

## **Necropolis 441**

### **Chapter 441: Hunting Lords**

"It's you!" The voice gained an edge of surprise and fear.

Lu Yun turned to see a young man appearing out of nowhere and looking at him with shock.

"Oh?" Lu Yun paused. He, too, recognized his opponent. Before they'd set foot on the path through the Blood Sea, the young man had offered to team up with Lu Yun and Qing Han, and Lu Yun had agreed.

However, his band didn't have enough courage to follow Lu Yun in the end. Who would've thought he'd make it to the third round!

"I didn't expect you to still be in the perceived void realm!" the young man said. "Please excuse me." He turned and vanished into the distance.

Caught off guard, Lu Yun snorted and shook his head at the youth's retreating back. "That wasn't cowardice. He knows himself well." He'd progressed further into the perceived void realm, but he still wouldn't be Lu Yun's match.

Shockwaves of battles traveled in from the distance. Many cultivators launched furious clashes upon encountering one another, marking this third round as a different beast altogether.

Although contestants were to eliminate each other in order to survive in the Sovereign World as well, the third round was much crueler. Only thirty-six people would be left standing in the end! More importantly, one would earn rewards from the Sovereign Ranking through eliminating other cultivators. The more cultivators one eliminated, the greater the rewards!

Laying low and preserving strength was no longer an option.

Preventing elimination by doing so would also bar one from obtaining fortunate opportunities, the precise reason why cultivators were participating in the Sovereign Meet. The difference between this gathering and the Dusk tournament three years ago was night and day!

Those who'd exceeded the ten lords during the second round hadn't been preserving their strength, per se. They'd simply been keeping quiet about their gains.

After entering the third round, no one was going to pull their punches anymore. Everyone was embroiled in battles as far as the eye could see, and every living being in sight was an enemy. Even those from the same sect or clan fought each other fiercely. No one was willing to fall behind and have opportunities that should be theirs slip through their fingers.

Soon, Lu Yun joined in the fray as well.

His opponent was an unravelled void realm cultivator. At this level, he'd gained insights into heaven and earth and tapped into nature's power to strengthen himself, allowing him to breathe in tandem with the world. Every move he made brought about great power. He carried no treasures on him, but his iron talons left cracks on the arena beneath his feet and had almost torn Lu Yun in half just seconds ago.

"I am Lü Li of the Mist Heavenly Palace. Well met." The man urbanely greeted Lu Yun with a cupped fist salute after a singular exchange. His long hair was bottle-green, and there was a fine piece of emerald-colored jade embedded between his eyebrows.

Lu Yun sucked in a deep breath at the sight of the torn arena, his face slightly pale. If the attack had landed, he would've been killed right then and there.

"Lü Li of Mist Land..." Lu Yun's gaze darkened. "I'd thought Lü Guhong was the greatest genius of Mist."

"He was. I never would've surpassed him if he hadn't died." Lü Li maintained a mild smile throughout his response. "The fact that this dao brother managed to evade my blow means neither of us will be able to defeat the other anytime soon. Since that's the case, I will take my leave."

He turned and walked away from their clash without hesitation.

"That's true, this elimination battle was designed for the strong. It's smarter to hunt down the weak rather than have the strong wasting their time on each other." Lu Yun chuckled heartily. "But so what? The will of the immortal dao sent the Sword of Dao to Qing Han as a trap, and she almost fell for it. That's enough for me to consider the will of immortal dao as my enemy as well!"

His smile turned vicious. "I'm going to do just the opposite! I'm gonna go after the big fish!"

Swoosh!

He disappeared without a trace.

.....

"One.

"Two.

"Three!" Violet lightning shot out from the Thunder Lord's body, killing all cultivators in his sight. He was simply too powerful, having reached peak unravelled void realm back in the Sovereign World. After returning to Destiny City, he'd incorporated heaven and earth into his body and ascended to the returned void realm.

Although he'd then met his death at the hands of a dao immortal, resurrection from the Life Glyph had returned him with all his strength and cultivation intact. He yet remained at his peak.

The Thunder Lord's true form was a violet thunder beast, born with the gift of manipulating thunder and lightning. Although his species didn't belong to the golden or silver bloodline, they were a premier bloodline as well.

The gold and silver bloodlines had sworn fealty to Levitating Island, while the violet thunder beasts were the top tribe of monster spirits in the ten lands.

Violet lighting crackled around the Thunder Lord, wreathing the monster spirit in a cloud of high voltage electricity. In only a dozen breaths of time, dozens of cultivators from various factions were rendered to ashes.

Since cultivators couldn't use their treasures here, enormously talented monster spirits like the Thunder Lord could almost sweep through them unchallenged.

Representatives of the ten lands in Destiny City were grinning so broadly that their faces threatened to split. Not long into the third round, the Thunder Lord had already killed more than a hundred cultivators.

