

## F Disciples 511

### Chapter 511: Eastern Sword Alliance

Chen Wentian's bad mood didn't last for long. The sword festival was filled with excitement. A few rounds of laughter and spirited chatter from his disciples and he had already forgotten about Liu Qiye. One moment, he was pulled along by Song Wushuang to watch a duel on a platform. In another, his mouth was stuffed full of random bits of food from nearby street vendors.

"Here, master!" Su Xue said, holding up some roasted meat on a skewer, "This is from a sword horn bull. They said it could improve one's understanding of sword Dao by simply eating this!"

"Look, swordfish and sword-nosed dolphin! Wahh, it's almost impossible to find beasts from the ocean around the subcontinent!" Su Yue squealed.

In no time at all, the twins had filled everyone's hands with goodies they had acquired from all over. It was their singular interest after the pursuit of cultivation. There was no one in the sect more obsessed with food than them.

"How is it?"

"So good!"

"We should have something like this at the sect."

"I know!"

The disciples chattered together in a big group. The ice sisters abandoned their usual tight-knit dynamic, freely mingling with the others. Wu Qianyu, who usually preferred solitude, couldn't help but be drawn in, listening in with an idle smile. Even Bei Yingluo, the most junior, was not forgotten with Song Wushuang paying particular attention to her.

Chen Wentian laughed along with them, enjoying the moment. He was glad to see that all of them got along. He didn't know if they had already developed such a dynamic when he left them for the Martial Brilliance Continent or if it was a recent thing. Either way, it set his heart at ease.

They eventually circled to the other side of the plaza where there was a singular platform that overlooked a wide audience. Several female cultivators stood above, waving their swords around individually. They were not fighting with each other but simply displaying their skills. Whenever one person performed a particularly flashy or fancy move, the audience would clap and cheer.

Their swords flashed under the light of the lanterns. Their wide sleeves and flowing dresses fluttered in the air, following their movements. When they leaped into the air, they were like fairies descending from the sky.

Anyone could go up there yet only a few did. If one's ability was not enough, they would not receive much attention and they would feel embarrassed. Only those who held supreme confidence in themselves and their ability dared to show off.

Amidst it all, Chen Wentian noticed Bei Yingluo glance several times at the stairs that led up to the stage. She seemed to be debating something in her mind, her eyes dancing around with uncertainty.

He slipped next to her and nudged her, "Hey, what are you thinking about?"

"Oh... master. It's nothing."

"Come on, you can tell me. Do you want to try your Bei Family Spear on the stage?"

"I just thought... the Bei Family Spear was created, in part, as a dancing art. I've practiced it with the pudao recently and I just thought..." She then quickly shook her head, "Forget I said anything."

He nudged her again, "If you want to try it out, you can try it out. I don't mind."

She looked at him uncertainly but he smiled reassuringly.

"I won't get jealous of random people in the audience, I promise."

Bei Yingluo bowed, "Thank you, master. I won't let you down!"

She then rushed towards the foot of the stage before he could change his mind.

"That was a surprise." Zhou Ziyun commented.

"What?" He asked.

"I thought you would say no."

"I'm not that small-minded." He insisted.

She shrugged, not bothering to argue with him.

They all stood together and watched as Bei Yingluo walked up in front of the crowd. A wooden placard was placed on the floor in front of her, displaying her name and her sect. She gave a bow and withdrew her sword of choice, a shiny pudaο with a straight, one-meter blade and a ridged handle of equal length.

Her appearance did not initially draw any attention but her usage of a spatial bag and the pudaο certainly did. Both things were unique among all the performers thus far and the crowd was instantly intrigued.

Bei Yingluo held the pudaο at the bottom of the handle, using her strength to hold the extra-long sword out like a broken spear. She then stepped into her clan's spear art with conviction. Her movements were quick and firm. Her limbs snapped to form with well-practiced precision and energy. She leaped across the stage, her thin, limber frame carrying her with surprising grace.

The audience cheered for her. They weren't disappointed by her flashy entrance. Her moves were born from spear arts so it was something that sword cultivators did not encounter often. It was fresh, it was exciting, and they appreciated it greatly.

"I have to commend the sect master of Ten Thousand Flower Valley. Your disciple, Bei Yingluo, is quite a talent." A male voice came from behind.

Chen Wentian turned to see an immortal with a richly adorned green outfit made of silk. The man was middle-aged with a neatly trimmed beard and bright green eyes. These details were inconsequential but what was most peculiar about this immortal was that he had a gentle lady hanging onto his arm as if she was his wife or concubine. She was quite a catch, perhaps only slightly below Song Wushuang or Xu Lanyi in terms of attractiveness.

Chen Wentian glanced between the two with growing curiosity and cupped his fists together.

"Immortal Blue Dragon Chen Wentian of Ten Thousand Flower Valley. You are?"

The man let out a belly laugh, "Immortal Green Destiny Yang Kaitian of the Mount Xiong Sect. Well met!"

"Well met." Chen Wentian replied courteously.

Yang Kaitian laughed again, "You know, I was surprised to find that we have quite similar interests."

Chen Wentian looked at him and then at the woman beside him, "Your disciple?"

"Exactly. Though, unlike Brother Chen, I wasn't audacious enough to bring more than one. Perhaps tomorrow night, I will do the same. Hahaha!"

Chen Wentian smiled wryly. He had nothing to say to that. Immortals like them were certainly not rare. Many immortals had relationships with their disciples but they didn't bother public declaring it. But since he only had female disciples, he would always seem frivolous wherever he went, especially with a crowd of them in tow.

"Perhaps Brother Yang has misunderstood something." Chen Wentian said.

"Heh, don't worry. You don't have to make excuses around me. We are men. There's nothing wrong with our interests. If others don't like it, they can mind their own business!" Yang Kaitian said and nodded towards the stage, "Your disciple is quite a sight. Good physique, elegant and charming. I'm impressed. I didn't know you were into that as well. Maybe I should send my Tongtong up there to perform a set as well."

"Master... don't..." The woman clinging to him whined in a coy voice.

"Hahaha! Tongtong is too shy, I need to teach her better." He pinched her cheek. He then thought about something and snapped his fingers, "You know what? Some members of the Eastern Sword Alliance are having a private party later tonight, immortals only. This is the address; you can stop by if you're interested. I promise it will be worth your time!"

He handed over and slip of paper.

Chen Wentian took it wordlessly.

"I promise, it will be a lot of fun." Yang Kaitian winked at him, laughed, and then strode away.

Chen Wentian stood there, slightly dumbfounded. He was expecting another confrontation with a member of the Four Greats, not a friendly chat. He didn't understand what that immortal meant by those words. He didn't know if he should accept the courtesy or ignore it.

The Four Greats of the Eastern Sword Alliance, were they enemies or harmless? What did they think of him? He already had to contend with the Tower of Swords. He didn't need more sects against him, more people plotting against him.

He thought about it as he watched Bei Yingluo finish her performance. She left the stage to the loudest applause and bounced towards him with a beaming smile.

"Master, how did I do?"

He chuckled. Why did he need to go to a party with dirty old men when he had so many beautiful disciples?

"You did great! I'll give you a special reward tonight!"

"Master, shhh! Don't say that so loudly!"

## Chapter 512: The Four Greats

A black shadow swept through Everblade City; avoiding moonlight, avoiding the bright lanterns, avoiding the random immortals that roamed the streets and the skies. The unseen being followed the darkness of alleyways, the shadows beneath tall walls, and arrived at a manor.

The manor was large, covering a wide area in the crowded city. The walls were tall and guarded by sword cultivators wearing outfits with four distinct designs. A casual passerby could sense the power and magnitude that exuded from the place. They all gave the manor a wide berth, knowing that it belonged to the Four Greats of the Eastern Sword Alliance.

A pair of black eyes blinked into existence within the shadow of the eaves of a house across the street. A furry snout sniffed the air. The nostrils wrinkled in distaste.

