on their faces. Not only were King Yi and his men within the scope of the impressive array of Divine Inscriptions, but even the stone platforms the princes were on were all radiating the glow of

Divine Inscriptions. This meant that at this moment, all their lives were under the control of Qin Wentian.

“What do you mean by this?” one of the High Princes inquired.

“From this moment onwards, no one is to move a muscle. If not, don’t blame me for not showing mercy.”

The coldness in that tone caused the hearts of everyone to pound madly in terror. This young man was crazy, and now he held their lives in his hands.

“King Yi.” Qin Wentian’s eyes stared straight at him.

“I will only ask you once. I want to hear everything regarding the death of Ye Xi’s mother back then. You only have a single chance,” Qin Wentian spoke calmly, but as the crowd turned their gazes onto this devilishly handsome young man, no one doubted his words.

King Yi’s mind rumbled, Ye Xi’s mother’s death...

An intense light of sharpness flashed past the eyes of the second prince as he too stared at King Yi.

“If there are any lies in your words, I will kill each and every one of you. If you say the matter had nothing to do with you, I will kill each and every one of you,” Qin Wentian spoke again, every sentence stabbing right into King Yi’s heart.

He initially wanted to negotiate his conditions, yet Qin Wentian cut straight to the point. If he denied it or if there were any falsehoods in his words, they only had one ending left to them—death.

Looking at that young man’s eyes, King Yi had never felt such an intense sense of fear before.

Everyone in the crowd involuntarily mused, this young man was extremely decisive, as well as extremely ruthless.

King Yi only had one chance. Just one.

“I don’t have much time to waste on you. Three breaths, speak or die.”

King Yi instantly paled, “It was the second prince, his highness, he wanted Ye Zheng to comprehend the depictions on the Gazing-Dragon Mountain Rampart and impart it all to him. Ye Zheng once refused, and so I sacrificed the elder brother of my wife. He ordered me to do so. I had no choice.”

“NONSENSE!” the second prince roared.

“Uncle Ye.” Qin Wentian glanced at Ye Zheng, only to see Ye Zheng nodding his head, “There’s no mistake.”

“Mhm.” Qin Wentian nodded, his gaze abruptly shifting to the second prince.

“That’s just his one-sided statement.” The countenance of the second prince turned green.

“A power play, political tricks?” The light in Qin Wentian’s eyes turned colder; he was no stranger to these as he had experienced them before in Chu.

With a flick of his fingers, the sword qi spiraled about. The second prince turned ashen as he roared, “THIS IS QIYUN!”

“Die,” Qin Wentian spat out, and instantly, a beam of sword light stabbed through the throat of the second prince. His decisiveness caused those in the crowd to shiver.

The second prince had fallen.

Ye Zheng and Ye Xi couldn’t believe their eyes as well. How ferocious, had the imposing second prince simply died, just like that?

“Hu...” Ye Zheng drew in a huge breath, feeling a sense of surrealism. His mind was filled with the daily thoughts of revenge, but he never had the opportunity to act on them.

“Uncle Ye, bring Ye Xi and go far away. The world outside is extremely vast, you all will definitely find a place to call home.” Qin Wentian gazed at Ye Zheng, causing him to start slightly before he nodded in agreement.

“Brother Wentian.” Ye Xi’s eyes showed a strong sense of unwillingness. Qin Wentian tousled her hair as he smiled. “In the future, even when you’re alone, you have to be as joyful as you are with us, okay?”

“I will miss all of you.” Ye Xi’s eyes gradually turned red, as she embraced Qin Wentian.

“We will meet again.” Qin Wentian patted Ye Xi’s shoulders, his face filled with a gentle smile.

“This benevolence, I fear that we have no way to repay it.” Ye Zheng clasped his hands to Qin Wentian in gratitude. After which, Ye Zheng’s silhouette flickered as he flew up the skies, no longer hesitant.

“Brother Wentian, Brother Fan Le, Big Bro Chu Mang, you guys have to stay happy as well, okay!” Tears dripped down unabated from Ye Xi’s eyes as her voice traveled through the air, waving goodbye to her three big brothers.

“Hmph, you finally addressed me as Brother Fan Le.” Fatty grinned, the smile on his face was extremely radiant. This little girl had eased the monotony of their boredom and kept them company for many days. In truth, he was also feeling a little reluctant to part with her.

Chu Mang waved back as well. Ye Zheng and Ye Xi’s silhouette gradually vanished, they knew that they would never return to Qiyun.

Qin Wentian glanced at Chu Mang and Fan Le; he initially planned to stay here and continue cultivating for a few days longer. But now it seemed that it was almost time to set off. They would remain here for some time longer as a deterrent, in case Ye Zheng and Ye Xi were to face killers sent after them by the Royal Clan.

What made Qin Wentian extremely astonished was that a few hours later, a group of people could be seen flying over to this location. The one in the lead was an old man, while two young people, a male and a female, both exuding an extraordinary air, followed behind him.

Upon noting his appearance, the two other princes brimmed with joy. They bowed to that old man, “Greetings to Senior.”

That old man slightly inclined his head, turning his gaze onto Qin Wentian. With just a single glance, Qin Wentian felt a huge pressure boring down on him.

This old man was a Heavenly Dipper Sovereign.

Qin Wentian initially thought that Qiyun was the same as Chu, Heavenly Dipper Sovereigns all belonged to Ancestor-level people and wouldn’t appear that easily. He didn’t expect to run into one so fast.

“We offer our greetings to Young Master Ouyang and Miss Ouyang.” That two High Princes then bowed and courteously greeted, their words causing Qin Wentian’s eyes to widen in surprise. Surname Ouyang?

If that was the case, he could already deduce their background. No wonder there was a Heavenly Dipper Sovereign present, they were not people of Qiyun!

Chapter 306: Ouyang Ting

Qiyun Country was a country under the administration of the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan, their relationship was the same as that of Chu and Nine Mystical Palace. Now that people from the Ouyang Clan appeared in Qiyun, it was no wonder even the High Princes had to be polite to them.

Back then when Xiao Lan from the Nine Mystical Palace arrived at Chu, Chu Tianjiao similarly bowed his head in submission and was extremely respectful to Xiao Lan.

At this moment, the Heavenly Dipper Sovereign cast his glance over at Qin Wentian’s group. A bright light could be seen flashing past his eyes as he marveled at what he saw. The rest of the cultivators of Qiyun all held their breaths, not even daring to move.

“Who was the one that inscribed these Divine Incriptions?” the old man faintly questioned, and momentarily, the gazes of the crowd all landed onto Qin Wentian.

The countenance of the old man changed as he stared intently at Qin Wentian, as though his eyes had the ability to see through him.

“All of you were trapped here because of this guy?” That young lady from the Ouyang Clan turned her question disdainfully to the High Princes. Her head was proudly inclined, like a princess from the Heavens, completely looking down on this group of people from Qiyun.

So many experts, all stopped by a single, young man. How shameful was that?

The two High Princes lowered their heads, not daring to refute the young lady’s words. The Qiyun country was subordinate to the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan, similar to the Nine Mystical Palace and Chu. But the main difference between them was the physical distance between the country of Qiyun and the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan, which meant a much higher degree of control being exercised over the other.

Not only that, but there would also be many disciples from the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan that would frequent the Gazing-Dragon Mountain Rampart to comprehend the insights as well.

“Young Master Ouyang, the capabilities of this young man is extraordinary. He would serve the Ouyang Clan well.”

King Yi then turned to Qin Wentian and added, “Miss Ouyang and Young Master Ouyang are both from the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan, situated in the Azure Continent. You would be considered quite fortunate if you were recruited within their ranks.”

Obviously, King Yi wanted to use this matter to form better relations with Qin Wentian, hoping he would be spared, and also hoping his words of praise would gain the goodwill of the Ouyang Clan. Only then would he be able to escape this calamity.

“Oh?” The young man glanced at Qin Wentian as he asked. “What do you mean extraordinary?”

“This man is at the fifth level of Yuanfu, but the will of the Mandate he comprehended is extremely strange, he can freely control the trajectory of arrows, easily slaying opponents at the same level as him. This herculean guy has a cultivation base at the seventh level but despite being the same level, was strong enough to fight equally against me. And as for that last guy, he has enough power to trap all of us here.” At this moment, to preserve his life, King Yi seemed to have forgotten the grudge between him and Qin Wentian.

As a conferred King that had undergone the tempering of political wars, he naturally understood the logic of adapting. At this moment, preserving his life was the most important.