"As long as he doesn't encounter the other returned void realm cultivators, the Thunder Lord will be able to sweep the competition and become one of the thirty-six sovereigns!"

"The ten lords dared declare themselves as lords due to being confident in their superiority. While some others might have ascended to the returned void realm in the second round, they chose to slink in shadows instead of taking a stand. Their lack of spirit makes them unworthy!"

The ten lords had been killed in Destiny City as a result of jealousy and resentment. Now that they'd come back to life and returned to the Sovereign Ranking, they demonstrated great flair and poise.

The Thunder Lord wasn't the only outlier, as the other nine lords had been going on a killing spree as well, acting as confidently as they had back in the Sovereign World.

Bam!

A sudden rumble descended from the sky.

"What?!" The Thunder Lord called out in shock. It felt as if a great mountain had slammed into him, dropping him from the sky and burying him into the ground, leaving a Thunder Lord-shaped dent in the arena.

He gaped at the figure drifting down in the air, his eyes wide with disbelief. Nearby cultivators were stunned as well. They'd been bracing themselves to be eliminated, but someone had then knocked the domineering Thunder Lord out of the sky!

Fever-pitch emotions boiled over in Destiny City.

"Shame! A curse on you for sneaking up on him!" the monster spirit immortals from the ten lands snarled angrily, but there was nothing they could do.

Bam!

Another explosion rang out. The figure landed and stomped on Thunder Lord, prompting roars of anger and pain as his meridians shattered and his body cracked like porcelain.

"Fight me head on if you dare!" Thunder Lord forced out with his last breath.

"You're more than welcome to do so after we leave this arena. But this is the end of the road for you here." Lu Yun put more strength into his right foot and crushed his quarry to death.

The Thunder Lord's body slowly dispersed, then he re-emerged among the monster spirits from the ten lands. Their elites hurriedly formed a protective circle around him, lest the same thing happened to him again.

"Bastard!!" the Thunder Lord's snarl rang in the area.

## Chapter 441.2: Hunting Lords

“How are you feeling?” The monster spirit immortals of the ten lands were also furious with Lu Yun’s sneak attack, but Thunder Lord’s condition was more important to them now, as he’d died once before.

“I’m fine. My life brand is recorded in the Life Glyph, so I’m still me after resurrecting.” The Thunder Lord breathed in deeply and looked up at the figure in the arena with pulsating hatred.

Jingle!

The sound was followed by a ripple as a pair of hammers wreathed with crackling lightning emerged before the Thunder Lord. It was a weapon exceeding ninth rank with a thunder method embedded within, the perfect match for the Thunder Lord’s attribute specialization.

This was his reward for attending the Sovereign Meet. To regular cultivators, the weapon was a great treasure, but it was unworthy for cultivators at the Thunder Lord’s height.

“Gahhhh!” the Thunder Lord threw his head back and howled, eyes shooting daggers at Lu Yun. “Look into him! I must know who he is and tear him to pieces!”

Lu Yun had trapped the Thunder Lord for seven days in the Sovereign World and prevented him from gaining anything during that period of time. Now, he’d eliminated the lord prematurely—by stomping him to death, no less!

Frustration and rage rampaged; the Thunder Lord wanted nothing more than to skin Lu Yun alive. He’d gained a pair of rank-exceeding weapons with ancient heritage after killing more than a hundred cultivators. But there were close to thirty thousand cultivators in the arena, and thirty-six would be left in the end!

If someone eliminated a thousand, or even ten thousand cultivators, what rewards would they gain? Connate-grade treasures? Or fabled connate-grade methods? What rewards would be given to those listed on the Sovereign Ranking as one of the thirty-six sovereigns?

No matter what they would be, the Thunder Lord could have nothing more to do with them.

“Look! What’s Qing Yu’s Sidekick doing now?” cried out someone in Destiny City.

After killing the Thunder Lord with a single stomp, Lu Yun soared into the air and shot in another direction, where a menacing golden lion was on an unstoppable killing spree. It continuously shot out golden ripples with crosses of its front paws, tearing cultivator after cultivator into pieces.

“Who is it?!” the lion looked up with a sudden snarl. It called itself the Monster Lord, and its growl made use of a soundwave combat art that turned its voice physical, targeting the uninvited guest over its head.

“Your maker!” the responding roar shattered the lion’s soundwaves.

“Gah!” the golden lion cried out in shock. Blood shot out of its eyes, nose, and ears as it whined painfully. The human’s retaliation had injured its nascent spirit, sending it into a daze.

“Isn’t Qing Yu’s Sidekick loyal to Levitating Island? Why would he attack a monster spirit from the island?” Confusion percolated among the immortals in the city.