Chen Wentian, in the form of his trusty shadow fox, observed his destination for some time. He didn't accept Immortal Green Destiny Yang Kaitian's invitation but was still curious enough to make the trip using Chen Mo. He didn't understand the Four Greats enough to make a judgment. He had to find out more.

A horse carriage passed through the street below. Its shadow connected with the house. In a swift moment, Chen Wentian left his hiding place for another below the clattering wooden carriage. A few hops later and he was within the walls of the manor. None of the protective arrays had been triggered by his presence because his presence couldn't be detected by normal means.

Once inside, it was much easier as there were plenty of stray shadows from shaded walkways and pavilions, tall trees and bountiful flowers in manicured gardens, to the tasteful architecture of the buildings dotted here and there.

Chen Wentian swept through the manor and arrived at the main building. He sensed four immortal auras at the Spirit Lord Realm and headed towards them.

"... regarding the last proposal, Mount Yun Sect agrees."

"Good, then we are all in agreement. We will wait for good news from your newest endeavor."

"Yes, leave it to me."

Four immortals sat facing each other, the short tables in front of each person laden with food and wine. They were the four sect masters of the Four Greats. Immortal Thousand Swords Jin Wu of the Mount Huang Sect sat to the east. Immortal Green Destiny Yang Kaitian of the Mount Xiong Sect sat to the south. The two others were also men, one short and stout, one old and frail.

The old immortal spoke next, stroking his long, flimsy grey beard, "Let's move on to our final matter. Immortal Blue Dragon Chen Wentian, what does everyone think of him and how should we deal with him?"

Jin Wu cleared his throat and said, "Chen Wentian is a person of low class. He is ill-mannered and ill-bred. We cannot let someone like him be associated with the Four Greats."

The short, stout immortal spoke after, "My core disciple, Liu Qiye had a run-in with Chen Wentian at the sword festival. His personality is exactly as Brother Jin described, a boring, small-minded person."

"Brother Yang, you also met him? What do you think?" The old immortal asked.

Yang Kaitian smiled, "Outward appearances aren't everything. It doesn't matter how he behaves. What matters is his strength which is undeniable. Or has Brother Jin forgotten already?"

Jin Wu scowled, no doubt recalling how badly he had lost out to Chen Wentian in a pure contest of spiritual strength.

The old immortal nodded slowly, "Chen Wentian, his strength is indeed undeniable. Although his Dao is of flames, his affinity with the sword is quite fearsome. He is the highest ranker on the stele at Dugu's Cavern. He also managed to best all of us at Dugu's hidden tomb. He even thwarted that old dog Peng Yuefeng."

"Exactly." Yang Kaitian added.

There was a long pause before the short immortal spoke, "If we consider matters more broadly, Chen Wentian is probably the one that can contend with the Tower of Swords. With the current trajectory, our four sects will not be relevant in the subcontinent for the next generation at least, not with Wu Qianyu and Peng Xiling running around."

"Mmm." The old immortal muttered, "It's pointless to consider an alliance with Chen Wentian. He has already rejected Brother Yang's invitation. He is the type of person that always thinks too highly of themselves. Plus, it might turn into another situation like the Tower of Swords. No... we must pull out the problem at the roots."

"So... what should we do?" Jin Wu asked impatiently.

The old immortal smiled darkly, "It's quite simple. Brother Hei touched on the problem already. The problem is not Chen Wentian or Peng Yuefeng but the exceptional disciples they managed to find, who both managed to shake the entire subcontinent at the Immortal Sect Competition. Wu Qianyu and Peng Xiling... we must get rid of them."

"Then, our only chance will be within the Forest of Swords." The short immortal surnamed Hei said.

"It will be difficult. One of them would be a challenge. Two would be..." Yang Kaitian said.

"Disciples losing their lives within the Forest of Swords is an accepted fact and has been for hundreds of years. Those who never return can only blame their own incompetence." Jin Wu said.

"We will have to expend a lot of resources. Many of our disciples might die as well." Yang Kaitian argued.



"As long as Wu Qianyu and Peng Xiling disappear within the Forest of Swords, Mount Huang Sect is willing to pay any price." Jin Wu retorted.

The short immortal nodded, "Mount Yun Sect agrees."

"Mount Tai Sect agrees." The old immortal said.

The three turned to Yang Kaitian who eventually sighed in defeat, "Mount Xiong Sect agrees as well."

The old immortal smiled widely, "Good, good. This matter is critical to the rebirth of the Four Greats. There can't be any mistakes. Choose your best disciples for the task!"

The others nodded or murmured in agreement.

After this, there were no more important issues to discuss and the four immortals became more relaxed. Wine flowed freely as the night progressed. They chatted and laughed, sharing gossip that would make the most stubborn old maid blush.

The four immortals and their sects had an unnaturally close relationship. Often, the topic of conversation would reach their disciples and the most recent marriage between members of different sects. It was such a common occurrence that all four sects had a tangled web of relationships that only served to deepen the alliance further.

"Brothers, it is getting late." Yang Kaitian said after he downed a cup of wine, "I have prepared the usual treat for my good brothers."

"Oh?" The short immortal looked up with great interest.

Yang Kaitian laughed, "Brother Hei is eager as always. Don't worry, she is quite a beauty. You'll like her a lot. Hehe. Oh, Brother Yue, is your sword still keen enough for another battle with us?"

The old immortal scoffed and stood up with the energy of a young man, "I'll show you how keen my sword is. Lead the way!"

"Let's go!" Yang Kaitian said and the four immortals left the room.

### Chapter 513: Deviant Tastes

Chen Wentian followed slowly behind the four immortals, hiding in crevasses and within the walls. The things he had just overheard, he expected no less from the so-called Four Greats of the Eastern Sword Alliance. Humans were jealous creatures. They couldn't help themselves.

The Forest of Swords gave them an opportunity they could not pass up. The forest was well known as a dangerous place where those that entered could easily lose their lives. The area was protected by a mysterious spiritual barrier that prevented any immortals from entering. All disciples would have to fend for themselves. It was the perfect location for ambushes and schemes, for accidents to happen.

The four immortals and Chen Wentian's shadow arrived before a set of sliding doors. Yang Kaitian held up a hand and everyone quieted down.

"Wait here, I sense that my cute little disciple is somewhat nervous." Yang Kaitian said.

The other three shared knowing smirks and smiles.

Yang Kaitian opened the door slightly and slipped inside, letting the others only a brief glimpse of a slender figure clad in a thin, flowing white gown.

"Master." A small voice drifted over.

"Tongtong, how are you feeling?" Yang Kaitian asked kindly from within.

"I'm... I'm fine."

Yang Kaitian leaned down and took her hand, rubbing it gently, "Remember what we talked about, what I promised you. All you need to do is be willing tonight. You and your brothers will all be promoted to inner court disciples. Isn't that what you wanted?"

"Yes."

"Good. Then there is nothing to worry about. Relax, my brothers and I will not mistreat you tonight."

"Yes, master. Thank you, master."

The sliding doors opened wide and Yang Kaitian's smiling face greeted the others. He beckoned inside and the four immortals gathered before a woman kneeling on the cushioned floor. Her hair was undone, black locks cascading behind her back. She wore a thin, almost transparent robe that barely hid the details of her body. Her shoulders were slender. Her hips were slim. Twin rabbits poked out of the thin fabric on her chest and hints of pink were visible.

The woman said in a soft voice, "Disciple Zheng Tong of the Mount Xiong Sect, greets immortal uncles."

She bowed to her master and then to the short immortal, "Immortal Rumbling Blade Hei Shanzhi."

The short immortal's smile widened, "Good girl."

Zheng Tong moved on and bowed to the other two. "Immortal Thousand Sword Jin Wu. Immortal Unbreakable Will Tai Wuyi."

The old immortal walked up and tipped her chin up, "Rise, my child."

Zheng Tong shivered slightly but obeyed. She stood and waited silently as four pairs of hungry eyes roamed her body. She closed her eyes, waiting for the inevitable.