“The might of these Divine Inscriptions are truly powerful,” the Heavenly Dipper Sovereign added. The silhouette of the young lady from the Ouyang Clan flickered as she instantly appeared before Qin Wentian. Her speed was extremely terrifying. She had a cultivation base at the sixth level of Yuanfu and had already comprehended a Mandate. At that moment, an ice-covered dagger appeared in her hands as she abruptly stabbed it towards Qin Wentian’s throat.

The speed of this strike was superbly quick, her actions like a bolt of lightning. The ice-dagger emanated an overwhelming frosty air, and as it neared the throat of Qin Wentian, the frigid aura dulled Qin Wentian’s reactions as his body stiffened.

Qin Wentian lifted a finger and flicked out, the beam of Astral Light knocked the dagger askew, almost causing it to fly out of the young lady’s hands. Only then did she retreat, returning to her original location.

“You guys, follow me back to the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan in seven days,” the young lady imperiously commanded, with the impression of granting a great boon to Qin Wentian and the others.

To those from Qiyun, being selected to enter the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan was undoubtedly something they yearned for, even in their dreams. Expressions of envy appeared on the faces of the crowd when they heard what the young lady had said.

Who would have thought that Sleeping God and Axe Demon possessed such a level of power, they were even eligible to enter the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan? This was a heaven-sent opportunity, and with that invitation, no one in Qiyun would even bother pursuing the death of the second High Prince. The authority of the Ouyang Clan far exceeded the royal authority in Qiyun; nobody would dare defy them.

“The purpose of our visit this time around was to recruit talented elites to join our Ouyang Aristocrat Clan. In the future, if their performance is considered outstanding enough, they may even be bestowed with our surname ‘Ouyang’, and become a clan member of our Ouyang Clan.” The Heavenly Dipper Sovereign’s gaze roamed around the crowd, glancing at Qin Wentian’s group, before landing on the two remaining High Princes. “Settle this matter for me. We will stay at Qiyun for seven days. If there are talented elites who wish to apply, get them to see me. I will personally inspect their strength.”

The gazes of the two princes flickered; the recruitment for Ouyang Clan this time around seemed to be much earlier compared to the previous years.

However, this wasn’t something that they had the qualifications to inquire on.

“Leave it to us, Senior. We will go and prepare now.” The two princes respectfully bowed.

After the arrival of those from the Ouyang Clan, their conflict with Qin Wentian had been totally forgotten and pushed to the side, despite the fact that the area was still lit up by the glow from the Divine Inscriptions.

“King Yi, come back with us to the Royal Capital,” one of the princes coldly stated. They had no way to hold Qin Wentian responsible for the death of the second prince any longer, but King Yi still had to be made accountable for it.

King Yi’s countenance turned incredibly unsightly; he had no choice but to nod his head.

Qin Wentian and the other two all had dumbfounded expressions on their faces. Was this matter settled just like that?

Such a happening made them feel it was all rather laughable. Shaking his head, Qin Wentian glanced at Fan Le and Chu Mang, “Shall we leave for the Azure Continent seven days later?”

“Sure.” Fan Le nodded, as long as there were beautiful ladies, he didn’t care where he went.

“Anything,” Chu Mang also replied. Since the second prince had died, King Yi would be in for some tough times as well. They were content to let the Royal Clan of Qiyun handle the matter of his punishment.

The appearance of the Ouyang Clan’s members saved them some hassle. Since the other party wanted them to join the Ouyang Clan, there was no harm in going with them and taking a look.

In any case, it would be good to see how that brazen fellow was doing these days.

The Ouyang Aristocrat Clan was his territory.

And as for the proud male and female in front of them, since they were sent out for such a meager task like recruitment, their statuses shouldn’t be very high up in the Ouyang Clan. At most, they would only be able to exhibit their supremacy over the people of Qiyun.

Qin Wentian’s guess was right. As a transcendent power, the number of people in the Ouyang Clan was staggeringly high. The levels of authority were all extremely strict, with those at the highest level of authority being naturally from the direct line of descent—they were the core members. Next in line, were the various side branches’ members, followed by the outsiders who were bestowed upon them the surname ‘Ouyang’. The lowest in the hierarchy, would undoubtedly be those newcomers that had been recently recruited.

Without outstanding talent, it was impossible to climb the higher levels of authority.

Evidently, these two young cultivators were people who were bestowed the surname ‘Ouyang’, hence, they were given such a meager task to fulfill. Back inside the clan, they would undoubtedly have to be at the beck and call of many.

Yet in Qiyun, they were considered existences at the peak.

As for the commotion Qin Wentian caused, that appeared and disappeared in the blink of an eye. No one dared to mention anything more regarding what had happened. For these few days, the young man and lady also sat in front of the mountain rampart, gaining insights and leaving the recruitment to the Heavenly Dipper Sovereign. After seven days, there were quite a few people that passed the selection, including the swordsman named ‘Thirteen’, who was still gaining insights in front of the mountain rampart.

Qin Wentian and the other two also spent these seven days in quiet cultivation. After they settled the matter of Ye Xi, they couldn’t be bothered with matters of Qiyun. Of course, they also didn’t take any offense at the arrogant attitude of the young man and lady who were bestowed the Ouyang surname. They were nothing but frogs looking out at the vast skies from inside a well.

“Time to depart.” At this moment, there were nine silhouettes that gathered at the rampart. Other than Qin Wentian’s group, as well as those from the Ouyang Clan, there was the swordsman ‘Thirteen’, the third prince of Qiyun, Ye Mo, and one more unknown youth.

The nine of them soared up into the air, beginning the journey back to the Ouyang Clan amidst the gazes of envy and admiration from the crowd.

The Ouyang Aristocrat Clan—that was a transcendent power!

“Young Master and Miss Ouyang, I seek your forgiveness for not properly receiving you during your trip this time around to Qiyun. I look forward to your guidance when we arrive at the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan.” The third prince of Qiyun took out two interspatial rings and passed it over to the two young cultivators from the Ouyang Clan. His movements were extremely slick, as expected of a noble. He knew how to act in certain circumstances.

The two of them casually accepted the ring; the young lady had no expression on her face, but a smile blossomed on the face of that young man. “Ye Mo, not bad. Experts are as common as clouds within our clan, but it isn’t so easy to obtain recognition. When we arrive there, I will introduce you to some seniors. You better pay your respects to them, it would be a smoother path for you if you can get one of them to accept you as a disciple.”

“Many thanks for Brother Ouyang’s guidance.” Ye Mo beamed with a radiant smile.

The Azure Continent and Moon Continent were both part of the Grand Xia Empire. When they crossed over to the Azure Continent, they couldn’t help but be impressed by the spectacular yet imposing landscape. There were many gigantic pathways, which were separated into nine different directions. When viewed from above, they resembled nine sinuous dragons stretching their bodies to nine different regions in the Azure Continent.

The Ouyang Aristocrat Clan was a transcendent power situated within the Azure Continent. To their surprise, the Ouyang Estate was actually built alongside tall mountains. They could see several palaces and grand halls towering over the rest of the estate, as though they wanted to reach the dome of the Heavens. The tallest building was an ancient castle over 1,000 metres tall, designed to resemble a sinuous, coiled dragon that projected an air of majesty.

The instant Qin Wentian and the rest took in the sight of the Ouyang Estate, their hearts couldn't help but be filled with amazement. The impact they had when they gazed upon the lands from the air, couldn't be described with words. The vastness and height of each lofty building were clearly of a different grade altogether. This wasn't something small countries like Qiyun or Chu could match. The entire estate was so vast that it was impossible to see the ends of it with a single glance.

Even the two young cultivators from the Ouyang Clan couldn't help but feel pride in their hearts every time they gazed upon this sight from the air. When would it be their turn to stand upon that ancient castle, disdainfully looking down on everything in the Azure Continent? Sadly, with their level of talent, this was destined to be nothing more than a beautiful dream.

"Is this the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan?" Qin Wentian murmured as he stared at the sprawling land space that the entire estate took up, as a faint smile appeared on his face. That stubborn fellow Ouyang Kuangsheng, how was he doing now? He insisted on training his sensory abilities to the point where he could condense an Astral Soul from the 4th Heavenly Layer before stepping onto the pathway of cultivation, all while ignoring the looks of contempt from others. Now that such a long time had passed since they last met, Qin Wentian wondered what was that fellow's level of cultivation now.

With the condition of his clan, the countless resources and the guidance of so many masters, then by all accounts, his cultivation progress should have improved by leaps and bounds!

"Let's go," the Heavenly Dipper Sovereign faintly spoke, and they all moved as a group towards the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan's castle.