Scarlet Ape had saved Lu Yun from a Mo origin dao immortal, but Lu Yun had then visited the Mo Clan. All the while, Scarlet Ape’s iron rod remained in the Jadeite Manor. Many could even feel the monster spirit’s crude presence from it. Now, however, the human that Scarlet Ape had protected was targeting the monster spirits of Levitating Island!

Flying into a rage, those from both Levitating Island and the ten lands flocked to the entrance of Jadeite Manor, but Scarlet Ape stalwartly kept them outside.

.....

Lu Yun had concealed his presence and eliminated two powerhouses in the simplest way. He then repeated the process and went after the next most powerful ripples of energy.

The Dragon Lord!

An elite from the dragons of the Unselfish Sea!

Likewise, the dragon failed to avoid Lu Yun’s ambush. Lu Yun eliminated it with a simple and direct attack. That calmed the clamoring crowd down.

“It seems... that he’s only after the powerful ones, no matter what their race!”

“What is he thinking? Is he going against the will of the Sovereign Ranking?!”

“How is he so strong?? The Dragon, Monster, and Thunder Lord were all killed with one swift attack! Did they not sense his approach?”

The golden lion and the dragon struggled to explain themselves. Lu Yun had given off no sign when he moved. They hadn’t even sensed him before he attacked!

Immortals in Destiny City could see him approach on the Sovereign Ranking’s projection, but cultivators Lu Yun had targeted couldn’t sense anything. The movement technique he employed didn’t seem to belong to the current world of immortals; he’d left absolutely no traces for them to follow or sense.

.....

“The lord of the human race? You’re nothing.” A faintly silver figure walked the arena, facing a frail-looking young man.

The young man was the human lord among the ten lords, but he’d been defeated by the silver figure in front of him.

“You’re the disciple of the Destiny city lord, Chu Yingxin!” The human lord was titled the Fallen Lord, and hailed from a great reclusive faction. He saw his birth as noble and himself as far above the geniuses of the world of immortals. However, he’d managed to survive only a little more than a hundred exchanges with Chu Yingxin before being defeated.

All supplemental paths were disallowed here in the arena. Cultivators relied on only their constitution, cultivation methods, combat arts, will, and wisdom. The Fallen Lord had lost; there was no question about that.

“You can die now.” Chu Yingxin reached out to strike the Fallen Lord with his palm, but quickly pulled back and whirled around to scan his surroundings warily. “Who is it?!”

“So you noticed me.” Lu Yun emerged from the darkness.

“You!” Chu Yingxin shot Lu Yun a murderous look and turned regretful. “What a shame that we’re in this arena. I can’t take the Blood Ganoderma from you even if I kill you here!”

“Indeed, what a shame,” Lu Yun sighed. “I won’t actually kill you here even after doing so.”

“Kill? Me?” Chu Yingxin threw his head back in laughter, then vanished in a flash.

Lu Yun turned around and attacked with both fists, punching the void before him.

“Oof... So strong!” Chu Yingxin paled and fell out from the sky, blood streaking down the corner of his mouth.

“You’re a void beast, a monster spirit born with the gift of spatial manipulation. No wonder the city lord took you as a disciple!” Lu Yun had identified his true form after the exchange.

#### **Chapter 442: Void Beast**

Blood drained from Chu Yingxin’s face when Lu Yun identified his true form.

“A void beast! No wonder I was no match for him.” The Fallen Lord found the revelation eye-opening.

Void beasts had an exceptional talent: they could meld into space and become nearly undetectable. Specimens of their race were exceptionally rare. Even the ancient immortal emperor had no idea where they lived—they could only be chanced upon, not actively sought.

In fact, an ancient monster spirit emperor had been a void beast. However, no one had expected the final disciple of the Destiny Lord would be one too!

As a void beast, Chu Yingxin was naturally gifted with a sensitivity to space. That was why he’d noticed Lu Yun in the first place.

“In my sect, we have a robe refined from the skin of a void beast. Wearing it allows one to travel through space undetected. Too bad the robe is a little tattered, so it can’t pass through an ancient tomb’s formations and restrictions...” the Fallen Lord’s voice sounded again.

Countless immortals looked eagerly toward the Destiny city lord’s residence in response. The human lord’s words were absolutely intentional!

“He’s a void beast, huh? No wonder master spoils him so much...” Xi Yingchen murmured, gazing pensively at his junior brother atop the arena.

“Say, could the city lord be after your skin when you finally grow up? Maybe he wants a robe just like ours!” the Fallen Lord jabbed snidely. “Hold on, I remember something else about void beasts from the records of the sect. Their body will form a...”

Bang!

Lu Yun splattered him into a gooey mess against the ground.

“How can someone with such awful morals call himself a lord? I’m really starting to wonder what the point of this ranking is,” snorted the young man.