Her master made the first move. He slipped behind her and undid her robe, letting the fabric pool at her feet. A warm breeze kissed her exposed skin as four sets of immortal auras shook in response, filled with desire, filling the room with an ambiguous atmosphere.

She sucked in a breath when a rough hand slid up her waist and cupped her breast from behind.

"How is she?" Yang Kaitian said in a low growl. "Brother Tai?"

The old immortal finally couldn't resist. He closed the distance and laid a hand on her other breast, fondling her softness, pinching her hard nipple.

"She's exactly my type!" Tai Wuyi croaked out.

This set off something in the others who quickly gathered around the naked beauty. Their hands roamed all over her. Hei Shanzhi went straight for the hidden warmth between her thighs while Jin Wu savored her pert buttocks, kneading them over and over. freeweb .com

Chen Wentian watched the absurd scene from the ceiling, not quite believing what he was witnessing. He knew that immortals had weird habits, a product of living long years in any way they pleased. He knew that certain types of men enjoyed sharing their women with others. They enjoyed seeing their women being touched and tormented by others.

The floor of this special room was not made of stone or wood. It consisted of square cushions that were like hard pillows. It was perfect for the scene within, it was purpose-built for it.

Moans soon filled the air, both male and female mixing together.

Zheng Tong was now on her knees, her head buried into the old immortal's crotch, her mouth hungrily sucking on his modest member. The old man was making energetic sounds akin to someone many decades younger, encouraging her, begging her.

Zheng Tong moaned into the cock in her mouth. While she tormented the old immortal, she was being tormented in turn by the short, stout immortal. Hei Shanzhi's hand never left her and his stubby fingers were now plunging in and out of her pussy.

"That's right, cry louder!" Hei Shanzhi hissed, "Do you like that?"

Zheng Tong pulled back her head, gasping for air, "Lord Hei, ahh! Your fingers are amazing!"

While Hei Shanzhi chortled loudly and continued his efforts, a fleshy appendage slapped her cheek. Jin Wu had undone his pants. His dick was erect and needed attention. The female disciple dutifully clamped her lips around him, sucking and licking vigorously.

"Suck it harder!"

"Yes, Lord Jin!"

"Good girl."

This group foreplay went on for a while. Zheng Tong managed a turn on all four immortals' cocks and they all found her pussy or ass at least once. Eventually, she was forced onto her back, her legs were spread, and Yang Kaitian took his disciple in front of his good brothers.

"Ahh, master!" Zheng Tong cried out.

The other three cheered him on. They fondled her breasts. They made her suck them off while Yang Kaitian plowed her pussy with rapid, shallow thrusts.

The so-called Immortal Green Destiny didn't last too long. He came with a grimace and a shout, spraying his stuff all over her flat stomach. His absence was quickly replaced as Hei Shanzhi's thickness invaded her tightness.

"Ahhh!" Zheng Tong howled, her voice filling the small room which now smelled of sweat and sex.

"Do you like that? Am I better than your master?" Hei Shanzhi asked, slamming his cock viciously into her used pussy.

Zheng Tong shook her head, unwilling to answer, not knowing how to answer.

"Hahaha! Brother Yang, this slut definitely likes my dick better than yours." Hei Shanzhi said.

"Hahaha!" Yang Kaitian responded good-naturedly, "How much do you want to bet?"

The four brothers shared a laugh.

It seemed that they had done things like this many times before. They were all already used to each other. Hei Shanzhi was the mouthy one. Jin Wu was the silent and intense type. Old man Tai Wuyi was happy with anything and Yang Keitian really enjoyed watching the others.

The Four Greats of the Eastern Sword Alliance continued their sordid affair into the morning hours. Five naked bodies intertwined in all kinds of combinations. Sometimes it was one dick in her pussy and another in her mouth. Sometimes it was one in the front and one in the back. There were also long stretches where she had to pleasure all four at the same time. Zheng Tong was given no respite as she was tormented over and over, fulfilling her duty as the disciple of an immortal with deviant tastes.

#### Chapter 514: Unusual Arrivals

Chen Wentian continued to watch the ever-evolving scene of utter debauchery below. This was the first time he had ever witnessed something like this in person. It was disgusting but also fascinating.

He would never allow something like that to happen to his own disciples. His disciples were his. They were his women. He would never let another man touch them.

Yang Kaitian was different. Zheng Tong meant nothing to him. She was his disciple but she was not his woman. She was merely a plaything, a pet, an object of sexual gratification. To him, there was nothing wrong with sharing a cheap whore with his sword brothers.

Chen Wentian shook his head.

Despite it all, as a man, he still understood the appeal of this kind of thing.

Orgies were quite common once one left the realm of modesty. One man and many women, one woman and many men, or even many men and many women, everything was possible. The human race enjoyed sex and immortals were no different. Chen Wentian was no different as he often dual cultivated with the five ice sisters at the same time.

It was unfortunate that he was the type of person that strongly disliked other men. Because of his past, he saw them all as competition, as threats to his survival. As such, he would never get an opportunity such as the one below so the only thing he could do was continue to watch.

Chen Wentian was still busy watching when he sensed something unusual.

In an instant, several shadow anchors he had laid around the manor lost their spiritual energy and disappeared.

He jerked to attention, looking towards the eastern gate, trying to sense anything he could from the remaining shadow anchors there.

Shadow anchors were simply deposits of his spiritual will and shadow energy. A more powerful source of spiritual energy could wipe them away. Spiritual energy with a strong affinity to a shadow fox would also cause interference.

More shadow anchors steadily blinked out of existence and now he was thoroughly alarmed. The four immortals were still oblivious. None of the protective arrays around the manor had been activated. Only he knew something was wrong.

He couldn't sense anything. There was nothing in the sky above. There was nothing within the ground below. Was there an invisible immortal? How could they hide their entire presence?

Chen Wentian felt a sense of dread he had never felt before in this shadow fox form. Something was seriously wrong. A thing that could interfere with his shadow energy had to be emitting even more powerful shadow energy.

There were many strange creatures in this endless world of cultivation. Creatures of shadow were not uncommon and even he could list off more than a handful. But regardless of what it was, there was no doubt that it far surpassed his ability. Perhaps it was already at the Spirit King Realm. And if it really was at the Spirit King Realm, Chen Mo stood no chance.

Chen Wentian made the decision resolutely. In an instant, he withdrew Chen Mo's soul back into the soul realm, causing the shadow body at the manor to dissipate into a puff of black smoke.

He had no desire to get caught by whatever it was. Even if Chen Mo couldn't truly die, he didn't want the shadow fox's existence discovered by such a powerful being. He was a stingy person and always held his secrets close to his heart.

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After Chen Mo disappeared, a black mass shifting through the shadows of the manor paused. It retreated some distance into a particularly dark corner to reassess the situation.

"Hmmm... strange." A deep, ancient voice muttered, "Was I discovered?"

"Senior Brother, what's wrong?" A sweet, flowing voice came from within the shapeless darkness.

"There was another... another shadow."

"Another shadow? How can there be another shade here?"

The ancient being grunted, "Not an ancient shade, not even an ordinary shade. It was something else that utilized the Dao of darkness and shadow."



"Where is it now?"

"It ran away."

The other voice was doubtful, "To be able to escape Senior Brother Seventh Black's shadow network, it must be very powerful."

"Perhaps..." The dark voice drifted off as if in deep thought.

"Should we keep going or think of something else? I don't want to put master's plans at risk again."

There was a long moment of silence before the black mass left its hiding place and continued towards the manor a short distance away.

"No need. We proceed. I can deal with that curious little shadow if it ever decides to come back again."

The shade entered the manor and came to rest at the same hiding spot in the ceiling as Chen Wentian. The two beings silently observed the human orgy below for a while before leaving and heading deeper toward the basement.

After going down several flights of stairs and past the servant quarters, the blackness slipped under a door and arrived in a bare chamber that held only a brick-lined well. Once judging that it was safe, a pair of blood-red eyes blinked into existence, followed by a gaping maw lined with rows of white fangs.