As they stepped inside, the vastness of the estate captivated their senses. They continued down the winding paths before arriving at a gigantic training ground. In front of them were two people currently in combat, which appeared to be soon coming to an end. A young lady clad in an orange-colored skirt directly sent a young man flying through the air. After crashing to the ground, the young man picked himself up and shook the dust off him before commenting, "Miss Ting is truly powerful indeed."

The young lady didn't say anything as she mounted a mighty steed—whose body was covered with flames—riding over towards Qin Wentian and the rest. As she neared, respectful expressions appeared on the faces of the Heavenly Dipper Sovereign and the two young cultivators as they dipped into a bow and greeted, "Miss Ting."

These few people seemed so high and mighty in Qiyun, but at this moment, they took on a bearing akin to servants, their actions causing Qin Wentian and the others to feel extremely puzzled.

“These are the new recruits?” The young lady on the ember-steed calmly asked.

“Miss Ting, there are a few among them with extraordinary combat prowess. Coincidentally, two of them have cultivation bases on par with Miss Ting, so they could accompany Miss Ting in sparring, should you wish to test them out.” The young man at the side pointed to Qin Wentian and Fan Le as he spoke, neglecting the third prince of Qiyun. After his earlier words to the prince, they all wondered if he had left him out deliberately!

Chapter 307: Offended Someone?

Qin Wentian’s eyes flashed with a strange glow when he heard that. Sparring?

Qin Wentian inclined his gaze, contemplating the young lady that stood before them. She exuded an innate arrogance and a sense of nobility, like that of a high-up, unreachable princess. Her snow-white skin and beautiful features further accentuated her unattainable status, alleviating her above the common crowd.

Such an aura did indeed have a resemblance to Ouyang Kuangsheng, and also, Yang Fan.

This young lady was only around eighteen years of age, and had a cultivation base at the fifth level of Yuanfu. She was brimming with a vitality akin to the blazing sun, and the proud look in her eyes immediately caused those around her to feel a sense of distance from her.

Even her fiery ember-steed had a pair of wings adorning its back. Everything about this young lady was beyond ordinary. It was obvious that her status in the Ouyang Clan was far beyond the two young cultivators and even that Heavenly Dipper Sovereign who had been sent out to Qiyun for recruitment earlier.

However, why sparring? Did the young lady want to use them to temper her combat prowess? And that young man who was her opponent earlier, he was still smiling even though he was injured. It seemed like this kind of occurrence was extremely common within the transcendent powers.

Maybe there would be some who felt that such a defeat was a blemish on their pride and dignity, and they might as well give up the chance to enter the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan. Yet, there were also those who wouldn't hesitate to give all they had for a chance to enter a transcendent power. As long as they had talent, they could claw their way up the ranks and soar into the skies, just like the two young cultivators who had been bestowed the name Ouyang—it was already sufficient for them to lord over Qiyun, so much so that even the high princes of Qiyun didn't dare breathe too heavily in front of them.

This made Qin Wentian recall how lofty Luo Qianqiu's status was—all because he was from the Nine Mystical Palace. Demon level geniuses like Chu Tianjiao and Sikong Mingyue, didn't they all take the eligibility of being able to enter the Nine Mystical Palace as the highest mark of pride? Yet, if they were to be granted admittance, their statuses on the outside would no longer be important. They would be ranked right down at the bottom, at the beck and call of others.

Such was the path of cultivation.

“Hu...” Abruptly, a fiery red-colored long whip snapped out. Qin Wentian's eyes narrowed, only to see that the long whip wasn't targeted at him, but rather at Fan Le who was by his side. Fatty reacted instantly, narrowly dodging that whip attack.

“Crackle...”

The long whip lashed against the ground, causing a loud snapping sound to echo in the air. A cold glint of light flashed past the young lady's eyes as she stared at Fan Le. “If you dare let your gaze roam so rudely one more time, I will gouge them out for you. Mingyue, bring them over there to wait for me.”

After speaking, she brandished her whip as her ember-steed soared into the skies, flying to an unknown location ahead. Fan Le grimaced, he had already controlled himself because they were in the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan. Although the young lady earlier was a beauty, he merely glanced at her face, and a little at her well-rounded boobs, but who would have thought that this mere action had almost earned him a lashing. If he were anywhere else, he would definitely openly stare at her figure.

“What a hot-tempered babe,” Fan Le murmured, his words causing the young cultivators who brought them over to frown. Usually, even they had to avert their gazes and didn't dare look at Ouyang Ting when she was speaking, so who would have thought that Fan Le would be so brazen?

“Shut up,” the female cultivator coldly snapped. “You guys were brought here by us, take note not to implicate us with your foolish actions.”

“You guys teach these newcomers about the rules,” the Heavenly Dipper Sovereign added, before disinterestedly flicking his sleeves and departing the area. The squabbles of the younger generations were beneath him.

“Since you’re already here, you better watch your words and behavior,” the young man coldly added, after which, he started walking away. “Follow me.”

Qin Wentian patted Fan Le on his shoulder, his action hinting that Fan Le shouldn’t be angered. Fan Le merely shrugged and didn’t continue with more cutting remarks.

“Miss Ting is from the direct line of descent, her status is far above all of us. Not only that, Miss Ting is a fanatic when it comes to cultivating and loves to look for opponents to spar against. If you guys are smart, you should all grab this chance to spar with her. Hopefully, if you manage to gain her recognition, you guys would then have a higher chance of being bestowed upon the surname ‘Ouyang’, elevating yourself to the same grade as us.”

The young man calmly continued, “But there’s one point all of you must remember; when sparring against Miss Ting, you must not hold back and use your full strength. If you can force Miss Ting to use her full strength as well, she would of course be extremely happy. However, do not ever hurt a single strand of her head. Understood?”

The implication behind his words was obvious—even if you win, you better lose.

“Such a good opportunity, why not give it to the others?” Fan Le glanced at Thirteen and the rest as he faintly asked.

“I’ve heard that the two of you are quite proficient in combat, far beyond the norm, hence I chose to give this chance to you. If you can’t recognise a good opportunity when it presents itself, then don’t regret that you’ve missed out when it’s too late,” the young man coldly replied, as he led them to another sprawling location.

Here, the buildings were packed closer to each other with several people already there.

Not only that, almost all were from the younger generation, with many sparring sessions taking place concurrently.

“Over here at this region, strength speaks the loudest. You three can go by yourselves and find a place you want to stay in.” The young man spoke to Qin Wentian and his group, before turning to the others, “The rest of you, come with me.”

After which, he practically abandoned Qin Wentian, Fan Le and Chu Mang right where they stood.

“Where are we supposed to go?” Fan Le unhappily mumbled.

“Let’s go take a look.” Qin Wentian carried Little Rascal, and they set off towards the sparring areas. But after a while, Qin Wentian exchanged glances with Fan Le, as they halted their steps and started to retrace it.

There was somebody monitoring their movements from the shadows!

As his heart sense gushed out, Qin Wentian discovered that every building here was already packed to the brim with people staying within. The act of the young man dumping them here indicated that he had other intentions in his mind.

“Newbies?” A round-faced man passed by, he involuntarily stopped his steps when he saw Qin Wentian and the two others.

“Yeah, can we ask you some questions?” Qin Wentian nodded.

“Sure.” The round-faced young man walked towards the nearby grass patch and sat down, smiling at Qin Wentian and rest. “Maybe we’ll be competitors in future.”

“What do you mean?” Fan Le asked.

“Don’t you all know the rules? There are too many cultivators who want to join the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan. Coming here does not mean that you’re automatically one of them. They usually group people of the same realm together in one region and then use an elimination match to determine who can advance. The process is tremendously cruel, but only by passing the various tests can one be conferred upon the name ‘Ouyang’,” the round-faced young man explained.

“To be surnamed Ouyang, they abandoned their real surnames?”

“No, it doesn’t mean that you have to give up your surname to have the ‘Ouyang’ clan name bestowed upon you—it’s only a kind of status. It means that you’ve officially become part of the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan, and have gained access to some powerful cultivation arts and innate techniques. There will be masters guiding you on your cultivation progress and you’ll get the chance to become a disciple of these experts. If you climb your way up through the hierarchy system, you might truly become a core disciple. By then, your status may even exceed some of those from the direct line of descent.”

The round-faced young man continued, “All the cultivators here possess an outstanding talent, and they all have high aspirations. Some of them, despite not being of the Ouyang bloodline, have the potential to be chosen by the Ouyang Clan to integrate themselves within. Of course, if one’s talent is not high enough, they can only choose to leave in silence, but that would be extremely embarrassing.”