The returned Fallen Lord heard his words loud and clear. He reddened with embarrassment and his eyes glinted with murderous fury. Having been defeated outright by Chu Yingxin with nearly no recourse, he’d attempted to hurt him through outside means.

However, revealing the void beast’s secret was a two-pronged assault: in addition to attracting unwanted attention to Chu Yingxin, it’d indelibly scarred his heart of dao.

Lu Yun scorned such underhanded tactics. He’d only pointed out Chu Yingxin’s true form out of instinct. In the heat of the moment, surprise had gotten the better of him.

Chu Yingxin was completely ashen, and the will to live withered away in his eyes. The Fallen Lord’s words had dealt a blow too heavy for him to bear. Could the Destiny city lord have adopted him just for his skin? The lord was his only family in the world!

Suddenly, the young beast sighed. He glanced meaningfully at Lu Yun, then slammed his own palm against his forehead.

Self-elimination!

If he didn’t figure everything out now, inner demons would surely form. Who knew what would happen to him then? A void beast fallen to darkness was practically invincible in the current world.

.....

“Master!” Chu Yingxin opened his eyes to find the city lord at his side.

“Yingchen, stay here for a while. Yingxin, come with me.” His master looked like he had a lot on his mind.

Chu Yingxin’s lips trembled, but nothing came out of them. He stumbled along behind his master in a daze.

The city lord and his youngest disciple strode along coolly through the city toward a certain manor.

“A void beast’s skin is excellent material indeed. You cannot protect him, Destiny city lord.” A throaty voice cackled in the air.

Chu Yingxin’s whole body began to shake, but the city lord didn’t respond.

As one of the sovereign experts in the world, he was an origin dao immortal. Despite his injuries, even the likes of the Nephrite emperor gave him plenty of respect. Alas, the events of the Sovereign Ranking

had cleaned out his accumulated renown. He was powerless against the outside predations on his own disciple.

Unless... the Fallen Lord was right after all, and he'd taken in Chu Yingxin for his skin?

.....

The trip to Jadeite Manor seemed to take far longer than usual under public scrutiny.

"He can come in by himself." The slightly hoarse voice of Scarlet Ape came from inside the door.

The monster spirit was evidently expecting their visit. Right now, it was the only one who could protect Chu Yingxin from the rest of the world. Even the nine celestial emperors were exempt from that list. They had too many worries and concerns about politics and attachments to various factions to act according to their own wishes.

Scarlet Ape had no such compunctions. Anyone who dared move against Chu Yingxin would suffer its unbridled wrath against their descendants.

If the gold and silver bloodlines were royalty and nobility, the void beasts were an imperial brood. They stood at the top of the monster spirit pyramid, comparable to Scarlet Ape's own bloodline.

If Chu Yingxin joined Levitating Island, its lord would surely take him in as its most favored disciple. After all, he was destined to grow into a monster emperor.

"Master!" The young void beast shook with a mixture of bottled emotions. He knelt down before the Destiny city lord, then heavily kowtowed thrice.

"I cannot protect you anymore, Yingxin. Go." The city lord looked like he'd aged tremendously in a matter of minutes. He nodded wearily at his disciple.

"You aren't going anywhere!" An ebony hand crashed down from the sky, aiming to grab Chu Yingxin. It belonged to an origin dao immortal—someone who couldn't bear to see Chu Yingxin escape to safety, no doubt.

"You court death!" An angry roar came from inside Jadeite Manor while a terrifying tremor rippled through the humongous staff there.

"Haha... if you were actually here, you baboon, I might be a little scared of you. But just your metal stick...?" The owner of the hand roared with laughter.

Thump!

The iron staff abruptly contracted before flying into a fiery ape's fingers. A wild spin from the ape shattered the black hand. The origin dao immortal it belonged to shrieked in pain and fled out of Destiny City on a scarlet light with reckless abandon.

"What?!" gasped the other immortals.

Scarlet Ape!

It'd really come!



“Whoever covets the void beast... will see their tribe wiped out!” The ancient monster spirit’s voice struck fear into its captive listeners. Its cultivation was clear as day. An origin dao immortal, and a flawless one, to boot!

This was only one of the ape’s incarnations with a third of its full power. Scarlet Ape had three such: one water, one fire, one metal. The one that’d come here was the incarnation of fire. When the three incarnations came together, the ape was as powerful as any celestial emperor.

Scarlet Ape grabbed Chu Yingxin and tossed him into Jadeite Manor, its eyes narrowed on the Destiny city lord.

“Hehehehe... another person who avoided the immortal restriction. Too bad about the damage to your cultivation. You’ll never return to your peak.” Its laughter was painfully grating.

The city lord didn’t reply. He hesitated for a moment outside the manor, then departed.

.....

Up on the Sovereign Arena, Lu Yun was still fighting other contestants. After taking only a few moments to eliminate all ten lords, he turned toward the other returned void cultivators.