This being was known to only a few as an ancient shade, a demon born of shadow. It only lived in the darkest places in the world such as underground caves. It was a supreme being of darkness, far surpassing ordinary shades that often haunted the homes of humans, scaring children from the shadows.

An ancient shadow lived for tens of thousands of years. Wherever it went, all shadow and darkness obeyed its will. It was only natural that such a demon would wipe out shadow anchors left by a shadow fox one whole realm below it.

The demon's mouth remained open and from within, a blue glow appeared. There was a gushing sound as a column of water poured out in an arc, straight into the well with a splash. A few moments later, a light blue creature in the shape of a human woman materialized. It turned several times to examine the surroundings and then gave a playful bow to the ancient shade.

If Chen Wentian was here, he would have recognized the being immediately.

It was none other than the Qin Shui'er, the shuimu, the water demon.

"Senior Brother Seventh Black, thank you for the comfortable journey." Qin Shui'er said.

The ancient shade named Seventh Black snorted, "Noisy. How many days do you need to complete your preparations here?"

Qin Shui'er twirled around again, "These four perverts? I will only need two days to complete my preparations. Their shared interest makes things a lot easier for me and I can take them any time I want."

"Will they be enough for you to finally break through?"

Qin Shui'er lost some of her perkiness, "I'm not sure. Sword cultivators are a lecherous bunch. Their weakness which makes them easy prey also makes them less appetizing. Their yang essence is weaker and less concentrated than flame cultivators."

"Understandable but this is the safest option we have for now. After you caused so much trouble at the Eastern Sanmu Metropolis, we won't be able to go back until you break through."

Qin Shui'er pouted but this had no effect on the emotionless mass of darkness. "You're no fun. Fine, fine. After I'm done with this bunch, there are several more sword cultivators that are good targets. I even saw an interesting flame cultivator."

The ancient shade stirred, its eyes and mouth disappearing into its body, "Good, get to work."

"Yes, senior brother." Qin Shui'er said as the other demon left the chamber.

## Chapter 515: Getting to the Point

"Come in."

A door slid open before Peng Lingxi could announce her presence. She didn't know why her master wanted to see her but he sounded more anxious than usual.

She walked in and quickly bowed as was her habit.

Immortal Desolate Sword Peng Yuefeng looked over at his disciple before looking back over the balcony at a slumbering Everblade City. The sect master of the Tower of Swords gripped the wooden railing, his fingers digging into the surface which could not resist his immortal strength. It was the night before the start of the convocation. All sects and participants were eagerly awaiting the sunrise, awaiting an opportunity to enter the Forest of Swords to improve their sword Dao by leaps and bounds.

Peng Lingxi heard him mutter something softly, not at her but at the sky. She bit her lips for a moment but decided to say something.

"Master, how was your meeting with Immortal Blue Dragon Chen Wentian?" She said and then held her breath, trying to sense his reaction and guess how many extra training sessions she would receive as punishment for speaking out of turn.

The immortal didn't turn around but said angrily, "He was stubborn as a pig, like always. He thinks he owns this subcontinent just by stumbling into a few disciples, ridiculous!"

He huffed and slapped the railing in frustration, "And he even had the audacity to try and call off our bet! He said it didn't matter to him. Nonsense! Did he really think I would accept that?"

Peng Lingxi resisted the urge to groan and roll her eyes. Her master was even worse, stubborn as a cow. He never took no for an answer and he hated losing face. In her eyes, this bet was completely unnecessary and only served to drive the two sects apart. She desperately wanted to see Chen Wentian again and talk to him. How could she that if the two sects really became enemies?

"Master, if this goes on, it will only build more resentment. Is there a need for this? You were never like this with Glacier Palace and Divine Blazing Mountain when they were still our considered rivals. Why can't we accept Immortal Chen's offer? It seems reasonable."

"It's not!" Peng Yuefeng snapped.

Peng Lingxi jumped in fright and quickly fell to her knees, apologizing for her mistake.

Peng Yuefeng huffed again and turned around, "Get up."

He strode past her and paced around the room for a while before speaking again, "Xiling, you are my best disciple. I have always given you preferential treatment due to your talent. Yet because of your age, I have not told you some of the things that I have told your senior brothers. I usually wait until a disciple becomes a senior disciple before I entrust them certain secrets of the sect."

He stopped before her and studied his most prized disciple, the one that had the most potential he had ever seen in his life.

"This Convocation of Swords is special and I will tell you why..."

Peng Yuefeng explained that the Eastern Sanmu Subcontinent had been blessed by a mysterious expert, a powerful swordmaster whose cultivation realm couldn't be fathomed. That person was surnamed Dugu and he left behind several legacies to aid the cultivators of the subcontinent in the ways of the sword.

Nobody knew why he did this. Some speculated that the Eastern Sanmu Subcontinent was this birthplace. Others felt that there was some other special attribute about the land that drew him here later in life. Whatever the reason, he was long gone now but the things he left behind continued to influence matters for hundreds of years.

"I'll get to the point. Do you remember Dugu's Cavern? It is one of his legacies. You also know of my sword, the Desolate Sword." Peng Yuefeng unclasped the oversized hunk of black metal on his back and swung it around. "It is also a legacy of senior Dugu which I managed to obtain in my youth."

Peng Lingxi knew about Dugu's Cavern. She had gone there several times to test her ability. She never knew why it was called that. She also couldn't have imagined that it was connected to her master's sword which was famous throughout the continent.

"Could it be... that the Forest of Swords is also a legacy of senior Dugu?" She wondered out loud.

"Correct but that's not all. In the far northwest, there is an ancient ruin. Hidden within that murderous place was another legacy of Dugu, one that that Chen Wentian managed to obtain."

Peng Lingxi gasped, "Really?"

"Mmm. It is known as Dugu's 10th Sword, a supremely powerful sword Dao, one which he has even taught to his disciples. Make no mistake, Wu Qianyu is surely cultivating that sword Dao. There is no other way she could have risen so ridiculously quickly." Peng Yuefeng sighed heavily and sat down in a nearby chair, "We can't let Wu Qianyu obtain the true legacy of the Forest of Swords. I can't lose to Chen Wentian again. These legacies of Dugu, the consensus theory is that if one obtained all of them, then something special will happen. Perhaps it will lead them to a much more powerful legacy of Dugu. Perhaps it might even lead someone to senior Dugu himself! Maybe he would be willing to part with some supreme sword truth!"

His eyes glinted with almost crazed intensity.

The sight made Peng Lingxi shiver but she still tried to argue, "But... but they are here because we invited them? I even delivered the invitation letter!"

Her master waved her off impatiently, "No us. The invitation came from the Eastern Sword Alliance. I didn't want Ten Thousand Flower Valley here but I was voted down. Tch... those jealous idiots. They don't want the Tower of Swords to obtain the secret of the forest. They are even willing to go risk inviting that bandit into our midst."

Peng Lingxi perked up, suddenly reminded of both Chen Wentian and that strange Immortal Sword Bandit Lin Huzhong.

"Bandit? Is there some sort of connection between Immortal Chen and that Immortal Sword Bandit Lin Huzhong?" She asked eagerly.

Peng Yuefeng laughed. His face relaxed for the first time as if he had just heard a funny joke.

"Nonsense. I was just calling Chen Wentian a bandit since he stole Dugu's 10th Sword from me. I was this close to obtaining it but he somehow managed to sneak past me. To this day, I don't know how he managed to do it."

"Oh..." Peng Lingxi deflated.

Her master didn't fail to catch her reaction and frowned, "Are you still thinking about that fat bandit? Heavens! I really don't understand what you see in him. Ridiculous... We'll talk about this when we get back to the sect!"

"I'm sorry." She quickly muttered, trying to hide her face.

She wasn't thinking about Lin Huzhong but Chen Wentian instead but she wasn't about to admit that.

"Whatever. Let's get back to the point. You can leave. Clear your mind of stray thoughts and focus on the convocation tomorrow and Forest of Swords."