“Does the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan force people to stay? Or can they leave anytime of their own volition?” Qin Wentian inquired.

“Naturally, but those who’ve come all this way obviously wish to fight for a better future. Who’d easily leave just like that? Why would the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan even need to force people to stay? Before one becomes a core member, there won’t be anyone giving a damn about where you want to go,” the round-faced young man replied.

“Hmm, do you know Miss Ting?” Qin Wentian asked again, the round-faced young man’s eyes lit up when he heard the question. He glanced about carefully before adding in a low voice, “This Ouyang Ting has an extremely high status in the Ouyang Clan, but she also has an unruly and wilful personality. She likes to find people to spar with her, but if her sparring opponents are too weak, they’ll be subjected to humiliation and even serious injury. It eventually leads to them choosing to leave. For those stronger than her, they don’t dare to use their full strength and can only ‘play’ along with her. But even then they have to tread carefully, because if they were to accidentally anger her, or some other Chosen, the consequences would be disastrous.”

“Anger?” Qin Wentian continued asking, yet the round-faced young man only waved his hands, not bothering to explain. He then added in a whisper, “Just be more careful and don’t spread this information. Lastly, pray more for your own good fortune.”

The round-faced young man had traces of sympathy in his eyes when he glanced at Qin Wentian's group, his words caused the eyes of Qin Wentian and Fan Le to flicker with a cold light. It seems like the young man had intentionally brought them to this place, with the intention of wishing harm to befall them.

"Have you met Ouyang Kuangsheng before?"

"I only heard that he is of the direct line of descent and his status among the clan is definitely at the very peak. If all goes well, the leadership position will eventually fall to him. I also heard that his character was extremely brazen and unrestrained, but sadly, despite half a year here, I have yet to meet him."

Qin Wentian had a bitter smile on his face, initially he came to the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan merely because he wanted to meet up with his good brother, yet who would have expected that the Ouyang Clan was so vast? It would be close to impossible to meet him. But naturally, Qin Wentian was happy for Ouyang Kuangsheng when he heard of the latter's status in the clan.

"Could you help us find a place to stay?" Qin Wentian smiled.

"How did you all manage to offend someone this quickly? I guess you all can temporarily stay in my courtyard first." The round-faced young man was extremely amicable, seeing how readily he agreed. Qin Wentian and the rest accepted his offer with their thanks.

Afterwards, when Qin Wentian and the two others tried to step out of the Ouyang Clan, they found themselves forcibly prevented from leaving.

"What's going on? We can't even go out?" Fan Le coldly stared at the person blocking their way. "We heard from a reliable source that before becoming core members, there would be no one restricting our movements."

"For the time-being, the three of you do not have permission to move about freely," the person blocking them replied. Qin Wentian frowned as he asked, "Why not?"

"I've heard that Miss Ting will look for you guys to spar with her tomorrow," the man bluntly replied.

"Then when will we be free to leave?" Qin Wentian's voice dropped several degrees.

“After the sparring match.” The person blocking, just as coldly shot back. Qin Wentian sighed, after which he turned back, as a cold glint of light flashed in his eyes. What the hell was going on, had they offended someone? But who did they offend?

She wanted to make them her sparring dummies? Well then, he was raring to go!

Indeed, on the second morning after their arrival, the young man and lady from before came to lead them towards the training ground. Qin Wentian discovered that other than the three of them, there were other cultivators already there. After several moments, a figure on an ember-steed was seen soaring through the air from the entrance of the Ouyang Castle. Ouyang Ting wasn't alone, several people from the Ouyang Clan accompanied her.

These people all exuded an extraordinary air. Evidently, they were all of the direct line of descent. Ouyang Ting calmly smiled, “These past few days, my sparring partners have been pathetic letdowns. I'm afraid if you've come to witness my defeat, you'll be sorely disappointed.”

“We have no intention of making merry at your expense. Recently, Ouyang Kuangsheng's improvement has been too rapid. If this continues on, we will all be left in his dust.” One of the young ladies by the side frowned.

“Hmph, he's older than us. Believe me, there's nothing impressive about him.” Ouyang Ting coldly snorted, appearing extremely unhappy. Yet, her eyes belied her trepidation—they were all from the same generation, so that volatile guy wasn't someone that they could afford to antagonize!

Chapter 308: Chop Off One of His Arms for Me

The ember-steed landed on the ground. Three beautiful young ladies and a young man proudly walked abreast each other, as those at the side all bowed their heads, not daring to look directly at them.

Fan Le's eyes lit up, to think that these ladies from the great clans were all so attractive. Beautiful features, in addition to exuding an air of nobility, they were extremely enchanting to Fan Le.

Ouyang Ting stood in the middle of the training ground as her gaze disinterestedly swept across them, saying in a bored tone of voice, “Let the sparring commence.”

“The two of you, go.” The young man who brought Qin Wentian's group to the Ouyang Estate urged them onwards. Qin Wentian and Fan Le's countenances remained expressionless as they,

together with six other cultivators, walked forwards. Apparently, these people could be considered as the unlucky ones.

“Out of you eight, only two will remain. Start fighting, those that are too weak aren’t qualified to spar with me,” Ouyang Ting coldly commanded, as the eight of them exchanged glances with each other.

The cultivation bases of these people were around the fifth level of Yuanfu, and they should have all been specifically chosen for this reason, because Ouyang Ting herself had a cultivation at the fifth level of Yuanfu.

“BZZZ...”

The cultivators released their Astral Souls, as though with the intention of wanting to gain the favor of all these young misses. To them, wasn’t this an opportunity to prove themselves? They naturally had to grab it when given the chance.

“Not bad, these Astral Souls should all be their third Astral Souls, and there are even two Astral Souls that were condensed from the 4th Heavenly Layer, how rare.” One of the females standing beside Ouyang Ting had a slight smile on her face. For their third Astral Souls to have originated from the 4th Heavenly Layer, it would undoubtedly give them an edge when fighting against those who were at the same realm as them.

“That’s the Skyember Demonic Lion Astral Soul, a demonic beast that’s strong enough to be ranked inside the Warbeast Index. Although its ranking is near the bottom, it’s still extremely powerful.” A young lady clad in green had a startled expression on her face. The other guy whose Astral Soul was condensed from the 4th Heavenly Layer wasn’t bad as well, he had an ice-attributed Astral Soul that would imbue his attacks with the concept of frost. It also allowed him to gain insights at a quicker pace when it came to ice-attributed cultivation art and innate techniques.

Because these two had an Astral Soul condensed from the 4th Heavenly Layer, the other four didn’t dare target them. Two out of those four started fighting against each other, while the other two exchanged glances, before deciding that neither of them was an easy target. Hence, they shifted their gazes onto Qin Wentian and Fan Le.

Qin Wentian and Fan Le were even younger than them. Not only that, they were either extremely confident in themselves, or they were fools. They hadn’t even released their Astral Souls yet.

“Oi, oi. Don’t antagonise me,” Fan Le ‘kindly’ persuaded the two of them when he saw how they switched focus onto him and Qin Wentian. However, such behaviour made him seem even weaker to the two cultivators. One of them immediately dashed towards Fan Le with a burning spear in his hands, pervading the air with the will of his Mandate—Ignition, the first level insight of the Mandate of Flames.

“Rumble!” Fan Le’s Astral Soul erupted forth. His third Astral Soul also originated from the 4th Heavenly Layer, and a fearsome heat scorched the air around him, the blazing temperature forcing his opponent eyes to narrow. In spite of this, his opponent had already stabbed forth his long spear. The spear was as fierce as a dragon, causing a massive wind to kick up as the tip of the spear blazed with the embers of a scorching fire.

Fan Le instantly leapt back, an Astral Bow forming in his hands. The will of his mandate infused his arrows as he instantly fired them.

His opponent reacted swiftly as well, weaving the long spear in an intricate fan; it was capable of performing a hundred percent block against incoming arrows head-on. However, he only saw Fan Le firing two arrows up into the skies, before the arrows abruptly shifted their trajectory, zooming right towards his head.

Alarmed, he swept out his long spear upwards in an attempt to defend against the fired arrows. Yet, already there were two more incoming arrows right in front of him. Disappointment flashed in his eyes, he had completely lost.

The opponent who rushed Qin Wentian, lost even faster. Qin Wentian’s only response to his opponent’s attack was to send out a palm strike infused with the will of his Mandate of Force, Strength. He used no other techniques, and relied on pure strength to suppress his opponent.