However, two people appeared behind him at this time: Qing Han and the little daoist nun.

#### **Chapter 443: Shamanism**

When Qing Han had run into the little girl, someone was chasing after her.

Lu Yun’s hunt of the other geniuses had garnered plenty of attention, and many began pursuing anyone related to him in turn. Qing Han, the little daoist nun, Silverblaze the Wolfking, and Yuan Tong the silverback gorilla... all of them were on the list.

Qing Han was just as strong as Lu Yun, and her intervention had easily put down the little girl’s attacker.

Although the little girl was perceived void realm as well, her showing in the arena wasn’t particularly eye-catching. Since the void realm was a relatively new thing, no one outside of the first wave baptized by the Dao Flower had the methods for it. They had no way of cultivating their way through.

However, cultivators in the arena didn’t need methods to progress through their realms. The power of immortal dao naturally bolstered them past various realm thresholds. In other words, the real purpose of the Sovereign Ranking was to water the world’s void realm sprouts. The realm needed nourishment if it was to take root and grow within the populace.

.....

**Boom!**

A resounding noise sent Yuan Tong’s huge body flying and spitting out a mouthful of blood. Its opponent was a black turtle with a dragon’s head and a long, spiked tail.

“I know you!” Yuan Tong roared. “You’re Admiral Turtle of the old North Sea Palace! You severed your cultivation to participate in the gathering?!”

Admiral Turtle!

After the North Sea faction disbanded and the center of power pivoted to Levitating Island's sacred land, it'd disappeared into the background. Everyone thought it was dead, so it was a real surprise for it to turn up here.

Once upon a time, it'd been a peerless immortal. Now, it fought as a returned void cultivator. Black radiance flashed through the air as the turtle transformed into a stout, hunched over, middle-aged man. He was dressed in a tunic the same color as his shell.

"I didn't expect you would recognize me." A ruthless look came over Admiral Turtle's face. "The North Sea Palace is no more, and the emperor has turned into the dog of another... the name 'Admiral Turtle' is a thing of the past." His skin began petrifying. "My name is Ding Lei, the greatest genius of the stone turtles!"

Fwoosh!

One of his arms transformed into a large turtle's foot, slamming down upon Yuan Tong.

"Raoooooh!" the gorilla roared and raised its own arms to meet it.

Alas, Ding Lei was already mid-returned void. As a mere peak perceived void cultivator, the difference between the two was uncrossable.

Boom!

The silverback's body was sent airborne once more. Its arms fell limply down; every bone in its body shattered into bits.

"It seems the Scarlet Ape's bloodline isn't all that noble, after all." Ding Lei returned to monster spirit form: an enormous turtle thirty meters tall. It moved ponderously toward Yuan Tong, a sinister grin plastered over its face.

However, it suddenly retracted its head back into its shell, just before a beam of silvery moonlight descended from the sky and forcefully blasted against its carapace.

Even when attacking, Silverblaze remained in girlish form. Cangyin had explained things very clearly then: the monster spirit form had many flaws. Only in human form would one truly see the world, its laws, and relationships for what they were. It was best to cultivate as a human.

Three streaks of light danced by her side; a closer look resolved them to be three glittering crescents of silver.

"Are you alright?" she asked of her old friend. They shared a strong friendship, and Yuan Tong had been bullied by its kin all its life. It was only with her help that it was alive today.

"Leave, Wolfking! You can't defeat it!" the gorilla gasped in apprehension, seeing its friend approach. Despite experiencing ancestral reversion and activating its Scarlet Ape bloodline, it had lost with a single blow from Ding Lei. Although Silverblaze was stronger than the gorilla, she certainly wasn't capable of the same.

“Leave me here. Hurry up and go!” Yuan Tong grew anxious, seeing its friend still standing by its side. Why wasn’t Silverblaze going anywhere?

“A girl, eh? I was just feeling bored in this arena. Let’s have some fun, girlie,” Ding Lei cackled. Maw yawning open, it sent out a huge soundwave toward the wolf-girl. This was a stone turtle’s natural ability.

“Away with you!” Silverblaze chided. With a flick of her fingers, she expanded the three crescent moons into immense arcs of light and sent them spinning forward to intercept the sonic attack.

They shattered against the blast of sound in the next moment. The Wolfking grunted, blood trickling out of her orifices.

With another roar, Ding Lei sent a front claw toward Silverblaze.

Schwing!

A sword aura descended unexpectedly, slicing deeply into the turtle’s foot.

“Aiiiiiiie!” Ding Lei shrieked with anguish. Its appendage had been neatly severed by the cut.

Three figures descended from the sky.

“How can this be!” Admiral Turtle gawked at the swords in their hands.

