

Emperor 3991

Chapter 3991: Ten Sword Prodigies

Both Dong Ling and Lu Qi stood in a daze after seeing the unmatched lady. She could absolutely shock Sword Continent or even all of Eight Desolaces.

They found it strange that they haven't heard of someone like her before. She should have been world-renowned.

"Let's go." Li Qiye smiled and turned back, surprising the duo.

Lu Qi found this astonishing. They were only passing by but Li Qiye decided to stop to take a look. He should be wanting to enter the city; why did he want to leave right now?

Of course, she didn't think that cowardice was the reason. Thus, it must have something to do with the unknown lady.

The two of them faced each other in silence. Did Li Qiye know her?

Lu Qi thought carefully and found it implausible. If they were acquaintances, they would have greeted each other. However, they simply stared at each other for a brief moment.

The whole thing was shrouded with mysteries. Of course, Li Qiye was the biggest mystery here but she didn't dare to pry.

She obeyed his command and started following. As for Dong Ling, he hurriedly gave chase and asked Li Qiye: "We're leaving just like that? We don't want to take a look at that famous ghost realm? Maybe there are incredible artifacts there at the immortal level..."

He blattered on while occasionally glancing backward.

Li Qiye gave him the side-eye and said: "No idea about the incredible artifacts but there's definitely a peerless beauty. Feel free to go take a closer look."

Dong Ling turned red after his true intention was revealed. He tried to play dumb and laughed: "It's not my fault, I'm just curious about the peerless beauty. I don't know how we haven't heard of her before in Sword Continent."

"There are too many strange things to count in this world." Li Qiye nonchalantly responded.

"Are you not curious at all? Why is she going to that ghost city all alone?" Dong Ling didn't give up.

"Not particularly. There are karmic ties and cause and effect. It's all destined." Li Qiye firmly answered.

"I see..." Dong Ling had no idea what he was talking about.

"If you are hellbent on going, do it. Who knows, she might like you back." Li Qiye added.

“Like me back?” Dong Ling’s eyes lit up after hearing this. Alas, he shuddered and thought about something: “No, no, I best not harbor any idea, I don’t even know if she’s a human or a ghost. My life would be over if it’s the latter.”

He wasn’t a fool. Why would a peerless beauty be here in this ghastly place? There was something else going on, dangerous enough to take his life.

“You’re not too stupid.” Li Qiye smiled: “But there’s an adage, dying in the embrace of a beauty is absolutely worth it.”

“So she’s really a ghost?” Dong Ling’s hairs stood on end. He felt that something was watching him ever since he got here. He turned around again and there was nothing but darkness.

“Stop trying to scare me, cultivators aren’t scared of ghosts.” He got closer to Li Qiye.

“Cultivators are nothing compared to real ghosts, nothing more than food regardless of their power.” Li Qiye smiled.

“Really?” Dong Ling became increasingly nervous due to their current location.

Li Qiye’s lack of response frightened him even more.

He didn’t want to stay here all alone. Though he was strong, he had no confidence in being here alone. That’s why it was wiser to leave with Li Qiye.

Just think about it, Li Qiye gave up despite having such a powerful maid. If he kept on going to that city, he would be dead in no time at all.

They eventually returned to the original steps. Dong Ling heaved a sigh of relief after seeing the starry sky and basking in the night breezes.

Though they somehow escaped unscathed from Revival Emperor City, he still had a heavy heart. In reality, they were quite safe because of Lu Qi.

It’s just that the place was creepy and he felt something was watching him from the darkness. This feeling was unbearable but he refrained from saying anything.

Now that he was out, the feeling was no longer there. The entire trip felt like a dream or an illusion. Nonetheless, he was absolutely certain that something monstrous was keeping an eye on them.

“Are there really ghosts in that city?” He couldn’t help but ask while descending.

“Those with wicked thoughts might see some.” Li Qiye joked.

“I definitely don’t have any wicked thoughts but I still think there are actual ghosts in there.” Dong Ling shook his head in response.

“No, just an abomination that has lived for billions of years.” Li Qiye revealed.

“Billions of years? What kind of thing can live that long?” Dong Ling took a deep breath.

He knew nothing about Li Qiye since they had just met but for some strange reason, he truly believed in Li Qiye.

“A remnant of the past.” Li Qiye responded.

The answer was rather vague but it confirmed Dong Ling’s speculation - there was something horrifying in that ghost city. It might be the reason why people never returned after visiting. It must have killed all of those cultivators.

He stopped thinking about it and cupped his fist towards Li Qiye: “I will take my leave right now. As long as the mountains remain verdant and the rivers keep flowing, we are bound to meet again someday. I appreciate what you have taught me today.”

Li Qiye simply nodded. Dong Ling then leaped into the sky and disappeared from sight.

“That’s one of the ten sword prodigies.” Lu Qi said.

Though Lu Qi rarely showed herself in public, she knew all of the famous cultivators in Sword Continent. After all, she was in charge of administration in the absence of her lord.

The ten sword prodigies were the best among the young generation. All were gifted in the sword dao.

Dong Ling was one of them but he was rather humble and didn’t state his title.

“Heaven Silkworm has a capable successor.” Li Qiye commented.

“Are you friends with that sect?” Lu Qi asked softly. She felt that he had a special relationship with this mysterious sect.

“Just a few ties from the past.” Li Qiye smiled.

Lu Qi nodded and followed right behind Li Qiye. Once they made it to the base, they saw the old man still waiting by the carriage.

He immediately stood up and greeted Li Qiye. As they were about to leave, they suddenly heard something akin to a bamboo stick hitting the ground.

Lu Qi and the old man immediately looked over and saw someone standing nearby.

Chapter 3992: A Beggar

The person was an old man whose robe was tattered from overuse. There were plenty of patches that were terribly sewn on.

However, the lack of craftsmanship was understandable after taking a good look at the old man. He appeared to be blind.

His eyelids were tightly shut as if they were sewn together. They looked like two meatballs sticking out of the sockets. There was one tiny gap in the middle. Who knows if he could actually see out of them? Even if he could, his vision would be awfully limited.