The Astral Energy in Qin Wentian’s Yuanfu had all been absorbed from constellations originating from the 5th Heavenly Layer, so how could Astral Energy of that quality lose out to that originating from the 4th? Moreover, his physique had already been enhanced after cultivating the Fiend Transformation Art, and now his strength was as tyrannical as a demonic beast’s. Even without the need to call upon the augmentation provided by his Astral Souls, Qin Wentian was already at an absolute advantage in this battle. It was unnecessary to bring out 100% of his power to suppress an opponent at the same level.

There was no suspense, only four cultivators remained at the end. Qin Wentian, Fan Le, as well as the two other cultivators who had an Astral Soul originating from the 4th Heavenly Layer.

“Excellent, the four of them are qualified.” The girl beside Ouyang Ting laughed.

Ouyang Ting walked out, pointing at the youth with the ice-attributed Astral Soul. “You, first.”

“Sure, I hope Miss Ting will go easy on me.” The young man walked out as he clasped his hands together.

“Don’t worry, I won’t injure you too grievously. But of course, if you are too weak, you have no one to blame but yourself if I end up crippling you. Make your move,” Ouyang Ting remarked.

The silhouette of the youth flickered, with hints of savagery in his movements. He lunged towards Ouyang Ting as his fist shadows covered the skies, an immense strength instantly erupting forth.

“Too weak.” Ouyang Ting coldly snorted as the will from her Mandate of Swords pervaded the air. The young man felt as though his movements had been restricted, and he paled. He understood that he was the target of another kind of Mandate, which emanated the will of restriction.

The temperature in the air abruptly dropped by several degrees, the young man also released his Mandate and his fist was coated with the will of ice. Whenever he struck out, Ouyang Ting’s body felt as though it were frozen solid.

“Still not enough.” The lilt in Ouyang Ting’s voice was extremely irritating. With a wave of her hands, countless whip shadows covered the space, as a loud hissing sound enveloped the area.

Swish, swish, swish...

With a snap, the whip lashes instantly transformed into countless incomparably sharp swords, fiercely piercing towards her opponent’s fist. The ice-crystal shield her opponent had summoned shattered into fragments.

Qin Wentian’s eyes flashed, although this Ouyang Ting was unruly and wilful, she had the power to back up her attitude. She had already comprehended the Mandate of Sword, as well as the Mandate of Restriction, easily suppressing her opponent in style.

“One more.” Ouyang Ting completely subdued the young man until he had no way to attack. The next cultivator with that Skyember Demonic Astral Soul rushed out. His aura was filled with hints of ferociousness, and the Mandate he comprehended was the Mandate of Demons, in addition to the

Mandates of Flames. In an instant, they joined their attacks, emanating a terrifying pressure—a hell of ice and fire!

Yet every lash of Ouyang Ting’s whip was akin to a sharp sword, and even her ordinary attacks seemed to contain the power of an innate technique behind them. Each strike was stronger than the last and in the end, the shadows of her whip engulfed the entire skies, and the sword qi she emanated bore down on the two cultivators.

“Peng, peng...”

Qin Wentian only saw two silhouettes flying through the air, traces of blood trickling down the corners of their mouths. After they recovered, they quickly stood up but now, hints of true admiration could be seen in their eyes when they looked at Ouyang Ting. This beautiful young lady not only had a high status, her combat prowess was also stronger than both of them combined.

“Barely passable. In the future, the two of them shall stay together. Work hard to become more powerful, and you may even cultivate those combination-type innate techniques. At any time, I may look for the two of you to spar with me again,” Ouyang Ting indifferently stated, her words ringed with the tone of a command.

“Yes.” The two of them bowed as they retreated.

“The two of you can come at me together as well,” Ouyang Ting spoke to Qin Wentian and Fan Le, her words causing the two of them to be stunned. Fan Le shrugged; with his combat prowess, he didn’t fear people at the same level at all. And as for Qin Wentian, he could already insta-kill opponents at the same level. This lass in front of them... was truly a genius at talking big.

“Nah, it wouldn’t be good if we accidentally hurt you with our joint attacks. Let’s just fight one-on-one instead. I wonder who Miss Ting will choose to spar against first?” Fan Le laughed.

“Boasting shamelessly, if the both of you are truly able to injure me, then that means I can only blame myself for my incompetence. But since your words are so brazen, let me teach you a lesson first,” Ouyang Ting coldly remarked to Fan Le, as she readied herself for battle.

Qin Wentian retreated, giving up the stage to both of them. Fan Le’s Arrow-type Astral Soul and Blazing Flames Astral Soul were unleashed, as an Astral Bow formed in his hands.

Ouyang Ting’s silhouette dashed out, while at the same time, Fan Le’s arrows were already whistling in the air. However, with a flick of her hands, a long whip wrapped around her entire body, impenetrable by wind and rain.

The rain of arrows never stopped, yet they had no way to penetrate her defences.

“Hmph.” Ouyang Ting entered close combat as she coldly laughed. The long whip in her hands fiercely lashed out, and Fan Le felt a will imposing on him, binding his movements.

However, there was no fear in his eyes. He chose to remain motionless, and merely looked at his opponent.

RUMBLE...

Terrifying flames from his Empyrean Flames Bloodline instantly exploded forth as Fatty’s eyes shone with a golden light. His arrows were momentarily imbued with a golden fire as he fired off nine arrows that joined in a straight line, straight towards Ouyang Ting.

Ouyang Ting was taken aback, and when she wanted to use her whip to block, she only discovered a strong sense of telekinesis-like energy interrupting the angle and speed of her attack, causing her movements to be slower than usual. That moment’s delay opened up a small gap in her defense, allowing the arrows to pierce through.

Fan Le’s arrows were too swift, too ferocious, and too crafty.

“Be careful!” someone from the back shouted. Ouyang Ting’s Astral Soul immediately erupted into being, her body covered by a sheen of Astral Light as armor took form around her.

Bzzz...

The arrows instantly thundered towards Ouyang Ting’s throat, blasting a terrifying air current on her body. Eventually, the arrows lost their momentum, but not before causing the watching crowd to burst out in cold perspiration.

Fan Le grinned, “Miss Ting, I know when to stop.”

The space seemingly congealed for a moment, and a faint pallor could be seen on Ouyang Ting’s complexion. That earlier attack by Fan Le was too powerful. She had never faced such a dangerous situation before when she was sparring. The feeling of being caught off-guard, followed by a sense of impending doom, as though her heart was about to leap out from her chest. Her entire body was cloaked by the sweat of her perspiration, and she felt exceedingly uncomfortable.

“Chi...” Abruptly, Ouyang Ting moved. The long whip in her hands lashed out—Fan Le’s countenance drastically changed because the distance between them was too close. The will of restriction binded Fan Le’s movements, making it hard for him to dodge the incoming attack.

Peng!

A crisp sound echoed in the air. Even though Fan Le had managed to dodge that strike at the last instant, he was still wounded by the razor-sharp, sword-like whip. His clothes were lacerated away, leaving behind a bloody wound. If it weren’t for his quick reaction, his injuries would have definitely been even more severe.

“What the fuck are you doing?” Fatty was incensed. Although he loved pretty girls, this Ouyang Ting was truly too unruly. Just moments ago she said that she was capable, but now, she had actually resorted to such sneak attacks.

Even in combat, or in sparring, how could it be completely danger-free? The other party wanted them to do their best, he was just following instructions. And aside from giving her a scare, he hadn’t really injured Ouyang Ting.

“You are courting death,” Ouyang Ting’s companions grimly stated, their demeanor was extremely frigid.

“Piece of shit.” Below, the young man and woman that had brought them here from Qiyun were also emitting killing intent.

Qin Wentian’s eyes flashed with a cold fire the instant Ouyang Ting unleashed her sneak attack. After witnessing the unfolding events, the coldness of his aura was piercingly sharp. Was this what they meant by ‘sparring’?

“Chop off one of his arms for me,” Ouyang Ting icily commanded. Immediately, the murderous intent radiating from Qin Wentian and Fan Le skyrocketed upwards!

Chapter 309: Two Madmen

Chu Mang similarly exploded in rage when he heard Ouyang Ting’s words. A terrifying aura gushed forth from him, what wrong had Fan Le done? Why did she want to chop off one of his arms?

As a raging wind billowed past, the two external Ouyang cultivators, as well as the third prince of Qiyun, Ye Mo, instantly moved towards Fan Le, surrounding him.

Qin Wentian and Chu Mang, both stood to the left and right side of Fan Le. The atmosphere in the training grounds was pervaded by a sense of heaviness.