In the Sovereign Arena, contestants were supposedly barred from using weapons and treasures. Even setting up formations and scribing talismans was banned. Flying swords like these were absolutely forbidden, yet each member of the trio before it held a flying sword. Its front foot had just been cut off by the sword qi from one of them!

“Milady!”

“Master!” Silverblaze and Yuan Tong heaved twin sighs of relief.

“Where did you get your flying swords?!” Ding Lei’s eyes rolled around in their sockets in disbelief. “No... the swords you wield aren’t spirit or immortal treasures. What... what are they!” It quickly noticed the peculiarity of the steel they held.

“You’ll know soon enough,” Lu Yun grinned broadly and unleashed an enormous beam of sword light from his hands. Ding Lei was scared right back into its shell just as the sword stroke slammed against it, scraping out a shower of sparks.

.....

“That big reptile Ding Lei has run into a real spot of bad luck,” snickered a North Sea monster inside Destiny City. In their eyes, Ding Lei was a traitor. It’d been the first to run after the fall of the palace.

While Beigong Xuan had become the Scarlet Ape’s subordinate in the new monster spirit sacred land, Admiral Turtle, the one who’d controlled the majority of the North Sea’s resources, was nowhere to be found. As such, Ding Lei was hardly popular among its former peers.

“Oh, yes. That reptile will soon learn about Qing Yu and company’s swords soon enough.” Ding Lei had no idea where Lu Yun’s sword came from, but the immortals in the city possessed full information.

.....

Boom!

Boom!

Boom!

Several loud crashes echoed through the arena. Having leaped upon Ding Lei’s back, Lu Yun hammered a flurry of fists against its cumbersome shell.

Many cultivators hidden nearby clucked their tongues and remained firmly in hiding.

More than a hundred punches later, he knocked Ding Lei’s lights out.

“The shamans’ dao of refining treasures from living bodies runs counter to heavenly provenance... but that’s not a big deal, considering our bodies here are made of Life Glyphs,” Lu Yun chuckled.

An extraordinarily bloody sight then ensued. He pried Ding Lei’s shell off its body with his bare hands!

A shamanic art! A shamanic treasure! Currently, Lu Yun was using a shamanic art instead of something more conventional.

Shamanic dao was a branch of immortal dao, thus it’d remained unrejected by the dao’s will. However, it differed from immortal dao in a number of important ways. Cultivators were generally unable to pick up on its ripples from usage.

As such, he felt very comfortable in landing a sneak attack. The flying swords that Lu Yun and his comrades used were shamanic treasures forged in the same way. The immortal dao’s current will couldn’t affect primeval shamanism yet.

However, the process of refining such treasures was incredibly bloody and cruel. When a cultivator died in the arena, their bodies crumbled to dust and disappeared. Given that, Lu Yun could only knock them unconscious or capture them so he could skin or debone them alive!

Ding Lei was jolted awake by severe pain, whereupon it started wailing. Discordant screams echoed through the arena, chilling everyone to the bone.

“Well done! A traitor like Ding Lei deserves torture like this!” the North Sea monsters howled with laughter.

“Those are shamanic methods. Have they reappeared in the world too?” Some of the more knowledgeable audience members were afraid for different reasons. Records and legends about shamans had always existed. The most famous of their methods were their corpse coffins!

Lu Yun refined Ding Lei’s shell into a giant shield, then extracted its spine and turned it into a club for Yuan Tong. Finally satisfied with his handiwork, he eliminated Ding Lei with a swift kick.

“Thank you, master!” Much of Yuan Tong’s skills lay with its iron staff. The inability to use treasures in this place had robbed it of at least thirty percent of its strength.

“Come, let’s go hunt some lords!” Lu Yun turned toward the remaining cultivators in the ring and leered. “Anyone who’s unravelled void realm should probably off yourselves.” He hovered menacingly in the air. “I can’t guarantee that I won’t feel the itch to create some more shamanic treasures.”

His voice roiled across the entire crowd, striking fear into countless cultivators’ hearts.

Splort!

A monster cultivator self-detonated, returning its mind to its body.

Thwack!

His senior smacked him across the face as soon as he returned.

“You blithering idiot! That guy is only targeting unravelled void and above. Why did a perceived void kid like you come back?”

Stunned, the young cultivator looked like he wanted to cry.

“My Sidekick and I are splitting up. The three of you can keep yourselves safe together, right? If not, you might as well go back too.” Qing Han scanned the little daoist nun up and down, manifest vigilance sparkling deep in her eyes. This little girl called herself Lu Yun’s dao partner all the time. If she knew Lu Yun was right in front of her, what would happen?

“You two go right on ahead! Um... how about this. Why not let me be number one for the Sovereign Ranking?” giggled the girl.

Qing Han rubbed her forehead and looked helplessly at Lu Yun, who could only shrug.