Being skinny caused his cheekbones to be overly prominent, resulting in a scary look. The rest of his frames were as thin as bamboo sticks. It seemed that one gust of wind could send him flying.

People shuddered for him because it must be cold wearing the thin and shoddy robe during the night.

He held a walking stick made out of bamboo with one hand. The bottom end was bald, most likely from accompanying the old man for so long.

His other hand was a broken bowl with several holes. He obviously picked it up somewhere and clearly treasured it since it was kept extremely clean.

There were five coins or so in the bowl. They issued clanks as he walked. Everyone could tell at first glance that he was a beggar.

This was a common sight in any major city. After all, life was tough for many. However, this was the wilderness.

The appearance of an old man like him here seemed out of place. Both Lu Qi and the old man took one step backward and became cautious.

The issue was that he appeared next to them with extreme speed. They didn't notice his arrival until he was already standing by the carriage.

Both of them were top masters, especially Lu Qi. She didn't dare to claim supremacy but she was confident that very few cultivators in Sword Continent could beat her. Moreover, she knew all of the big shots too.

She didn't recognize this old man. There wasn't a famous cultivator acting like a beggar either in this region.

First was a mysterious beauty in a ghost city. Now, another mysterious beggar? This was too much to be a coincidence. Since when did Sword Continent have so many hidden masters?

"Grandpa, is there something you want?" She took a deep breath and bowed slightly.

The old man was clearly powerful so prudence was the best course.

"Sirs, I haven't eaten for three days and three nights. Please give me something good." He raised his bowl and caused the coins to collide.

For some reason, the duo felt that this old man wasn't actually begging but rather, he was showing off the coins in his bowl. This was a rather strange and outrageous feeling.

However, Lu Qi wasn't laughing. She glanced at the old carriage driver, unaware of this newcomer's intention.

"What would you like, Grandpa?" She asked.

"Just something good." The old man remained vague. The coins were still clunking.

The duo became lost due to the lack of criteria. Something good? Like what? Treasure? Weapon?

"How about my head?" Li Qiye interjected with his signature lazy voice.

Lu Qi heaved a sigh of relief and stood aside.

“You’re too funny, Sir.” The old man smiled. Due to his caved-in cheeks, the smile looked awfully creepy.

Li Qiye got closer and said: “Does it look like I’m joking? How about this, I’ll cut off my head and let you have a taste.”

“Sir, I don’t eat raw.” The hideous smile remained.

“That’s fine, I’ll cook it first.”

Lu Qi and the old driver became confused again. Who would talk about cutting off their own head and boiling it for someone else to have a taste?

They stared at Li Qiye and it didn’t look like he was joking.

“Sir, I don’t have that many teeth left, I’m afraid I can’t eat something so hard.” The old man opened his mouth, revealing only a few yellow teeth. They seemed as if they could fall off at any moment, definitely unable to chew Li Qiye’s head.

“Then I’ll cut off your head and boil it for you to eat, sounds good?” Li Qiye smiled.

This suggestion was even stranger. How could the old man eat his own head? That’s impossible.

“Well, I think my old bones might be too hard for chewing.” The old man shook his head.

“Don’t worry about it, I’ll take my time boiling it. Even things harder than bone will eventually break down.” Li Qiye smirked.

“No, no, I don’t think I can wait that long.” The old man responded and shook his bowl again: “Sir, just give me something good.”

“So be it, here’s something good.” Li Qiye chuckled and suddenly kicked the old man’s chest without showing any mercy.

“Ah!!” Lu Qi and the old driver shouted in astonishment.

“Bam!” The old man flew through the horizon like a meteor.

The duo’s mouth was wide open, not expecting this at all. Lu Qi knew that this old man was far stronger than her. How did Li Qiye manage to make contact? Why didn’t the old man try to dodge?

The powerful hidden master really looked like a helpless beggar during that moment.

The duo couldn’t make heads or tails of this event.

Chapter 3993: Hallowed City

Hallowed City was created and named after Hallowed Dao Lord. It was one of the largest cities on the continent and served as an ancestral ground.

It operated similarly to a sect but there was one key difference - it was open to everyone.

Others always protected their ancestral ground from outsiders but this wasn't the case here. Because of this unique characteristic, it became quite lively and prosperous.

Most importantly, its sword named Sacred was available for all to see. This was one of the nine heavenly swords. Its equivalent dao possessed the same name.

In this continent, it was abundantly clear that having any of these swords meant regional supremacy. Any sect would instantly become a top power.

The best example was Sea Emperor Sword Kingdom. It had five dao lords and two swords - Vastsea and Abyss.

Few had the privilege of seeing the kingdom's two swords, not even its own geniuses. They were well-hidden and heavily guarded.

The other sects such as Sword Temple and Virtuous School did the same, always hiding their sword and the equivalent dao.

In Hallowed, the heavenly sword was placed at the highest spot - the Hallowed Platform.

Thus, one could see sacred lights emanating at the top of the city from a distance. The platform had a statue of the dao lord. The sword in his hand was the famous blade named Hallowed.

It has been there for millions of years. Everyone had the chance to see it regardless of their background and race. Notorious characters and nobodies shared the same right as long as they came to Hallowed City.

Indeed, numerous top masters have come before - War God Dao Lord, Armament Dao Lord, Blessed Dao Lord, All-things Dao Lord, Buddha Dao Lord... Even Duality Master visited.

Many pondered the reason why the insightful dao lord left his weapon on the platform for all to see.

There were plenty of explanations and speculations regarding this topic.

One speculation stated that it had something to do with Hallowed Dao Lord's background. Rumor has it that he was a sea demon cursed at birth. His cultivation path was arduous but he never gave up.

Eventually, he defeated the shackles of his bloodline and became a supreme dao lord. Because of his humble background, his benevolence and magnanimity had no bounds.

He once entered a forbidden zone and spent ten thousand years suppressing the area with his vitality. This caused considerable damage to his physical wellbeing.