But of course, to Ouyang Ting, the thought of a large-scale fight never crossed her mind.

During the times when she sparred with her opponents, she had never received such a fright before. And in her moment of anger, she wanted one of Fan Le's arms as compensation for the terror she felt. She didn't have any particular emotions towards her choice in punishment, and neither would she have a guilty heart. Because to her, this was merely a small matter.

"Are you okay?" Ouyang Ting's companions asked with concern. Ouyang Ting lightly shook her head and following which, her companions all looked towards Fan Le, radiating a cold, murderous intent.

"Miss Ting." A voice filled with power suddenly broke the heavy atmosphere. Ouyang Ting shifted her glance to Qin Wentian, who continued to speak, "You are the one that wanted your opponent to do their best. Please take back your earlier command, and apologize to my friend."

"Truly ridiculous, you want to use us as sparring partners, yet we cannot win? We can only lose?? With a mentality like that, you still dare to dream about getting stronger? If we were outside in the real world, you would have already died countless times." Qin Wentian's tone of voice was completely glacial. His words caused Ouyang Ting to glower unpleasantly at him. She then stated, "Sever the arms of this guy as well."

"You b*tch!" Chu Mang roared. Ouyang Ting's countenance turned green.

Being humiliated while in her own territory? This was a first.

"Kill him!" Ouyang Ting angrily cried. Qin Wentian's aura completely erupted forth, making no attempt to hide his power. He came to the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan for the purpose of paying a visit to his brother Ouyang Kuangsheng. Although he knew that it wouldn't be an easy task to meet him, but in such a huge clan, even their entry and exit was restricted. It was unlikely they would allow a 'random' stranger to meet one from the Ouyang direct line of descent.

But, they were good friends after all, and he wasn't sure of the relationship between Ouyang Kuangsheng and Ouyang Ting. Who knows, they might even be siblings. Hence, he didn't want to

create unnecessary trouble and end up making things awkward for an old friend. Moreover, they just arrived at the Azure Continent, and he was in no hurry to leave so soon.

“I’m acquainted with Ouyang Kuangsheng. This is my last warning, I hope you take back your command and apologize,” Qin Wentian coldly stated when he saw the crowd moving menacingly towards their direction. When she heard his words, Ouyang Ting’s eyes once again became riveted onto Qin Wentian.

The advancing crowd also hesitated. Qin Wentian was acquainted with Ouyang Kuangsheng?

This fellow was probably making such a claim in hopes of saving his life. How laughable.

Due to Ouyang Kuangsheng’s background and personality, he had few friends in the entire Azure Continent. Qin Wentian was so young, and the aura he exuded was merely at the fifth level of Yuanfu, and yet he said he was acquainted with Ouyang Kuangsheng? What a joke.

“Even if you really know him, the three of you still have to suffer the fires of my rage today. Do it,” Ouyang Ting icily commanded. As the sound of her voice faded, her companions stepped forth, while the other cultivators near her crowded around as well. Upon seeing what was happening, the guards in this area started to move over and surround them too. In this scenario, Qin Wentian and the two others would find it hard to escape, even if they were given wings.

The strongest among the attackers was the young man who was bestowed the name ‘Ouyang’, he had a cultivation base at the seventh level of Yuanfu. The young lady had a cultivation at the sixth level; the third prince of Qiyun, fifth level. All of them had decent levels of strength.

“SCRAM!”

Chu Mang brandished his gigantic axe, and with a howl of rage, he rushed towards the young man who had a cultivation base at the seventh level of Yuanfu.

Fan Le clashed against Ye Mo, while the young lady stabbed her short sword towards Qin Wentian.

What made them astonished was that the companions of Ouyang Ting didn’t make a move at all. They merely stood there silently, watching the show. This caused the third prince Ye Mo’s countenance to sink. Fan Le’s combat prowess was exceptional, and as to why he acted, it was

because he wanted to put up a good performance for Ouyang Ting. Yet he didn't expect that his supposed 'allies' would merely cross their arms and wait to watch the show.

The instant the young lady stabbed her sword over, an overwhelming demonic qi gushed forth from Qin Wentian's body. His eyes were closed, yet an instant later, the young lady felt a stabbing pain piercing her mind as a terrifying pressure shook from within.

“RUMBLEEE~”

Qin Wentian's will of the Mandate of Force erupted outwards as he sent a palm strike towards the short sword. Cold amusement flashed in the eyes of the female when she saw Qin Wentian's actions. Using his bare hands to block one of her sword attacks?

Even though Qin Wentian exuded a tyrannical aura, wasn't he overestimating himself a little too much?

In an instant, Qin Wentian's palm was coated with a layer of demonic qi, manifesting demonic scales that covered his entire palm.

Peng...

The terrifying strength of the impact immediately flung the female through the air. Qin Wentian's cold gaze then turned upon the third prince Ye Mo, and with a flick of his fingers, a beam of sword light flew straight at him. Startled, Ye Mo was distracted by Qin Wentian's attack and didn't even notice the golden arrow fired by Fan Le. It instantly penetrated through his brain, directly slaying him from where he stood.

Qin Wentian turned around, his gaze now riveted on Ouyang Ting and her companions. As he took a step forwards, even the earth trembled at his might. Towering amounts of demonic qi soared upwards to the skies; his eyes reflected death. When Ouyang Ting felt the weight of his stare, even she involuntarily trembled as she felt a chill run through her heart.

“Your level of power isn't bad, indeed.” The young man standing beside Ouyang Ting walked out. His cultivation was also at the seventh level of Yuanfu, and his eyes, when gazing upon Qin Wentian, was filled with contempt, as though he was looking at an ant.

“However, this farce ends now,” the young man quietly remarked, and as the sound of his voice faded, the guards all rushed towards Qin Wentian’s group.

“Bzzz.” A pair of Garuda Wings abruptly formed behind Qin Wentian’s back. His silhouette flickered as he vanished from view, dashing at lightning speed towards Ouyang Ting.

The young man laughed coldly as he maneuvered himself into Qin Wentian’s path, intent on blocking him. His Astral Souls rumbled the void as a black swirling whirlpool of energy could be seen circulating in the palms of his hands.

“Die.”

Seeing how Qin Wentian continued to dash towards him, he snorted disdainfully as he blasted out with a black-colored palm imprint. That brutal, black-colored energy swirling around in his palms instantly exuded a menacing aura of destruction. It lacerated the air, slamming towards Qin Wentian.

The blood in Qin Wentian’s body surged up as a crimson glow covered his palms; it seemed as though an ancient demon deep in slumber was in the midst of an awakening. Qin Wentian nonchalantly threw a palm imprint outwards, as a terrible roar echoed from the void—the roar of a dragon.

This dragon palm imprint was an innate technique he had comprehended on the Gazing-Dragon Mountain Rampart. With a single palm, a dragon imprint would manifest, even the demonic scales on his palm turned draconic the moment he unleashed this strike, covering his entire arm. This explosive might was further imbued with the power of Divine Energy that was used to channel this technique.

On the sidelines, the two Ouyang Clan ladies coldly laughed, that black-colored palm strike was known as the Heart Destruction Palm, it was sufficient to claim Qin Wentian’s life.

At the point of impact, the dragon imprint withered slightly upon coming in contact with the opponent’s destructive energy, yet still remained firm and strong. It overpowered the Heart Destruction Palm imprint and continued onwards, blasting towards the young man. The young man turned ashen as he hastily brought both his palms together in a defensive stance to block the attack. With an explosive boom, the body of the young man was unceremoniously catapulted through the air.

How terrifying was the explosive element in Qin Wentian's strike? Its power had already exceeded the limits of what a human was capable of at the fifth level of Yuanfu—it was on the level of a desolate beast. Even a cultivator at the seventh level of Yuanfu couldn't withstand a single strike.

“Shit.” The expression on the guards' faces sank, while the two young ladies from the Ouyang Clan wore matching expressions of disbelief.

Ouyang Ting could feel her entire body turning cold. She rapidly retreated backward, yet Qin Wentian's ice-cold eyes bore right through into her mind. A beam of golden light erupted forwards from the center of Qin Wentian's brow, so resplendent that she had no choice but to close her eyes. When she opened them once more, she saw a silhouette enlarging itself by the second as it sped towards her.

“BOOM!” Qin Wentian's hands slammed into Ouyang Ting's throat, lifting her up in a choke-hold, slowly squeezing her life away. Ouyang Ting only felt her breath tightening as she paled. She could feel the shadow of death creeping closer to her with every second. “STOP!” The surrounding people were outraged; there were so many experts present yet they allowed a cultivator at the fifth level of Yuanfu to capture Ouyang Ting. This was something unforgivable.