#### **Chapter 444: Sword Divine**

The rules of the arena changed after Lu Yun went on a killing spree, targeting the most powerful of the contestants. Those who’d been solo-hunting the weak began to form teams, and all thirty-six returned void realm cultivators came together.

“We must eliminate Qing Yu and his Sidekick first,” one of them said firmly. “Otherwise, none of us will survive to the end!”

He was a top genius who’d gained the blessings of the Dao Flower and created his own void realm method upon ascension. He’d thought he’d be unrivalled in the arena and that there was no way he wouldn’t be listed in the Sovereign Ranking.

However, a mere sidekick had forced him to band together with the other top contestants. The thirty-six returned void realm cultivators were the strongest in the arena!

“Qing Yu’s Sidekick isn’t necessarily more powerful than we are, but he’s too unpredictable,” complained another cultivator. “We can’t even sense where he is!”

He'd seen Lu Yun cutting a returned void realm cultivator down with a single slash; his opponent hadn't even seen Lu Yun even upon the moment of elimination. If this cultivator hadn't happened to witness the scene, he wouldn't have noticed anything either, since Lu Yun didn't register in his senses at all; not even when Lu Yun made his attack!

Or... perhaps the traces he left couldn't be detected by contemporary cultivators.

"He's made a mess of everything!"

.....

"You don't have to join hands against him," a calm voice traveled forth from the void. "I can kill him myself."

A figure shrouded in shadows slowly descended from the air. He was tall and burly, his arms long enough to reach past his knees. On his back was an immortal sword.

"Who are you? Why can you also bring an immortal sword into the arena?!" The thirty-six returned void realm cultivators were inordinately shocked to see him. Their gazes fell on the sword on the man's back. Unlike Lu Yun's shamanic treasure, this was an immortal sword!

"You may call me Sword Divine." The man's words drifted in the air, sounding as close as a whisper by the ears, but as distant as an echo from the firmament. It was impossible to remember his voice.

"Sword Divine... He's a divine!" Someone immediately picked out the salient bit of information from the newcomer's name.

There were divines among the thirty-six returned void realm cultivators, but even they were confounded by Sword Divine's emergence. There was no heavyweight like him among the divine race!

The shadow divines who'd shown up at the end of the Ingress Path weren't part of the current divine race, either. The senior divine council were also clueless as to who they were. They'd backed down from the center stage of society as a whole, and there was no reason for them to make an enemy out of the entire world—at least, not yet.

.....

"Who are they talking to?" asked an immortal in Destiny City. None of them could see Sword Divine!

"Qing Yu's Sidekick talked to the air like he was facing his worst enemy during the second round. Is there... really someone we cannot see?" That realization sent chills down everyone's spine.

"It seems the Sovereign Meet this time really isn't being controlled by the will of the immortal dao." An origin dao immortal frowned.

"Look, Qing Yu's Sidekick is fighting Wu Tulong!" someone exclaimed.

Wu Tulong!

Three years ago, he'd been among the five youth sovereigns and had been responsible for restoring the returned void realm—the last of the void realm. Now, he'd ascended to that very same realm.

He had no weapon with him, but his unique inner energy enabled him to manifest a pike with which to fight Lu Yun. His gaze was sharp as an eagle's, and there was no trace of emotion on his face.

Likewise, Lu Yun didn't use his bone sword. He chose to fight with immortal dao combat arts rather than shamanic techniques.

"What a pity that we didn't fight three years ago, Wu Tulong," Lu Yun murmured as the two circled each other. "And now it'll be a regret I harbor forever. You're no longer the man I once knew."

Wu Tulong stilled after a violent tremble. Something seemed to be breaking through his cold mask.

"You... are not master's match yet," he suddenly changed the topic.

"Who... who is your master?!" Lu Yun perked up. Wu Tulong hadn't completely lost to the soul seed yet!

"Fight!" howled Wu Tulong in lieu of a response. His pike burst into multiple shadows and covered the area around himself. Every single one of the shadows lunged at Lu Yun with the power to destroy heaven and earth.

"So be it!" Lu Yun growled.

Bam!

His inner energy surged and the image of an enormous qilin emerged behind his back.

"A qilin method!! That Sidekick is using a qilin method!!"

"The qilins were completely destroyed in the war of immortals a hundred thousand years ago and their heritage was lost. How does he know a qilin method?!"

No heritage had been left from the qilins, but image records of their methods could be found in tomes unearthed from ancient tombs. Reading the books allowed people to observe the methods like they were seeing it with their own eyes.

However, with no heritage passed down, contemporary immortals couldn't cultivate any qilin methods. Hence, it was quite a surprise to see the abrupt revival of this extinct method, and one of the great combat arts of the qilin tribe at that!

A large black qilin image flew out of Lu Yun's hand and scattered Wu Tulong's shadow pikes. Then his hand turned into a qilin foot and stomped at Wu Tulong's chest.