This magnificent feat earned him the respect of future dao lords. Some cultivators believed that he was the greatest dao lord and should be placed before Blessed Dao Lord.

His legacy remained here. The city continued to bask in the rays of the heavenly sword.

Li Qiye's carriage slowly headed for Hallowed City since the Preeminent Plate was here. They saw the rays pouring down before they even got close to the city.

It looked peaceful and majestic like a crown. The sword would play the role of the jewel embedded on top.

"We're close." Lu Qi tidied her dress and stared at the city with respect.

This sentiment could be found in virtually all cultivators. They wanted to show respect to the city and Hallowed Dao Lord.

"Hallowed Sword." Li Qiye smiled while staring at the city.

The path gradually became crowded since visitors from all over the world came to this famous destination.

Recently, it became packed with people due to the recently-opened Preeminent Legacy. [1]

To put it simply, it was an incredible prize left behind by another unique dao lord - Omniscient. It contained the dao lord's resources and the profits accumulated from this event throughout the years.

Winning the prize didn't make one the strongest or the most authoritative in Eight Desolaces. However, it would definitely make them the richest. That's the significance behind this event and the reason why people kept coming like crazy and risking everything they got.

They all dreamed about being the luckiest and winning the prize. This would alter their fate forever.

Unfortunately, no one had won the grand prize while the legacy continued becoming bigger and bigger. This still didn't deter visitors from giving it a shot.

"Young Noble, would you like to go to the legacy first?" Lu Qi asked.

Li Qiye lazily answered: "Go on a tour of the city first. No one won before, we don't need to be in a hurry."

Lu Qi nodded and obeyed his command.

However, their carriage was stopped by a group of young cultivators. They all had the same uniform and an exceptional aura.

"Sea Emperor Sword Kingdom!" Others recognized their uniform and quickly dispersed.

No one wanted to mess with the strongest sect in Sword Continent. Every time its disciples appeared, others would come to flatter them with haste. Opposing them was never a wise choice.

They wondered about the people in the carriage. Who was brave enough to antagonize the members of this sect?

Chapter 3994: Qingcheng Zi

The disciples from Sea Emperor Sword Kingdom surrounded Li Qiye's carriage and attracted the attention of the crowd.

"Who is in charge here? I am Liu Qi of Sea Emperor. Come out and talk now!" A young male came out and shouted with vigor.

He was at the yin yang realm - a high cultivation realm for many cultivators, especially the smaller sects. The sect masters there were most likely in this realm too.

However, this realm was nothing to a lineage like Sea Emperor. It had millions of disciples. One could pick a random member and find them to be in the yin yang realm.

Some believed that only those in the Myriad-form realm and above mattered in Sea Emperor. A yin-yang disciple was only average at best. From this notion, one gained a better idea of Sea Emperor's power.

No one in the crowd had a clue on who Liu Qi was. If he was from any other sect, he would have a title and a high position, perhaps an elder if not the sect master.

Alas, he was just a nobody in Sea Emperor. Nonetheless, others didn't view him in this way. An ordinary disciple from Sea Emperor was still a big deal to the rest of the world.

The old driver didn't bother reacting while Lu Qi frowned slightly. Li Qiye got out of the carriage and lazily stretched: "What is it?"

No one thought that Li Qiye was a big deal due to his appearance.

"Brat, you hit our ship and injured our disciples. Do you realize what you have done?" Liu Qi aggressively shouted after seeing Li Qiye.

This caused the crowd to clamor. They thought that the ordinary guy was quite bold, to actually hit a ship from Sea Emperor? This was akin to taking food from a tiger's jaws.

"I suppose something like that did happen. And?" Li Qiye shrugged with a smile on his face.

His attitude left Liu Qi and his peers furious. They glared angrily at him.

"Such impudence!" One of them roared.

Others couldn't believe it. This guy dared to blatantly disrespect Sea Emperor? He must be tired of living.

"I don't think the brat knows how frightening Sea Emperor is. A yin yang cultivator means nothing to them." One expert murmured.

They could see Li Qiye's cultivation realm. He was similar to Liu Qi but the latter was from Sea Emperor. This meant that he should be far stronger than those in the same realm.

Liu Qi's face turned red. He took a deep breath and tried to maintain a style befitting that of a disciple from a prestigious sect. He coldly uttered: "There are two options for you..."

"Oh?" Li Qiye interjected and appeared to be bored of this conversation already.

His inattentiveness infuriated Liu Qi. Nothing would feel better than stomping on Li Qiye's face. He took a deep breath and said: "First, compensate for our losses and apologize by prostrating..."

The crowd exchanged glances. Some believed in pride and honor over life. An apology and compensation weren't out of line. However, demanding prostration was too extreme. Nonetheless, this was indeed the style of Sea Emperor.

"And if I refuse?" Li Qiye waved his hand and interrupted Liu Qi.

"Then you're a dead man. The prestige of Sea Emperor cannot be questioned or violated. It doesn't matter how far you run." Liu Qi's eyes became murderous: "But we're not unreasonable. Since you broke one of our ships, just your life alone will be enough. We'll spare the others."

Others didn't think he was being arrogant. Sea Emperor did have this power and authority. If they wanted someone dead in Sword Continent, escaping would be impossible especially for a nobody like Li Qiye.

"Taking his life is too much. Let's turn this hostility into friendship." A smooth yet serious voice answered before Li Qiye.

Everyone followed its direction and saw a youth walking over slowly. Despite the seemingly slow pace, he was actually moving quite fast and appeared before everyone in the next moment.

He wore a black robe with an old sword tied to the back. He possessed a pure and refreshing aura as if he came from a pristine wilderness.

Handsome wouldn't be the word to describe him but he exuded an aura of open-mindedness, amicability, and trustworthiness.

"Qingcheng Zi!" Many recognized him right away. [1]

"One of the ten sword prodigies..." Most have heard of him before.

"Brother Qingcheng." Liu Qi lowered his head to greet this newcomer; his peers did the same.

Of course, they weren't afraid of Qingcheng Zi. There was another reason.