Naturally, no one would have expected that Qin Wentian would dare to behave so brazenly in the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan and not only that, this level of explosive strength wasn't something they expected someone at the fifth level of Yuanfu would possess.

Qin Wentian swept his gaze over to the crowd, as he coldly stated, “Get Ouyang Kuangsheng to come over.”

“I'll go immediately.” A young lady's silhouette flickered as she dashed away. At this moment, she had a strong feeling that Qin Wentian might really be acquainted with Ouyang Kuangsheng.

“Re...le...ase me first.” Ouyang Ting choked, both her hands clawing helplessly at Qin Wentian's hands.

Qin Wentian glanced at her coldly before unceremoniously dragging her body with a single hand as he walked towards Fan Le.

“Let me help you if you don't know how to apologize.” The coldness in Qin Wentian's voice penetrated the bone.

BOOM!

Ouyang Ting was directly forced to her knees. The sounds of her kneecaps slamming against the ground thundered out, with cracks seen on the surface of the ground as she knelt in front of Fan Le. This scene caused those in the surroundings to stare in incredulous disbelief, were they in a dream? This fellow was mad, he was a mad man.

He actually dared to force Ouyang Ting to kneel.

The two cultivators, who had brought Qin Wentian to the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan, turned as gray as ashes. No matter what happened to Qin Wentian, they would definitely not be able to escape responsibility.

“Do you understand what the hell you’re doing?” Ouyang Ting turned her head with difficulty, glaring at Qin Wentian with hatred in her eyes.

“Miss Ouyang, if we weren’t in the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan right now, you would already be dead,” Qin Wentian coldly replied. Qin Wentian wasn’t a barbarian, but he knew that people like Ouyang Ting could never be convinced by logic, ever. Power was the most effective way to talk to these people.

Such a commotion swiftly caused several experts to arrive at the training ground. Initially, there hadn’t been too many experts stationed here, since after all, no one would have expected that such a thing would occur in their own Ouyang territory.

These experts stood in the air, their gazes like the edge of a blade, directly staring at Qin Wentian.

“Release her.” barked an extraordinarily handsome young man clad in white.

“Young man, do you understand what you’re doing?” A voice drifted over from afar as an old man arrived at the training ground. Just a single glance from him was sufficient for Qin Wentian to feel great pressure.

“My friend accompanied Ouyang Ting in her sparring practice. After he was victorious, Ouyang Ting actually wanted to chop off one of his arms. I wanted her to apologize, yet she wanted to sever

my arms as well. How does Ouyang Ting view us? As slaves or playthings for her to break at will? Senior, tell me, what would you do if you were in my shoes?” Qin Wentian gazed at the old man silently, awaiting his response. That old man unhappily cast a glance at Ouyang Ting. Such behavior was indeed too excessive.

A defeat meant a defeat, yet she actually wanted to chop off someone’s arms just because she lost?

“Even your lives would have been a small price to pay, let alone an arm.” A cold intent radiated from the white-clad young man.

“It seems like this kneel, was too light.” Qin Wentian calmly turned his gaze onto the young man in the air, then shoved his palms forward with violent force, slamming Ouyang Ting’s forehead onto the ground. An instant later, a terrifying baleful aura gushed out from the white-clad young man, he looked like he wanted nothing more than to tear Qin Wentian apart from where he stood.

“If the arm of my bro really got slashed off, even having ten lives would be insufficient payment,” Qin Wentian stated. His features were calm and composed, radiating a feeling of utter confidence.

“Well said.” Yet another silhouette whistled through the air, his words causing the hearts of those present to pound madly. Which madman dared to speak out such a statement? Wasn’t he courting death?

Yet, when they ascertained the identity of the speaker, they immediately froze in alarm. What was going on?

They saw a young man clad in blue, with his hair fluttering in the wind. He swept his gaze coldly through the crowd, including that old man from earlier. “I’ve already been informed of this matter. With her temperament and that despicable display of conduct, Ouyang Ting is not fit to belong in my Ouyang Clan. Her behavior today was atrocious and has shamed our illustrious name. I strongly recommend that the clan break off all relations with her and toss out this piece of garbage.”

The arrogant voice fairly reverberated throughout the surrounding space, his words causing the crowd to perspire madly from fear. There wasn’t only one madman present today!

Chapter 310: Lenient Punishment

The words of the young man clad in robes of blue instantly caused the entire area to be inundated in silence. When Qin Wentian saw who the speaker was, a radiant smile beamed on his face. When he

had mentioned Ouyang Kuangsheng's name to Ouyang Ting, she had actually wanted to kill him—this told him that the relationship between them wasn't civil. If not, Ouyang Ting wouldn't be so decisive.

Now that good ol' Ouyang Kuangsheng had appeared, his personality was the same as Qin Wentian remembered.

Ouyang Ting, who was forced to kowtow, feebly raised her head from the ground. Her countenance was pale, and her forehead had a bloody gash upon it. Looking at the descending silhouette, she coldly remarked, "Ouyang Kuangsheng, I'm the same as you, the blood of the main Ouyang Clan runs through our veins. This outsider treats me like this, yet you're still making such a deranged statement. ARE YOU STILL A MEMBER OF OUR OUYANG ARISTOCRAT CLAN?"

The white-clad figure standing in midair also stared at Ouyang Kuangsheng, as he icily added. "Ouyang Kuangsheng, you have gone too far."

The white-clad figure was an external cultivator that had been bestowed upon the surname 'Ouyang' and eventually had his status elevated to a chosen on account of his talent. He became the personal disciple of an expert and was even ranked on the Heavenly Fate Ranking.

Duan Qingshan was the role-model of many hot-blooded cultivators, and someone that external cultivators in the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan hoped to overtake.

In spite of this, it was still almost impossible for an external cultivator to fight over the rights of inheritance. Hence, Duan Qingshan decided to woo Ouyang Ting, and hopefully with that, he could integrate himself within the Ouyang Clan and even gain the right to fight for the leadership of the clan in the future.

Because within Ouyang Ting's veins, there flowed the purest of Ouyang blood, as she was from the direct line of descent. Many people looked with favor upon their union, especially Ouyang Ting's family, they were all extremely supportive of this matter.

But now, there was actually an external person who dared to treat Ouyang Ting in this manner within the grounds of the Ouyang Clan. And what made everyone speechless was that Ouyang Kuangsheng stood on the side of this external person and even joined him in berating Ouyang Ting.

This made many feel a sense of surrealism, this matter was just too crazed.

“The bloodline of my Ouyang Aristocrat Clan, shouldn’t be associated with garbage like her. As a descendant of my Ouyang Clan, in a battle, winning means you are strong, but losing merely means that you need to work harder. Wanting to chop off the victor’s arms just for losing? And she was even the one who requested the sparring? This has totally thrown away the prestige of our great Ouyang Clan and casts a shadow upon its illustrious name. What utter humiliation, what utter shame. Could it be that you, Duan Qingshan, take her actions as a matter of pride?”

Ouyang Kuangsheng stared straight at Duan Qingshan as he coldly continued, “Duan Qingshan, don’t forget how you clawed your way step-by-step to the position you have today. If the people of our Ouyang Clan acted like Ouyang Ting, and everyone that lost to you wanted to break one of your arms, how many arms would you have to chop off? If our Ouyang Clan promotes an attitude like this, how many elites would still dare to join us? How would we even grow stronger then?”

Duan Qingshan scowled, but he had no words left to refute.

This could be a matter of extreme proportions. They didn’t even need to care who was right or wrong, just with Qin Wentian’s attitude and behavior towards Ouyang Ting, it was already sufficient to sentence him to death. There was no need to talk so much about other things, and no one would dare to speak out on Qin Wentian’s behalf as well. Yet, Ouyang Kuangsheng dared, and he even used an extremely logical point to condemn the actions of Ouyang Ting.

With Ouyang Kuangsheng’s status, who dared to say that he was wrong?

Like what Ouyang Kuangsheng had said, Duan Qingshan climbed up to his current level through a series of tough challenges, clawing his way up step-by-step. If the rest of the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan behaved like Ouyang Ting, how could there still be the Duan Qingshan today?

From afar, the sound of a massive wind gusting drifted over. The commotion grew increasingly louder and in time, several Ouyang Clan elders had arrived on the training field.

“What’s going on?” one of the elders asked, as he coldly surveyed the scene before him.