"Yes, master!" Peng Lingxi bowed and left the room.

Peng Yuefeng watched her retreating figure and then fell into contemplation.

After a while, he looked up and sent off several strands of spiritual messages. He didn't have to wait long for a tall, middle-aged man to enter.

"Master."

"Mmm," Peng Yuefeng nodded as his eyes landed on his most senior disciple, "Shuya."

"Yes, master!"

"You were right. Peng Xiling... no, Peng Lingxi... She still has a soft heart. Her talent is undeniable but she is unsuited for certain tasks. I thought that these years of tough training could change her. But it seems that a woman will always be a woman." Peng Yuefeng sighed heavily, "Shuya, I will still have to rely on you."

"Master, you can entrust me with anything!" Peng Shuya replied.

"The issue of Wu Qianyu, I'll leave it to you. Gather the other disciples once you all are within the Forest of Swords and take her out." Peng Yuefeng said and handed over a glossy piece of steel, "Take this sect master's crest and command the disciples however you see fit. You will be in charge."

"Yes!" Peng Shuya gripped the crest, his hand shaking slightly.

"If you can, don't involve Lingxi in your plans. Let her be her carefree self."

"I understand your intentions completely. I will handle everything."

"Good. Failure is not an option."

"Yes, master!"

## Chapter 516: The Convocation of Swords

A clear, bright sun rose and shone upon the sword cultivators of Everblade City. Today was the day of the Convocation of Swords. Three nights of festivities had passed and it was now time for all the sword cultivators of the subcontinent to show off their abilities to earn the right to enter the Forest of Swords.

The start of convocation was held in a large stone-tiled plaza to the north of the city. It was a wide square arena with terraced seating on three sides. Members of the Eastern Sword Alliance took their

seats to the south along with honored guests. Other sects and participants found themselves to the east or west.

The north side was open and led directly into a thick forest with ancient trees that cast deep shadows. This was the only entrance to the Forest of Swords. Trying to enter senior Dugu's trial ground from any other direction was futile. Many sword cultivators had tried in the past only to get hopelessly lost in the wild forest and dangerous mountains.

This plaza and this entire city were constructed for the Forest of Swords. There was no other purpose.

"Swordsmen and Swordswomen of the subcontinent!" A bright voice echoed across the plaza, signaling the start of the competition.

Everyone's attention turned to the immortal who had taken the raised stage at the center of the southern side. To Chen Wentian, it was a familiar face.

"My name is Immortal Green Destiny Yang Kaitian. On behalf of the Eastern Sword Alliance, I will act as the host of this event, the fifty-third Convocation of Swords! Welcome, everyone!"

A roar of approval erupted from the gathered cultivators. Mortal disciples were eager to prove their strength against their peers. Immortal masters were eager to see their disciples succeed. Everyone wanted something out of the event. All of their desires combined into a storm of spiritual energy that swept through the center of the plaza.

"Hahaha! Welcome, welcome! Friends from near and far. Some of you, I haven't seen your faces for five years, since the last convocation. I'm eager to see how your disciples have progressed!" Yang Kaitian smiled broadly and a hand towards the east, "I see we have a broad contingent of immortal sects from the subcontinent who are not members of the alliance. There are many old names and a few brand-new ones. I shall give a short introduction of all that are participating. First up, Myriad Castle led by Immortal Formless Sage Lan Mei."

A large contingent on the eastern side stood up to be acknowledged. They wore colorful robes with no specific style. Even their spiritual auras varied greatly. True to their name, it was a sect that specialized in many different cultivation arts, of which a large portion utilized all kinds of swords.



After Myriad Castle was the New Horizon Sect. This was a bunch of uptight sword cultivators who all wore the same light blue uniforms and carried the same slender swords on their backs.

Next came the House of the Northern Blade followed by the House of the Southern Sword. They were an interesting pair of sects, bitter rivals that resided on opposite sides of a large river. Their conflict with each other spanned multiple generations. Everywhere the two sects met, blood would always be spilled.

Compared to these two, the next two sects were the complete opposite. They were known as the Red Peak School and the Cloud Peak Sect. They used to be bloody rivals but something interesting happened recently that resolved their issues completely. The sect masters of the two sects suddenly decided to get married, finally putting an end to a hundred years of strife. Their two sects were still separate due to logistical issues but it was common knowledge that a new sect named Red Cloud Manor would soon rise from this union.

After these noteworthy sects was another one named the Virtuous Sword Villa. This was a group of nuns with swords. Thankfully, they were not bald and merely wore simple cloth caps that covered their heads. They all carried a sword in one hand and prayer beads in the other. Along with their utterly boring sand-colored robes, they were certainly a unique sight among the participants.

Chen Wentian snorted with amusement and nudged Zhou Ziyun who was sitting to his left. "Hey look, looks like your senior sisters are here!"

Zhou Ziyun shot him a displeased look and pursed her lips.

Lin Qingcheng, who was on his other side, laughed, "Master is so mean. Sister, ignore him. He can ogle the nuns all he wants but he will never be able to sleep with one."

"Hey!" He protested.

Meanwhile, the introduction of sects continued. Some sects were small and Chen Wentian had not heard of them before. Other sects were quite famous throughout the continent and even performed well during the recent Immortal Sect Competition.

There were a few familiar names including Skycloud Temple, Xiao Immortal Clan, and even the Legendary Fighter League.

Chen Wentian perked up once again at that name. That sect's master, Immortal Phoenix Legend Shi Shi had left a good impression on him. She was earnest and well-meaning. She had an intelligent aura and the type of effortless charm that came from a woman who aged gracefully.

He craned his neck to try and a glimpse of her but there were too many people.

"Master, looking for one of your secret sweethearts?" Zhou Ziyun prodded, guessing his thoughts.

"Secret sweetheart?" Chen Wentian spluttered, "When do I have the time to find secret sweethearts? Ridiculous... see if I don't spank you tonight."

Xu Lanyi burst out laughing, "Secret sweetheart? Hahaha, I think senior sister worries too much. It's impossible for him to have secret sweethearts."

"What's that supposed to mean?" He retorted, "I could have secret sweethearts if I wanted to."

"Uh huh, sure." She replied, not believing him at all.

"Hey!"

The introduction of the various unaffiliated sects eventually finished and Yang Kaitian went on to introduce the members of the Eastern Sword Alliance. There were the Four Greats; the Mount Yun Sect, the Mount Xiong Sect, the Mount Huang Sect, and the Mount Tai Sect. There was the Tower of Swords. There were also several minor sects that held little influence and were simply glad to be a part of the alliance.

"And finally!" Yang Kaitian shouted, his voice strong and clear as ever, "We have some esteemed guests here to observe the best of sword cultivation that the subcontinent has to offer. Here, we have someone who needs no introduction, Immortal Tempest Badger Qiu Chuyi from the Beast God Sanctum. Welcome, senior Qiu!"

A middle-aged man with an average build stood up and cupped his fists, "Many thanks to Brother Yang for his hospitality."

"Next to senior Qiu, we have a powerful swordswoman from the capital, Immortal Ardent Duchess Su Tan, a member of the famous Huang Family."

A tall, heroic woman in golden battle armor stood up briefly, nodded, and then sat back down.

Zhou Ziyun scoffed and muttered under her breath, "Another secret sweetheart."

"Finally, a special surprise to everyone, we have an unexpected guest from the Martial Brilliance Continent. It is my great honor to introduce Immortal Yellow River Yang Maoda. He is a member of the Yang Clan of Great Waves, one of the great powers of the continent!"

The gathered immortals and mortals all exploded with applause and amazement. A guest from the Beast God Sanctum and the Immortal Association was expected but the continent? They had never had a guest from the Martial Brilliance Continent, it was history in the making.

Amidst all the excitement, the short figure of Immortal Yellow River Yang Maoda stood up. His ugly square face turned towards the eastern side of the plaza. His eyes locked with a certain immortal's and his lips curled up in a smirk.