"Conflicts are inevitable once outside." Qingcheng Zi stared at the two and spoke: "Since the brothers from the sword kingdom haven't suffered any personal injuries, why not drop this issue?"

Liu Qi hesitated for a moment and unwillingly said: "Hmph! Brat, I'll drop this out of consideration for Brother Qingcheng!"

The young audience found this surprising.

"The sword prodigies have plenty of clout. Even members of Sea Emperor have to give them face." One youth murmured.

"I thought Mount Qingcheng has been declining for a long time now. Plus, it's under the jurisdiction of Sea Emperor too. Why would Liu Qi be so polite towards him?" Another became perplexed.

One prodigy was far from enough to affect Sea Emperor. This sect had young geniuses at the same level as well.

“The reason is that the ancestor of Mount Qingcheng was kind to Sea Emperor’s progenitor. That’s why Sea Emperor has always respected Mount Qingcheng.” An older cultivator explained.

The progenitor of Sea Emperor was Sword Sea Dao Lord, rumored to be a sea demon who eventually obtained the heavenly sword named Vastsea. This allowed him to become a dao lord.

He always personally protected Mount Qingcheng. After creating Sea Emperor, he ordered for his sect to keep the same sentiment.

According to the legend, his ancestor was a powerful sea demon who was saved by an ancestor from Mount Qingcheng. Thus, the dao lord did all of this to repay the kindness shown to his ancestor.

As Sea Emperor grew stronger while Mount Qingcheng declined, no one dared to ever offend the latter. The members of Sea Emperor also showed respect towards Mount Qingcheng since this was a rule in their sect.

Chapter 3995: Exercise

“Brat, consider yourself lucky today.” Liu Qi glared at Li Qiye and was still annoyed.

He gathered his friends and pursued Li Qiye in order to teach the guy a lesson about offending Sea Emperor Sword Kingdom. This would also serve as a deterrence for everyone else.

Alas, he had no choice but to give up.

“No, I’m afraid it’s too late for you to leave.” Li Qiye smiled.

“What? Don’t be an idiot who doesn’t appreciate mercy.” Liu Qi’s expression soured.

Li Qiye placed one hand on his waist and started stretching: “I’m rusting from lacking exercise.” He then pointed at Liu Qi and said: “If you can block one sword move from me, I will spare all of you.”

The crowd became frozen. They thought that he was lucky to be saved by Qingcheng Zi. Thus, the lack of appreciation was one thing yet he chose to be so haughty?

“Is the brat crazy?” Many viewed this as a suicidal attempt.

“How dare you run your mouth before us?!” One member from Sea Emperor shouted and grabbed his sword hilt.

“I see, I see, someone even more arrogant than me.” Liu Qi had an angry smile.

He then cupped his fist towards Qingcheng Zi: “Brother, it’s not that I’m being inconsiderate towards you. This brat is simply asking for it.”

Qingcheng Zi stared at Li Qiye in confusion. Normally, people knew when to back off but Li Qiye chose escalation instead. It seemed as if he wanted to provoke Sea Emperor.

“Forget it, my meddling is unwanted.” He shook his head and moved to the side.

“Brat, I’ll do you a favor and send you on your way!” Liu Qi then stepped forward and pointed at Li Qiye.

He had to acquiesce earlier in public. This annoyed him to no end. Now, Li Qiye was asking for it and he wouldn’t be blamed for showing zero mercy.

“Talk all you want after surviving my attack. I won’t be a bully either, take out your treasures and activate your merit laws now while there’s still time.” Li Qiye smiled.

He was merely speaking the truth but everyone took it as blatant disrespect.

“The brat is only at the yin yang realm at best, not even at the intermediate level. He should be considerably weaker than Liu Qi who is from a prestigious sect. Liu Qi should have stronger treasures and merit laws.” One expert gazed at Li Qiye and stated his assessment.

Though both were in the same realm, everyone thought that Liu Qi should be stronger due to his background. Thus, Li Qiye was being a fool.

“He’s nothing more than a frog who doesn’t know the immensity of heaven and earth. This is fine, he deserves death anyway for messing with the wrong person.” One youth sneered.

“Senior Brother Liu, make him get on his knees and beg!” Someone from Sea Emperor shouted.

“No, that’s not enough. Crush all of his bones and make him beg for death! That’s what he gets for offending our sect!” Another added.

Everyone thought that Li Qiye was finished after listening to the aggressive members from Sea Emperor. They realized that it was best to never provoke this sect.

“Come, brat!” Liu Qi roared as his eyes pulsed murderously.

“Take out your weapon already.” Li Qiye waved his hand.

Liu Qi trembled with rage. Though he wasn’t a genius or anything in his own sect, he was still a big deal in the cultivation world, being on the same level as some elders and sect masters.

“I hope you can back it up.” Liu Qi released his vitality, unable to tolerate this any longer.

“Boom!” Nine fate palaces appeared along with the majestic four symbols. They were around eighteen feet large and poured down violet rays.

“He’s at the intermediate level.” One expert said after seeing the size of the symbols.

As a cultivator grew stronger, their symbol would become one foot longer after each realm increase. Given what he had shown, others could see that he was at the intermediate level of the yin yang realm.

“He’s a ghost member.” Another noted the violet rays pouring down like waterfalls. This was an obvious sign.

“Clank!” He unsheathed his sword and green waves emanated from it.

“A heaven-level sword.” One youth said.

Only experts had access to heaven-level weapons. Though this was a low heaven-level sword, it was still more than enough to impress the crowd.

Sea Emperor probably had a scary number of disciples like Liu Qi. However, he still had such a good weapon? This was indicative of the sect’s resources and foundation.

The green waves from his sword formed a mighty wall and he uttered: “Bring it, brat.”

“Are you prepared?” Li Qiye chuckled.

“Do your worst because I’ll cut you to pieces afterward. Take out your weapon!” Liu Qi gritted his teeth.

“No need to make a big deal out of this.” Li Qiye smiled and bent down to pick up a dried branch. He waved it around and said: “This’ll do.”

The crowd immediately looked around in confusion.

“Is there something wrong with his head?” One expert wondered.