“Second Grandpa, Ouyang Ting sparred against others, and after losing, she gave the order to chop off one of the arms of the victor, destroying our austere reputation and shaming us all. I recommend to toss her out of the clan,” Ouyang Kuangsheng spoke to the elder calmly, like an equal speaking to another.

“These people are too impudent, elder should have witnessed it as well. They dared to treat Ting`er like this, they should all be slaughtered.” Duan Qingshan icily defended Ouyang Ting.

“How laughable, did you want them to obediently let Ouyang Ting chop their arms off with a smile on their faces? What do you take them for?” The full force of Ouyang Kuangsheng’s stare bore down on Duan Qingshan. “As long as you still dare to say their arms deserve to be chopped off, then I, Ouyang Kuangsheng, promise you this—I will definitely find a reason to chop off one of your arms today.”

“Ouyang Kuangsheng...” Duan Qingshan raged. This Ouyang Kuangsheng wasn’t giving him any face at all.

“You’re comparing me to these people?” Duan Qingshan’s expression was incredibly unsightly.

“Enough.” That elder berated as he stared at those below. He then coldly asked, “What status do they hold? Who brought them here?”

Below, Chu Mang’s opponent, the young man who was bestowed the Ouyang name, totally paled. He was the one that suggested Qin Wentian and Fan Le as sparring partners for Ouyang Ting; not even in his wildest dreams would he have ever imagined such a thing happening. But he knew now that his fate was going to be extremely miserable.

“Tell me everything clearly.” The gaze of the second elder fell upon him and instantly, he felt a terrifying pressure bearing down on him.

“This matter concerns Ouyang Ting. You better speak ‘truthfully’,” Duan Qingshan coldly commanded. But the word ‘truthfully’ was like a huge boulder pressing against him on his back. He was thinking, what should he say?

“Let me tell you, this man Qin Wentian is my brother. I fought with him side-by-side a few years ago. If your words contain the slightest hint of a lie, you’d better be prepared for the consequences.”

Ouyang Kuangsheng pointed to Qin Wentian as he spoke, referring to him as his brother. That person only felt his mind rumbling, those who Ouyang Kuangsheng deigned to be acquainted with were already monstrous geniuses, let alone a man he termed ‘brother’.

The crowd all started from this revelation. No wonder Ouyang Kuangsheng had such a big reaction.

“BOOM!” The terrifying pressure emitted by the elder forced the young man to his knees. All traces of blood had long faded away from his face; regardless of what he said now, he knew he was doomed. His mind was in a state of chaos, he couldn’t afford to offend either party.

Duan Qingshan was an external cultivator that became a chosen, while Ouyang Kuangsheng was from the direct line of descent, the main branch with the greatest authority and power.

Putting them aside, he couldn’t even afford to offend Qin Wentian now.

“Let me speak instead, you all just need to ask these two to confirm whether my words are true or not.” Chu Mang gazed at the elder in the air, his manner of speaking was calm and forthright.

“Fine, go ahead,” the elder calmly replied.

“The three of us are close friends that are roaming Grand Xia together. By chance, we arrived at Qiyun’s Gazing-Mountain Rampart and were then recruited into the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan by those two and a Heavenly Dipper Sovereign senior.” Chu Mang began from the start and related everything that followed after it. When Chu Mang spoke of the fact that their freedom was restricted, that they couldn’t leave and was forced to spar against Ouyang Ting, the temperature around Ouyang Kuangsheng dropped by several degrees.

“Is what he said, true?” The elder coldly glanced at the young man and lady that were responsible for the recruitment.

“Junior is aware of my mistakes.” The young man didn’t dare to raise his head and chose to confess directly.

“I understand now.” The elder understood that Chu Mang’s words were most probably true. He then continued, “The two of you deliberately made things difficult for newcomers and even confined their movements. Although your actions were for Ouyang Ting, this matter has been happening too frequently to the extent that I can no longer turn a blind eye to it. I have to correct this now before our clan begins to corrode from within. The two of you, just sever an arm and leave the Ouyang Clan, and this matter shall be at an end.”

The young man and lady paled at his words, but they still nodded their heads. They initially wanted to get into Ouyang Ting’s good books, yet now, with Ouyang Kuangsheng here, even Ouyang Ting would find it tough to extricate herself. How could she have the time to care about small timers like

them? With a howl of agony, they tore off their right arms and left the Ouyang Clan immediately after.

One false step and all their hopes and aspirations came crashing down on them. A catastrophe indeed.

“Release her first.” That elder glanced at Qin Wentian, who nodded and released Ouyang Ting.

Ouyang Ting stood up, the frigid look in her eyes was extremely chilling to behold. The elder then stated, “Ouyang Ting, it would’ve been fine if you were just looking for sparring opponents to raise your combat strength. But wanting to chop off an arm just because you suffered defeat?”

“Second Grandpa, he almost killed me,” Ouyang Ting justified.

“But were you even injured?” An unhappy look flashed past the eyes of the elder. “What’s the point of sparring if others aren’t allowed to win against you? What would you even accomplish in the future?”

Ouyang Ting stiffened, as she continued, “Ting`er understands her mistakes, and will agree to any punishment Second Grandpa sees fit to administer. But how will you deal with these people for treating me like this?”

“Ouyang Ting, do you feel that they should allow you to sever their arms with no resistance on their part?” Ouyang Kuangsheng dangerously growled. “Second Grandpa, back then I fought side-by-side with Qin Wentian in the Refinement Grounds of the Celestial Lake Palace. I can guarantee you that his talent is definitely not below mine. Ouyang Ting’s eyes are blinded by the power of our Ouyang name. She’s foolish to the extent that she doesn’t understand this basic truth; background and status mean nothing in front of absolute power. Second Grandpa better consider my suggestion seriously.”

The elder appeared unperturbed, but he was already considering options in his mind.

The temperament of Ouyang Ting was indeed a problem, but Qin Wentian’s actions were too brazen. If not for the appearance of Ouyang Kuangsheng, he would have definitely chosen to side with Ouyang Ting. This was something that needed no consideration.

But Ouyang Kuangsheng had repeatedly emphasized the relationship between him and Qin Wentian, so the elder had no choice but to seriously ponder his decision—he had to weigh all pros and cons.

He could only deal with this matter lightly, if not, both parties would suffer a blow in their prestige amongst the clan.

“Ouyang Ting, your temperament is not good, and you do things too impetuously. From now onwards for an entire year, all privileges granted to one with your standing shall be confiscated from you. You will no longer have any authority,” The elder calmly spoke, his words causing Ouyang Kuangsheng to frown. Such a punishment, was equivalent to no punishment at all?

“As for the three of you, you guys were forced by the circumstances; hence, there will be no punishments.”

The elder glanced at Qin Wentian and his group as he spoke, he evidently wanted to quickly resolve this matter.

“No punishment?” Ouyang Ting’s countenance darkened with outrage. Qin Wentian forced her to kneel in front of Fan Le and even made her kowtow to him. This matter was to be brushed off just like that? She truly could not tolerate this mouthful of foul breath.

She, Ouyang Ting, was forced to kneel and kowtow to an outsider. How could she ever raise her head up high in the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan ever again?

“Isn’t Ouyang Ting’s punishment a little too light? Second Grandpa, if she doesn’t change her unruly ways, what then?” Ouyang Ting hadn’t even commented, but Ouyang Kuangsheng was already jumping in and acted directly.

He also knew that wanting to toss Ouyang Ting out wasn’t a realistic thing to do. An Aristocrat Clan was still an Aristocrat Clan, and Ouyang Ting was also of the main bloodline. Although she was in the wrong today, the one that received the greatest amount of humiliation was still her. Qin Wentian, Fan Le and Chu Mang hadn’t suffered any disadvantages at all.

Ouyang Kuangsheng was born like this, overbearing and imperious. He seized the advantage, not allowing Ouyang Ting to have any chance to make a move against Qin Wentian in the future.

“If she still doesn’t change, this matter shall be handed over to the disciplinary hall,” the elder calmly replied, his words causing Ouyang Ting to feel as though her entire body was doused with ice-cold water.

Ouyang Kuangsheng nodded, “I’ll remember this.”

After speaking, he turned his gaze onto Qin Wentian and the two others as he smiled. “Why didn’t you guys look for me when you were here? Let’s leave this place for now.”

“Mhm.” Qin Wentian laughed as he nodded in agreement, leisurely walking out. He also understood that the reason why he was able to get away with what he’d done today was all because of Ouyang Kuangsheng. After all, as an outsider, forcing someone of the direct line of descent to kowtow in apology was a matter of grave humiliation!