#### Chapter 517: Entrants to the Forest

Chen Wentian froze as the last guest was introduced. He didn't expect someone from the Martial Brilliance Continent, at least not so openly. He certainly expected the Seven Potentates and the Yang Clan of Great Waves in particular to send people to investigate him and his sect.

Across the wide distance of the plaza, between the two sets of seats to the east and west, Chen Wentian stared at Yang Maoda, not backing down from the challenge. Showing up like this, in the Eastern Sanmu Subcontinent, was a blatant provocation.

Yang Gehu had suffered a crushing defeat at the Gift Giving Ceremony. The Yang Clan of Great Waves had suffered humiliation as they had never before. Was it finally time for their counterattack? Was this Immortal Yellow River the opening move?

"This Immortal Yellow River surely has some relation to that Yang Gehu you mentioned." Zhou Ziyun whispered.

"That is certain. Though I don't know why he would show himself instead of continuing to stay in the shadows. Why would the Eastern Sword Alliance invite him of all people?" Chen Wentian said.

"Yang Kaitian is also surnamed Yang. Maybe he is a bastard offspring, a distant relative of the Yang Clan. Speaking of them, has there been any intrusions into the sect's territories?" She asked.

"I haven't detected anything around the sect or main the cities of the province. However, some anonymous immortals have flown across the province unannounced in the past few weeks. Perhaps it was this Yang Maoda. As a Spirit Lord, it's much easier to get around without causing too much noise. He could have been running around the subcontinent for a long time and gathering information on us."

Chen Wentian said this but he wasn't sure. The truth was that cultivation arts that allowed a person to move around undetected were all closely guarded secrets. If the Yang Clan of Great Waves had such an ability, Chen Wentian certainly wouldn't know about it. If one existed, it would be one of the highest secrets within their clan.

He had tried to spy on them in the Martial Brilliance Continent but found the task much too difficult. There were so many powerful immortals that shadow anchors only lasted a short while. And even if he could take over the soul of a junior Yang Clan member, they were simply not important enough to be privy to any useful information.

"Master, how should we respond?" Zhou Ziyun asked. "Should we move ahead with some of our plans in the continent?"

He glanced at her and patted her arm, "No need for now. He is only a dog of the Yang Clan. Nothing to worry about. He made a mistake showing his face and taunting me."

"Alright." .com

The pair their attention back to the convocation. Yang Kaitian finished introducing everyone on the southern side and then introduced the mortal sects and loose cultivators on the western side that made up the rest of the hopefuls.

He didn't spend too much time on them and quickly moved on to the rules of the competition. He explained that the Forest of Swords only produced a limited amount of sword truths every five years. Too many people fighting over a small number of sword truths would create chaos so the number of people allowed to enter the forest was limited to three hundred and thirty-three.

The highest cultivation allowed entry by the protective array around the forest was the third lesser realm of Spiritual Awakening. Nobody knew exactly why the fourth and last lesser realm wasn't allowed but some speculated that senior Dugu wanted a person's final step towards immortality to be wholly their own and not because of external assistance.

On the other end, there was no minimum limit for one's cultivation to enter the forest. Someone at the Body Refinement Realm or even a child could enter. In practice, both were impractical and thus banned by the Eastern Sword Alliance.

Mind Focusing Realm cultivators were allowed but their numbers were strictly limited. Out of the total of three hundred and thirty-three, only thirty-three spots were allocated to those at the Mind Focusing Realm. It was intended that only the best of the best at this lower realm could enter and seek to leap-frog their cultivation with a lucky encounter.

Even though Mind Focusing Realm cultivators were allowed, the forest was still the realm of those at the peak of the Spirit Initiate Realm. They would be the ones to brave mysterious challenges and trials set forth by the forest. They would be ones fighting and competing with each other for the desired prizes. Of all the names recorded onto the sword pillars of Everblade City as having obtained a sword truth, only a scarce number was not at the peak of the Spirit Initiate Realm.

Once inside the forest, the entrants would have two weeks to explore and search for sword truths. Where they entered the forest would also be their exit but it would be shut, not to open until the two weeks were up. They would be on their own, isolated from the outside world. Any conflicts and dangers, they would have to face by themselves.

"Alright! As many of you have already sensed, the entrance of the Forest of Swords is beginning to open up." Yang Kaitian said, still energetic as ever, "It will fully open in three days. Thus, it is our goal to establish the complete roster of three hundred and thirty-three entrants in this time. Firstly, the three hundred slots for those at the Spirit Initiate Realm and the lesser realms, as always, we will determine the spots based on a challenge tournament!"

Yang Kaitian waved his hand and summoned his spiritual energy. He leaped from the southern side to the north of the plaza and dug his hands into the ground. With a shout, he raised a towering stone pillar and planted it into the ground.

After the rumbling stopped and the dust cleared, everyone could see individual names carved into the stone, one name per row. There weren't three hundred names but close to around two hundred and fifty. Curiously, one name stood out in particular which was at the very top. It contained the symbols that spelled out Wu Qianyu, Ten Thousand Flower Valley.

#### Chapter 518: Tournament Format

Wu Qianyu's name was first on the stone pillar. Everyone could see that. Cries of protest and surprise arose. Her name was widely known but she was far from the strongest mortal present. There were more than a handful of sword cultivators that had surpassed the peak of the Spirit Initiate Realm and a few who were even at the third lesser realm. Even if she was famous for the moment, it didn't mean anything to these mortal experts.

The next name beneath Wu Qianyu became visible. It spelled out Peng Xiling, Tower of Swords. Everybody knew him. He was equally as famous as Wu Qianyu, two comparable young cultivators.

As the entire stone pillar of three hundred names and their sects was finally displayed for all to see, Yang Kaitian let out a laugh, dispelling any unhappiness that still remained in the air.

"This pillar represents the preliminary seeding for the challenge tournament. Out of respect for the Immortal Association, those that scored within the top one hundred for the Monster Fighting Competition were given preferential rankings. Of those, we are lucky enough to see forty-five of these talented young cultivators attempt the challenge of the Forest of Swords. We of the Eastern Sword Alliance are honored by your interest and look forward to seeing where you all will end up on the pillar as the challenge tournament progresses."

At his explanation, all signs of disagreement disappeared. Those with keen eyes could see Immortal Ardent Duchess Su Tan, representing the Immortal Association, nodding along with satisfaction. Even the bravest person present did not dare argue with someone like her.

Yang Kaitian flashed another smile and continued his explanation, "For the remaining two-hundred and fifty-five places, they are given to those who have participated in prior convocations. As the convocation has no age limit, many of you have participated in multiple instances. The alliance believes that previous achievements should be recognized. Thus, after the rankers of the Monster Fighting Competition, the names that follow are those who have managed to obtain one or more sword truths. These number a total of one hundred and thirty. Finally, this leaves one hundred and fifteen places which were given based on results of challenge tournaments in previous Convocations."

After he finished, another round of conversations arose from the crowd. Some who were satisfied with the preliminary seeding were busy bragging to their peers. Others who were left out were hotly complaining to anyone who would hear them.

Yang Kaitian let them be for a while before speaking again, "Swordsmen and swordswomen, everyone who has come to participate in the Convocation of Swords, do not be disheartened or too excited by the preliminary seeding. Everything is only preliminary and the final three hundred allowed to enter the forest will differ greatly. Everything will depend on strength as well as strategy as even holding onto your position within the three hundred will be a great challenge for many of you."

Yang Kaitian explained further the rules and intricacies of the challenge tournament. True to its name, it was a tournament of one-on-one battles based on challenges.

Anybody was allowed to challenge anyone as long as the one they challenged was a higher ranked than them. This meant anybody in the preliminary rankings could challenge Wu Qianyu. This meant that anybody not in the preliminary rankings could challenge anyone that was. A challenge duel lasted five minutes. It ended when one side lost their sword, lost their ability to fight, or was expelled from the dueling area. The winner would then swap rankings with the loser.