Someone from the last generation agreed: “Yes, he has to be crazy. Even if he was one realm higher, using a branch versus a low heaven-level sword is insane.”

“People like him will die without a grave.” Another snorted.

Qingcheng Zi frowned after seeing this reckless act. He himself wouldn’t dare to do this.

Liu Qi’s face turned red, having never experienced this level of humiliation before. The guy was weaker yet he wanted to use a tree branch against a powerful sword?

“Kill him, Brother Liu!” His friend shouted.

Liu Qi pointed his sword at Li Qiye. Terrifying sword energies emanated as he said: “This is your last moment, brat.”

Chapter 3996: Killer Branch

Though far from being peerless, Liu Qi was still an official disciple from Sea Emperor Sword Kingdom and had access to orthodox merit laws and weapons.

Li Qiye’s choice of using a branch could only be construed as blatant disdain akin to a slap on the face. The disciples from Sea Emperor couldn’t swallow this anger.

Even disciples from ordinary sects wouldn’t accept this, let alone the number one sect in Sword Continent.

As for the spectators, they have met arrogant cultivators before. This was a common theme found in the younger ones - always contemptuous and haughty.

However, it was their first time seeing someone like Li Qiye - using a branch to compete against Sea Emperor's merit law and treasure.

If he was a sovereign and far stronger than Liu Qi, it would be a different story. However, his cultivation was actually weaker.

"I can't believe what I'm seeing." A knowledgeable cultivator shook his head.

"If he dares to do this to my sect, I would let him suffer a fate worse than death." A youth found this unacceptable.

"There's no way he's getting out of this alive." Another youth sneered.

As for Qingcheng Zi, he found this astonishing as well. He had met plenty of people before due to his prestigious status. This was still a first for him.

Sea Emperor was number one for a reason. Their merit laws and treasures were exceptional and brilliant, nearly always better than the competition.

Thus, someone who would act in this manner was either crazy, outrageously ignorant, or extremely powerful. Alas, he didn't think Li Qiye fit these categories. The guy looked strangely calm and aloof.

"Senior Brother, don't kill him so quickly. Cut off his legs first and take your time." A Sea Emperor's member gritted his teeth.

"That's right, killing him with one slash is too nice. Make an example out of him!" Another bellowed.

"Brat, you deserve death of the worst kind. I shall make mincemeat out of you then drink your blood and eat your flesh..." Liu Qi coldly uttered.

"Enough blabbering, start already." Li Qiye interrupted him.

Rage made Liu Qi tremble. He shouted: "Die!"

Clanks could be heard and after a bright flash, green light needles erupted from a slash. They seemed eager to add thousands of holes onto Li Qiye without killing him.

Li Qiye reacted by slightly waving his branch to the side. To the spectators, he looked as if he was panicking. Liu Qi was in front of him yet he thrust his branch towards the back.

"Has this brat cultivated before?" Even the most generous spectators thought that Li Qiye's mistake during battle was egregious.

"What an idiot!" Some young cultivators laughed.

Others watched with disdain, thinking that this stupidity was about to end with death. Even if he was weaker, he should know where the opponent was attacking from and react accordingly.

Qingcheng Zi didn't expect this either. He thought that Li Qiye would put up a better fight.

Only Lu Qi was moved to see this. She thought that Li Qiye's movement looked a bit familiar. She also knew that this youth from Sea Emperor was nothing more than an ant. After all, even her lord treated Li Qiye with respect. She was merely curious about his true power and this particular technique.

The old servant became surprised and this feeling only grew as time passed.

"Idiot, meet your mak-!" Liu Qi also laughed after seeing this.

As Liu Qi's sword rays were about to piece Li Qiye, Qingcheng Zi suddenly noticed something amiss. Intuition told him that a threat was near.

Liu Qi suddenly stopped and couldn't finish his line. "Ugh-"

Something seemed to be stuck in his throat and impeding his breathing. It was none other than Li Qiye's branch.

Liu Qi had no idea how it pierced his throat. In fact, other spectators had the same problem.

They only saw Li Qiye attacking in the opposite direction. How the hell did the branch hit Liu Qi? Since the latter never expected any resistance, he didn't bother trying to block.

"This..." Qingcheng Zi felt a chill coursing down his throat. He wondered if he could have blocked the branch just now.

He couldn't come up with an answer from lacking confidence.

Liu Qi himself thought that this was an illusion. However, the pain coursing through his entire body told him otherwise.

As Li Qiye pulled the branch out, blood began to gush from the wound. Liu Qi could only watch his life pass away without being able to say a single word.

Chapter 3997: Sword Saint

Liu Qi died with his eyes wide open from disbelief. In the previous second, he harbored nothing but disdain for Li Qiye, thinking that the guy was about to lose. The actual result was unimaginable.

He was supposed to torture the guy first, letting him taste agony. In reality, a single branch robbed life away from him.

The spectators felt the same way, unable to fathom the attack. It had nothing to do with speed but rather, direction.

Li Qiye aimed in the opposite direction of his opponent. How did that move connect in the first place? Everything felt surreal so the atmosphere became eerily quiet.

"Fellow Daoist, may I ask for the name of this technique?" Qingcheng Zi couldn't contain his curiosity and cupped his fist towards Li Qiye.

“Just playing around.” Li Qiye tossed the branch away then answered.

“...” Qingcheng Zi was astounded. His being able to kill Lui Qi while playing around was interesting enough. However, the actual development exceeded common sense.

Li Qiye boarded the carriage and the old driver started heading for Hallowed City again.

After he was gone, the disciples from Sea Emperor calmed down and grabbed Liu Qi’s corpse before leaving.

“I think he poked the beehive.” One expert said while watching that group of disciples scurry away.

After all, killing a member of Sea Emperor in public would require an explanation or retribution.

Meanwhile, a girl dressed in green has been watching the entire time. “Let’s enter the city.” She ordered.

Li Qiye seemed drowsy inside the carriage while Lu Qi hesitated to speak while staring at him.

“Speak your mind.” He said without opening his eyes.