Theoretically, an unranked expert could immediately challenge Wu Qianyu and win the top spot, expelling her from the top three hundred in the process. This could be good if that person wanted immediate fame but it didn't mean they could keep their position. They could just as easily lose their position to another stronger challenger.

However, there were also rules to prevent everyone from ganging up on the higher ranks or challenging one person over and over, wasting their strength. Every competitor, ranked or unranked, had three challenges in total. If they failed to get their name onto the stone pillar in three tries, then their tournament was over and they would have to wait five years for another attempt at the Forest of Swords. This way, challengers had to consider risk versus reward when putting forth a challenge.

As for those receiving challenges, to prevent being inundated, they could only receive three challenges each day for nine total over the next three days. Those who received a challenge could not receive another challenge within two hours of receiving their previous one. And finally, those that were not on the stone pillar could not receive challenges as such a duel was entirely pointless.

Yang Kaitian continued, "The ranking challenges will begin shortly. We will draw challengers at random. This plaza can transform into nine different dueling platforms so that challenges may take place simultaneously if needed. However, the plaza can also be used as one big fighting arena which is exactly how it will be used for the secondary tournament that will determine the final thirty-three Mind Focusing Realm sword cultivators that will be allowed entry into the Forest of Swords."

The secondary tournament, compared to the challenge tournament, was a much simpler affair. There were many participants at the Mind Focusing Realm and it would take too long to determine a ranking through one-on-one duels. The audience also had little interest in fights between what were equivalent to children in their eyes.

It consisted of eleven sword battles spread out over the course of three days, with four battles on the first two days and three group battles on the third day. Each sword battle would utilize the entire plaza and would be a free-for-all format. All participants of the convocation at the Mind Focusing Realm would be drawn at random for one of the eleven battles. Everyone would get only one opportunity.

The last three standing in each sword battle would be considered the winners and be allowed to enter the Forest of Swords. Three people for eleven battles equaled exactly the thirty-three openings allotted.

"That is all the rules and considerations for the two tournaments." Yang Kaitian said, "You all may take the next hour to strategize and prepare. We will begin promptly whether you are ready or not!"

## Chapter 519: Each Sect's Strategy

"Master," Zhou Ziyun spoke up.



"Hmm?" Chen Wentian replied.

"Did you want to discuss our strategy?" She asked anxiously. "To assure the best result possible."

He leaned back in his chair and took a sip of wine, "Do we need a strategy?"

Zhou Ziyun stared at him like he was insane. She gestured all around them.

"Do we need a strategy? Look at them, everybody is discussing two different tournament formats." She hissed. "There are a lot of intricacies, especially to the challenge tournament!"

Her words weren't false. All the participants and sects were busy conversing amongst themselves, figuring out last-minute adjustments to any plans or strategies they had. Many immortal sect masters had even raised spiritual barriers around their sections.

Chen Wentian laughed, "Relax, I was just messing with you. Tell me, what did you have in mind? We only have a small number of disciples."

The others gathered around him as Zhou Ziyun spoke in a hushed voice, "In my opinion, Sister Wu will immediately face challenges. A majority of the rankings in the challenge tournament don't matter but the top ten ranks do matter. It is a testament to a sword cultivator's strength and a way to gain fame and respect. Many challengers at the lesser realms will want to try for the top ranks, especially seniors at the Lesser Realm of Spiritual Awakening."

Chen Wentian raised a finger, interrupting her, and then pointed at Wu Qianyu, "Qianyu, do you care about your ranking?"

"Master, disciple does not care about her ranking. As long as I make it into the Forest of Swords, I am content."

He nodded, "Smart. Then let's go with this. If someone challenges you and they are at a higher lesser realm, just forfeit and save your strength. No point in fighting too hard before the forest."

"Yes, master." Wu Qianyu bowed.

"Moving on, anything else?" He asked Zhou Ziyun.

"Yes, regarding Sister Li and the others who are already in the rankings, I suspect that they will also receive strong challenges. The reason is due to the way they have done the preliminary rankings. Those that were at the bottom of the top one hundred of the Monster Fighting Competition are ranking highly even though their actual strength is much lower compared to others. A lot of sword cultivators will be looking to unseat them as quickly as possible."

"Hmm..." He tapped his chin as he pondered the issue.

Zhou Ziyun made another sensible point; one he had not considered. He had only considered Wu Qianyu as a real contender at the Convocation of Swords. He had no expectations for the others.

"What about you and Chengcheng?" He asked after finding no answers.

"We're not even sword cultivators but we will try our best." She answered.

"That's fine. That's all I wanted anyway. The Forest of Swords doesn't matter. I just want all of you to try your best. Yingluo, you are included too. Don't back down from a fair fight. Use it to gain real battle experience. Do your best so that you aren't letting yourselves down. That's all I want."

"Yes, master." They all replied.

He smiled, "That said, if any of you manages to enter the Forest of Swords, I will grant that disciple a special reward."

"Ohhh! What kind of reward?" Lin Qingcheng asked.

"Anything you want!"

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Across the plaza, in the southern section, the Tower of Swords was holding a similar strategy session. The wiry form of Peng Yuefeng was surrounded by thirty or forty of his best disciples, those that held the best chance of advancing to the Forest of Swords. His most prized disciple, Peng Xiling, stood to his right while his strongest disciple, Peng Shuya, stood to his left.

"Everyone, listen up!" Peng Yuefeng said sharply, "For the challenge tournament, we must suppress Ten Thousand Flower Valley with all of our strength. Only Wu Qianyu is allowed to enter the forest. The rest of them, none of them can be allowed to enter. Shuya, Yuchang, Zhongmin, Yijie."

"Yes, master!" Four of the core disciples bowed.

"You four will be responsible for coordinating our efforts during the challenge tournament. If any disciple of Chen Wentian pops up in the rankings, I want to see them kicked off at the next opportunity!"

Peng Shuya saluted with his sword, "Master, you can rely on me!"

"Outside of this specific instruction, the only other goal is to get as many members of the Tower of Swords into the final rankings and into the Forest of Swords. Act accordingly."

"Yes, master!" All the disciples replied.

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"Senior Ancestor Yang, what do you think about the Convocation of Swords? Is everything to your liking?" Yang Kaitian said, his face plastered with a stiff smile.

Across from him, Immortal Yellow River Yang Maoda sat without movement or any expressions, silently observing the eastern section.

"Venerable Yang, is the wine to your liking? It is something that this Old Tai has been brewing for a hundred years. I can only produce five jugs of it every decade..." Tai Wuyi trailed off, unsure if he should keep flattering this strange immortal from a faraway land.

The other two members of the Four Greats also attempted to draw Yang Maoda into casual conversation but failed miserably. This person that Yang Kaitian had invited was a complete enigma. They couldn't figure him out or what his purpose was for coming to such a place that would surely seem provincial and insignificant compared to the great Martial Brilliance Continent.

Some time passed before Yang Maoda finally moved. He turned around and slowly eyed the four immortals around him before smiling with his teeth.

"There is only one thing I want which should also align with your goals." He said, his voice raspy like sandpaper against stone.

"Senior Ancestor Yang, please tell us! We will carry it out, even if it takes us through mountains of fire and valleys of ice." Yang Kaitian insisted.

Yang Maoda's smile widened slightly. He reached into his sleeves and pulled out four equally-sized chunks of orange spiritual crystal. In a flash, the crystals landed in the other four immortals' hands, much to their delight.

"A down payment for what I want you to do. If everything goes accordingly, I will give double the amount afterward." Yang Maoda said.

Each member of the Four Greats nodded eagerly. They were respected members of the cultivation world within the Eastern Sanmu Subcontinent but they couldn't help but bow down to a much great power.

"Good, my request is simple. I heard from Yang Kaitian that you want to get rid of Immortal Blue Dragon's most talented disciple. I simply want to go a small step further. Talented or untalented, young or old, I want them all dead."

A chill swept over the four sword masters. They looked at each other uncertainly and then over their shoulders to make sure that the spiritual barrier was still in place around them.

They didn't know why this Yang Maoda had such a hatred of Chen Wentian but his request was truly ruthless. Making one disciple disappear under dubious circumstances within the Forest of Swords was easily done. Killing the others would be difficult to cover up.

Yang Maoda clicked his tongue, "What is there to think about? Isn't it simple? Chen Wentian only has nine disciples participating. If your four sects work together, you can easily get all of them to enter the Forest of Swords. Then, you can take care of all of them inside there."

"But... if all of his disciples die within the forest, he will certainly become enraged and blame the alliance." Jin Wu argued.

Yang Maoda growled as his spiritual aura pulsed with profound strength, "You don't have to worry about Chen Wentian. I will take care of him before the convocation ends."

Jin Wu gulped and avoided the fearsome immortal's eyes. He looked for help from his brothers but found none. They were all equally unnerved by the situation. They were being forced to be used as tools but did they have a choice?

Yang Maoda eventually snorted, "Did Yang Kaitian not tell you anything about my sect? If you help me with this matter, the Yang Clan of Great Waves will owe you a debt of friendship. You all may visit the Martial Brilliance Continent and my young lord's territory."

The four sword brothers shared another moment of silence before Tai Wuyi sighed heavily and nodded his head, "We agree. We will carry out your request."

Yang Maoda showed his teeth again, "Good, don't act so distressed. Don't you know, I just saved all of your own lives?"

"What do you mean by that?" Hei Shanzhi snapped.

Yang Maoda held up a cup of wine and examined it closely, turning the cup slowly, "I wouldn't have told you unless you agreed. There is something wrong with this wine. In fact, there is something wrong with all the beverages being served at this convocation."

"What?!"

"Yes... there is an unmistakable taint that shouldn't belong."

Yang Maoda summoned a ball of dirty-yellow water to envelop his hand and the cup of wine. There was a surge of energy as he crushed the cup along with the clear liquid within into nothingness. There was a hiss followed by a thin strand of invisible spiritual energy that was only detectable to him. It tried to escape but he trapped it and finally destroyed it completely.

"Interesting. I wonder. What is a shuimu doing here?" He muttered softly to himself.

Chapter 520: First Challenge

"Cough! Cough!" Chen Wentian spluttered as the few mouthfuls of wine he had previously downed came back up.

"Master, are you alright?" Zhou Ziyun asked.

She quickly produced a handkerchief and wiped his mouth.

"Thanks, it's nothing. This wine has a strange aftertaste. Perhaps it has gone bad." He muttered.

He frowned at the wet patch on his front. His reaction had been purely on instinct. His physique, which was partly that of a blue dragon, did not agree with this jug of wine provided by the Eastern Sword Alliance.

He shrugged and decided to not think too hard about it. There were many things about blue dragons that he still didn't understand as the blue dragon soul's memory was still spotty at best. He incinerated the offending jug of wine and produced another from his spatial bag. It was a wine made from the nectar of sunny honeysuckle flowers, produced by the farms within Ten Thousand Flower Valley.

Sunny honeysuckle was great at absorbing the spiritual energy of the sun. Its nectar was sweet but produced a wine with a fiery body and a bold taste. It was considered a spiritual wine and great for flame cultivators.

"Hey, Xue'er, Yue'er, do you want some?" Chen Wentian called out.

"Ah!" Su Xue cried out, "Is it finally ready?"

"Mmm." He nodded.

The wine had been their idea, including the planting of that specific species of honeysuckle.

"I want to try it first!" Su Yue squealed.

Amidst noisy chatter and incessant giggles, Chen Wentian and his disciples spent the remaining time tasting wine instead of worrying about the upcoming challenge tournament, much to the disapproval of neighboring sects and their sect masters.

Chen Wentian and Ten Thousand Flower Valley may have achieved fame across the Eastern Sanmu Subcontinent during the previous Immortal Sect Competition, but in the eyes of other immortal sects, he was still an undeserving newcomer. They felt that he had gotten lucky in finding Wu Qianyu and in stumbling into the stewardship of Glacier Palace. His rivals and peers refused to accept that he was anything good because they were blinded by jealousy.

Chen Wentian cared little about what others thought of him but it was a little difficult to ignore when neighboring immortals were constantly probing his spiritual aura and testing his mettle.

"Time is up, let the challenge tournament begin!" Immortal Green Destiny Yang Kaitian's voice boomed across the area, startling many.

His figure streaked across the plaza, drawing everyone's attention. He carried a huge bronze caldron above his head. He arrived before the stone pillar to the north and slammed the caldron down.

Gong!!

A deep metallic melody reverberated through the gathered cultivators.

"The challenge tournament!" Yang Kaitian, "Within this caldron is all the names of the challengers at the Spirit Initiate Realm that wish to enter the Forest of Swords. I will now draw nine names at random and they may proceed to challenge anyone atop the ranking pillar. Let's go, first round!"

He slammed a palm against the side of the bronze caldron which was taller than him. There was a surge of spiritual energy as nine wooden placards flew out in a line and arrived before him.

"First challenger, Zhang Han of the Tai Ping Pavilion, come forth!"

Immediately, there was an energetic shout from the southern section. A sturdy man with a clean-shaven face and wild black hair leaped down onto the stone platform of the plaza. A classic, slender jian was strapped to his back within an engraved and gold-plated scabbard.

"Zhang Han present!" The man declared.

His voice carried across the wide plaza, showing off his significant strength at the peak of the Spirit Initiate Realm.

"You have ten breaths to decide on your challenge." Yang Kaitian said.

"No need, Lord Yang." Zhang Han said with confidence, "I challenge Wu Qianyu of Ten Thousand Flower Valley!"

All eyes shifted towards the east.

Chen Wentian snorted and shook his head. Wu Qianyu's name was simply too famous. Everyone and their cousins wanted to challenge her. Even if they were clearly weaker than her, they were still willing



to try. It was the best way to get noticed as everyone's attention would no doubt be on her duels at every opportunity.

Wu Qianyu stood up to answer the challenge.

"Master?" She asked, waiting for his permission.

He looked up and gazed at her expectant expression. Her pose was relaxed but alert. She was in high spirits. He knew that look. She was looking for a good fight.

He smiled and nodded.

Wu Qianyu bowed her head and then whirled around to face the plaza. With a surge of spiritual energy at her feet, she leaped down.

"Go Sister Wu, kick his ass!" Lin Qingcheng shouted.

"Sister Wu!" The twins added their cheers.

Wu Qianyu landed on the stone platform with a gentle gust of wind. Her white battle robe fluttered slightly before coming to a rest. Her sleek black hair was kept in a neat bun and fastened with a single jeweled hairpin.

All eyes were on her. Some of those in the audience had caught glimpses of her at the ceremony for the Monster Fighting Competition. Others had only heard of her meteoric rise in fame. Everybody wanted to see her and what she was all about.

With a flash of spiritual energy, the Purple Jade Sword appeared in her right hand. She twirled it around once and let it rest against the back of her sleeve. Other than that, she remained still and straight like a sword.

Her aura combined with that of the Purple Jade Sword and carried a profound sword energy that was difficult to grasp by even the strongest sword cultivators. This was the power of Dugu's 10th Sword; this was not some sword art created by a country bumpkin. It was indisputable that she was a true talent. There was no fluke about her performance during the Immortal Sect Competition.

Under the scrutiny of thousands of people, Wu Qianyu stood her ground. She was calm. She was confident. She was ready.

She had trained for the past few months with everything she had. She had subjected herself to unbearable pain with her master's help. She had ventured into the Eastern Wilderness by herself to hone her skills.

She wanted to prove to the world that the Immortal Sect Competition was no fluke. She wanted to show everyone the true strength of Ten Thousand Flower Valley. She wanted to repay Chen Wentian for all the time and effort he had spent on her. She wanted him to know that she was worthy of his love.

"Wu Qianyu present!" She declared, her voice sharp and firm.