“Young Noble, your technique earlier, was it Sword Point created by Sword Saint?” She finally revealed her mind.

The move earlier left a deep impression on her. She found its miraculous nature familiar. She heard of her lord talking about sword arts before. Sword Point was one of the topics.

“Yes, it was Sword Point.” He smiled.

“I’ve heard rumors of Virtuous School losing this technique long ago. No current disciples know how to use it.” Lu Qi became startled.

Normally, one would assume that he was from Virtuous School after hearing this. However, she didn’t think so.

Even the strongest ancestor there would need to treat her lord with respect. On the other hand, her lord showed nothing but reverence for Li Qiye. Virtuous School had no one at that level.

“The world is full of surprises.” Li Qiye said.

“Have you been to Virtuous School before?” Lu Qi asked.

“No.” He responded.

This only added to the mystery. Sword Saint’s dao was inscrutable. Only the members of Virtuous School had some achievements with learning them.

As for Sword Point, it would be impossible to decipher without direct instruction from Sword Saint himself.

Sword Saint was rather famous in Eight Desolaces. Many referred to him as Sword Emperor. However, he thought that he wasn't comparable to the wise sages of the past and didn't dare to assume the title of "emperor".

He was one of the few dao lords who didn't have this cultivation realm in his title either.

After becoming a dao lord, he started Virtuous School. He was considered one of the ten Grand Creators for his help in popularizing the sword dao.

His achievements illuminated the ages. He stood shoulder to shoulder to Sword Sea Dao Lord and even the mythical cultivator known as Emperor Ye. [1]

Nonetheless, some refuted his supremacy, thinking that it would be unreasonable for him to be listed on the same level as Sword Sea Dao Lord and Emperor Ye.

He obtained one of the nine heavenly swords after becoming a dao lord - Ragesun. However, he didn't find the dao that paired with it.

Thus, he shouldn't be able to compete against Sword Sea Dao Lord who had a perfect pair.

Nonetheless, his contribution to the continent was as clear as day. The sword dao here reached the next level because of him, becoming the most popular path of cultivation.

Moreover, he never stopped teaching people after becoming a dao lord. He was always willing to guide swordsmen regardless of whether they were in his sect or not.

Who wouldn't want to be taught by a dao lord? The issue was that most dao lords left their legacies only for their direct descendants and sect. Sword Saint, or Sword Emperor, was an exception.

Another notable dao lord who taught many disciples was All-things Dao Lord. According to the legends, this dao lord had around three thousand disciples during that era. However, a key difference between All-things and Sword Saint was that All-things' disciples were still members of True Immortal Sect.

As for Sword Saint, he still took in disciples outside of Virtuous School. His thirty-six best disciples had the title of Sword God. Only the first disciple was from Virtuous School. The others came from other sects. From this, one could see how generous he was.

During his era, ninety percent of all cultivators in Sword Continent focused solely on the sword dao. This earned him a great reputation as the number one swordsman and a spot among the ten Great Creators.

Thus, many sects in the current days had ties with him. Alas, after so many years, only Virtuous School still had a strong grasp of his sword dao.

As for the famous technique named Sword Point, no disciples there have successfully learned it in later generations.

Its only known user, at least to Lu Qi's knowledge, was Li Qiye.

The carriage slowly rolled forward, almost entering the city. However, someone suddenly jumped on the carriage and sat down.

Chapter 3998: A'jiao

The old servant and Lu Qi were startled by the uninvited guest. This person was simply too fast and they had no time to stop it.

The old servant's expression soured while Lu Qi stood up right away, ready to face the powerful foe.

However, Li Qiye waved his hand and told her to sit down. She obeyed but continued to glare at the intruder.

It turned out to be a girl, not a beauty but ugly and plump. She had fat everywhere but strangely enough, they seemed to be tough like metal instead of jiggling around upon movement.

Her skin was a dark yellow. Others would assume that she was a farmer who worked year-round doing hard labor.

In reality, she was only around eighteen or so. It's just that her appearance made her seem old, seemingly experiencing too much hardship outside in the scorching sun.

Her hair was long and jet black, braided into a bun. It certainly wasn't a flattering look. Worst of all, she even had a thick layer of rouge with a distasteful scent while wearing a conspicuous dress with colorful flower patterns.

If she had an average and low-key fashion style, no one would fault her for her physical appearance. This gave the impression of her being a country-pumpkin who yearned for life in the big city.

"Oh? Lil' Bro, long time no see." The girl acted coquettishly and winked at Li Qiye while gesturing by connecting her middle finger and thumb.

This only worsened her unflattering appearance to a nauseating level. The old driver shuddered while Lu Qi had goosebumps, wanting to kick this monster off the carriage.

As for Li Qiye, he stared intensely at the girl for a while.

Lu Qi noticed this and found it quite strange. Li Qiye naturally didn't like her; they must actually know each other.

"Who are you?" Li Qiye stopped looking and asked lazily.

To which the girl responded: "Lil' Bro, can't forget you've forgotten your upstairs neighbor, A'jiao already. You visited my house before..."

"Not a clue." He interrupted her.

Lu Qi started thinking about this conversation. If this girl was a nobody, Li Qiye would have thrown her off the carriage.

But it would be weirder for them to be acquaintances. He was someone above their lord, why would this vulgar girl be his neighbor?

“Oh, wait a minute, upstairs? Must have been a long time ago and I don’t quite remember.” He pondered then smirked.

“Lil’ Bro, you’re being too cold.” A’jiao kept on making cute gestures with her hands: “You even broke my vase during your visit. It was a pretty big deal but we dropped the issue, can’t believe you’re pretending to not know me.”

“It’s just one vase, I might remember if I had destroyed your house or something.” He responded.

Lu Qi thought that this conversation was just too hard to follow.

“How cruel, we’ve never done anything to you outside of living upstairs, why did you have to destroy us. Isn’t there a proverb about how a relative afar is less useful than a close neighbor? You’ve hurt me with your choice of words...” She looked as if she was the victim. Unfortunately, this exaggerated reaction didn’t win her any sympathy.

“Enough, say what you want. More of this crap and I’ll finish you.” He said flatly.

“Lil’ Bro, you’re so merciless even towards a flower like me...” She winked again.

“Bam!” He kicked her off before she could finish. She fell to the ground and bellowed in pain, completely covered in dust.

Lu Qi wanted to laugh but realized that it would be improper. She naturally enjoyed this entertaining meeting. There was no doubt that these two knew each other. The question was - how did this supreme existence know this vulgar lady?

A’jiao had thick skin and leaped back on the carriage. Lu Qi was afraid that her landing would break the carriage but no, she was agile despite her bulky frame. She landed gracefully like a falling leaf.

“Lil’ Bro, must you be so cruel?” A’jiao complained.

“Remember, this is my world. If you need something from me, come with sincerity. I’ve been thinking about destroying your house but since you’re here, I might reconsider...” He went on.

“Whoa, no need to say these unpleasant words.” She said: “Don’t you know people say that concord comes after discord? Or that even lovers fight sometimes? Remember how close we used to be?”

“Have you looked into the mirror?” He sneered.

“You must be hating me because I’m not as pretty as the girl next to you...” She acted like a bullied wife again.

“This is getting too troublesome.” He interrupted her and said: “Eras are dust, ages are dirt, all become void, ephemerals are only defeated by the heart and the mind. Let’s get to the point.”

The vulgar conversation took a sudden shift and surprised Lu Qi.

“Eternality from an unyielding dao heart, you’ve been waiting for an opportunity.” A’jiao’s expression became serious.

Lu Qi suddenly saw a new existence - not a vulgar country-bumpkin but a peerless existence that had lived through the ages. The dust of life has covered up her true appearance.

"Wait, I'm here to talk business with you, not to touch on this boring subject." But the initial A'jiao returned right away.

"Speak." He said.

"My father said that I'm not young anymore, it's time to look for a husband which is why I'm here, Lil' Bro, what do you think..." She had a bashful expression and stole glances at Li Qiye.

Li Qiye immediately stood up and got closer. A'jiao lowered her head, seemingly shy.

"Are you feeling sick?" He eventually asked.

She looked up and glared at him before realizing that this was the wrong expression. She spoke with indignation: "Lil' Bro, you're so mean..."

"How rare and earth-shattering." He shook his head: "I myself am feeling scared, this must be a dream."

"You dream about me in this manner?" A'jiao seemed happy.

Lu Qi felt lost again. A'jiao seemed to be talking about marriage but Li Qiye's response took a different route. She was lacking context and couldn't understand the two.

"Is this a peace negotiation?" He then sat down and said: "Go for it."

Chapter 3999: Marry Me Already

"Lil' Bro, why are you so anxious? We need to take it slow when talking about the most important event in our life." A'jiao said coquettishly.

"Do you think I can't stomp you down? I want to see how you would try to stop me." Li Qiye glared at her.

"Lil' Bro, your words are as sharp as swords." She pouted, causing her lips to look like a pig's snout.

"Scram." He lay down and stopped paying attention.

"Okay, okay, let's just talk." She begged.

Li Qiye simply ignored her.

"Alright, since you want to talk, let's talk." She winked: "After all, you'll be our son-in-law soon..."

"You're making me nauseous. Leave already." He glanced at her.

She laughed heartily after hearing this. The laughter echoed like a bell but at the very least, it was far more pleasant than her trying to act cute.

"What is your condition?" She became serious.

"I don't think anything like this has happened before in history, what a miracle." He touched his nose and smiled.

"Well, there's an exception to everything. Plus, you're a unique existence and have value above everyone else. My rich father said that you can ask for whatever you want, we have a lot of antiques at our home. Don't be shy now, this will be a good start for us..."

She acted as if she was on his side instead of her father's.

"I don't think free lunches exist in this world or a random pie falling from the sky. Even if there was, this pie might smash my head hard enough to kill me." He calmly said.

"You're being too suspicious for no reason." A'jiao complained: "Our house takes pride in having a flawless reputation of being trustworthy."

"Reputation isn't worth a coin when everyone's dead already." Li Qiye said.

"Well, there's a beginning to everyone." She said: "This is for our happiness in the future. You just need a little push to start and then you can do anything given your ability and intelligence."

"If you're relying on me, it shows that the matter isn't serious enough. You all can deal with it too." He said.

"It's a matter of should or shouldn't. This is a case of shouldn't, that's why we need you to do it. Plus, this aligns with your goal too." She elaborated.

"Oh?" He showed no sign of hastiness: "I'll start with a high price if you insist."

"Do as you please." She revealed her most charming smile: "Our house has money anyway."

"Do you know what I want?" He smirked while staring at her.

"Hmm..." She pondered before answering: "I don't, I'm not a worm in your belly, Lil' Bro."

"If you don't know, then you've come to the wrong place and found the wrong person." He shrugged: "Return from whence you came and one day, I might visit again." His eyes narrowed after saying this.

Her eyes narrowed as well. This caused Lu Qi to feel a chill all over her body. Time and space seemed to be flowing chaotically and she became something as insignificant as a speck of dust - just one exhale from A'jiao would blow her away.

She realized just how terrifying A'jiao was. Both her lord and the top existences of Sword Continent couldn't hold a candle to her.

Why was this terrible being here in Sword Continent? Who the hell was she?

Only Li Qiye was unmoved by A'jiao, unaffected by the terrifying aura.

"Your heartlessness is hurting me." She became normal and the aura disappeared.

"If you want to negotiate, do it earnestly. If you don't, whatever. When the opportunity comes, I'll go." He said.

"Do you really want it?" She asked.

"Isn't it obvious? I know you can't give it to me though." He chuckled.

"Lil' Bro. Change your condition, we can negotiate something else." She sighed and said.

"Can't you see that I have all the advantages? It is you who is asking for a favor here. Trust me, I have plenty of time and of course, you do too. Then why the need to rush anything?" He smiled.

"Maybe." She answered seriously: "But you know that time is not on your side. No one can escape when the end comes, not even you or me."

"When a nest is overturned, no egg can remain intact." He replied: "I understand this very well. It's just that you're far more anxious than I am, no?"

"Lil' Bro, don't you know that you're not the only one in this world? Maybe others can do it too. At that point, your bargaining chip..."

"Feel free to ask someone else." Li Qiye waved his hand and interrupted her: "I don't mind if you actually have another candidate. After all, this might be a crappy transaction, the probability of dying is a hundred percent."

"You're afraid of death?" She smiled, wanting to provoke him.

"That depends on how. At the very least, this matter is not worth my death." He said: "Stop bluffing though, you wouldn't be here if there were other candidates."

A'jiao had no response this time. After a long while, she asked again: "Change it to something else, we can accommodate you then."

"I'll let you have some time to come up with a list. We can talk afterward." He said.

She carefully mused before nodding: "So be it. As you've said, we do have time. There's no need to rush."

"Goodbye now." He told her to leave with no intention of getting up like a polite host.

A'jiao had no choice but to get up. As she was walking away, she suddenly turned back and said: "Lil' Bro, I know why you're here. If you want to find the whereabouts, I can give you some information. After all, nothing can hide from my eyes."

"I appreciate your goodwill but I'll take my time. Unlike you, I don't mind that someone has made contact." He chuckled.

"Are you really this confident?" She spoke normally without trying to act cute. Her rough appearance became rather natural and far more pleasant than before.

"Yes, and you have experienced my confidence before. My goal will come into fruition eventually, I've never doubted this for a second before." He said.

“It’s nice that you’re so confident but the unexpected will always happen.” She cupped her fist then continued to walk.

She then turned her head and winked at him again: “Lil’ Bro, remember to come, I’ll be waiting.”

Chapter 4000: Hallowed Sword

Hallowed City appeared magnificent with its lofty and impregnable walls reaching the clouds.

The sacred lights from above enveloped the city. Because of this, Hallowed seemed to be the safest area in the entire world - capable of stopping all foreign invaders.

Moreover, basking in the light gave people the impression that they were being enlightened by a dao lord while being protected by him.

They found unprecedented peace and comfort in this place regardless of their power. Even the weakest living beings no longer had fear in this place.

That’s why numerous inhabitants of the continent traveled to Hallowed City, hoping to make a home here. The charm of the city turned it into one of the largest on the continent.

Its flourishing prosperity couldn’t be overstated. After entering the city, a bustling scene and exciting atmosphere greeted newcomers.

Thousands and thousands of disciples and experts from various sects and races were present. Some were still unknowns while others were top lords.

One could occasionally see a majestic carriage being escorted by a powerful cavalry. This looked like the entourage of a mighty king.

Of course, the citizens here didn’t find this surprising. Big shots such as the five overlords and grandmasters have visited before.

Li Qiye got off the carriage and was met by the comforting rays. This was akin to relaxing in a hot spring after a hard day at work.

One must admit the greatness of Hallowed Dao Lord for creating this massive architecture and sharing it with the rest of the world. Few in history have done something similar.

“Hallowed.” Lu Qi said sentimentally. This wasn’t her first visit but she was still stirred each time.

“The city lord is doing an excellent job at governing. The city is becoming increasingly prosperous. No wonder why it is considered the everlasting impregnable fortress of Sword Continent.” Lu Qi said.

The city enjoyed a historical foundation with plenty of advantages. However, this didn’t diminish the achievements of the current city lord.

Some believed that the lord was unstoppable when not counting the five overlords. Thus, Hallowed City had enough power to take down any sect in this region. Even Sea Emperor Sword Kingdom wouldn't dare to be haughty here.

"Everlasting?" Li Qiye shook his head: "Don't say that word in a trivial manner. The only thing everlasting is the cycle of rise and fall. Even the most powerful lineage will crumble one day."

Lu Qi couldn't help but nod in agreement.

As for Li Qiye, he was thinking about Holy City again. It was considered the bulwark of the human race. Alas, time was merciless and still took it down.

Hallowed City, more or less, resembled Holy City back then. Being "everlasting" was easier said than done. It required the effort and blood of countless people.

Li Qiye raised his hand and rays began dancing on his palm. Lu Qi couldn't believe it.

Everyone knew that the rays emanate from the heavenly sword. No one could grasp or control them but Li Qiye had no problem in doing so.

They looked like spirits happily playing, unable to resist the temptation of his palm.

During this process, a gray-haired old man somewhere else in the city suddenly felt something only for a brief second. He murmured: "Who is resonating with Hallowed? Can it be, a new master?"

He attempted to find the source to no avail. Everything had returned to normal but he knew that it wasn't an illusion. Someone had indeed communicated with the sword and caused it to harmonize.

Hallowed Dao Lord left the sword here for its fateful owner. The one capable of gaining its approval could become its next master. The old man was frightened because only a peerless cultivator could do so.

He started thinking about the possibilities. Lu Qi back in the carriage was doing the same.

"Young Noble, do you know that those who can harmonize with the sword can try to pull it out?" She asked while looking upward.

Who wouldn't want one of the nine heavenly swords? Hallowed, in particular, was a special one as well.

"Not wasting my energy thinking about it, I can take a heavenly sword whenever I want." He smiled.

Lu Qi was shaken after hearing this nonchalant comment. This sword's new owner had a strong possibility of becoming the next dao lord.

On the other hand, Li Qiye didn't think much of it and she knew that he wasn't being pompous. Her lord couldn't dare to make this claim. This made her wonder about Li Qiye's true power.

He lazily got back into the carriage and stopped caring about the sword.

Her sect had many properties in Hallowed City. Thus, they stayed at a mansion where the land was worth as much as gold. Possessing such an expensive property was a testament to her sect's power.

After preparing their place, Lu Qi acted as a guide and led Li Qiye towards the most bustling street in the city - Purification Street.

It was also the most complicated area with people everywhere - scammers, thieves, hidden big shots...

Rumor has it that Hallowed Dao Lord came from this street. After becoming a dao lord, he still left this place open to the public.