.....

"Humans have indeed relinquished their former pride and cultivate monster spirit methods now." On the rooftop of Jadeite Manor, Scarlet Ape stared dumbfoundedly at the young man using a qilin method in the Sovereign Arena, cradling the iron rod in its arms.

"The martial combat arts of the world were all invented by the human race. Natural talents of the monster spirits and divines were considered barbaric tricks beneath them. Although the talents of the dragons, phoenixes, qilins, and tortoises are ranked relatively higher, they are no match for the combat arts of the human race.

“Wait, the qilin method he’s using isn’t what it was in the past. It has incorporated the strength of the original method and the dao of the human race... It’s an immortal dao combat art! ...the human race is truly formidable...”

.....

The qilin foot knocked Wu Tulong and his pike away, but the former youth sovereign riposted with an immortal sword, sending further ripples of shock through the audience. It was an actual immortal sword, rather than a weapon created by inner energy.

“Stop holding back, or I’ll kill you,” Wu Tulong remarked emotionlessly.

Lu Yun’s pupils constricted rapidly. A sense of danger loomed over him when the sword pointed at him. His instincts told him that if he was slain by that immortal sword, he wouldn’t be eliminated, but dead for real!

#### **Chapter 445: True Ability**

Amidst the storm of sword energy sweeping through the air, Wu Tulong seemed an entirely different person from before. Whereas he’d previously retained a shred of humanity, he’d now turned into a puppet and was completely devoid of human emotions.

Inside Destiny City, the downhearted powerhouses from the Immortal Martial School had long since realized Wu Tulong was no longer his former self, but what could they do? The school’s guardian spirit had taken Wu Tulong away; they hadn’t even known where to begin searching for him. They could only watch on helplessly as he showcased combat art upon combat art that wasn’t his inside the arena.

However, other immortals in the city weren’t aware of the truth yet. Lu Yun had slaughtered the ten lords in the arena, cutting down returned void cultivators like a hot knife through butter, yet Wu Tulong was trading blow for blow with him.

“The Five Youth Sovereigns from three years ago are indeed true to their reputation. They’re as formidable as ever...” quite a few people sighed.

.....

“Stop holding back or you’ll really die,” Wu Tulong declared coldly after forcing his opponent back in a burst of strength.

“Stop holding back?” Lu Yun gently shook his head. “I’m afraid you wouldn’t be able to withstand a single move.”

His words were met by Wu Tulong’s cold glare.

“It seems this one persistent obsession is the reason why you haven’t entirely lost yourself yet...” Lu Yun’s eyes suddenly shone bright.

Three years ago, the Five Youth Sovereigns hadn’t competed to ascertain the hierarchy among them, and Wu Tulong had always rejected Lu Yun’s title as number one. They hadn’t found an opportunity to fight until now, either, leading to the birth of an obsession in Wu Tulong’s heart.



“Alright, then get ready for my full strength!” Lu Yun suddenly roared, his voice echoing through the air. An almost imperceptible smile appeared on Wu Tulong’s hard, unfeeling face.

Boom!

A deafening sound boomed from within Lu Yun, followed by an enormous atlas slowly spreading open over his head, enveloping the surroundings with cutting sword intent.

“This is...!!” Everyone in Destiny City stared in shock. Back in the Sovereign World, Lu Yun had once used a strange atlas containing more than a thousand flying swords to eliminate a thousand cultivators in a single attack!

“That atlas... How can he bring treasures into the Sovereign Arena?!” quite a few immortals gasped. “It seems there’s loopholes in the Sovereign Ranking’s rules. Not every possibility has been accounted for!”

“Wait a moment!” someone cried out all of a sudden. “It’s not a treasure, but a combat art—a peerless art of the immortal dao!”

“In the primordial era, there existed a formidable immortal known as the Ten Thousand Sword Immortal who could surround himself with a legion of swords! And his signature ability was an art called ‘Sword Atlas...’

“When the Sword Atlas unfurls, ten thousand swords appear!”

“This Sidekick must’ve obtained the Ten Thousand Sword Immortal’s inheritance in the Sovereign World!”

Somewhere in Destiny City, the already-eliminated brothers Lin Yu and Lin Xuan smiled wryly at each other when they saw the Sword Atlas’ cutting aura.

“I think that’s the combat art we gifted to him...” Lin Xuan murmured. The immortals of the Lin Clan standing beside the two brothers glared hotly at them.

“How despicable! We gave him such a tremendous opportunity and got nothing in return. He hasn’t made good on his promise yet. Come on, let’s go to Jadeite Manor and wait for his return!” Lin Yu immediately dragged his younger brother in his wake and made a beeline for the door.

“You two, come back here at once!” the Lin immortals almost blew their tops. Those two brats had not only voluntarily given away their own opportunity, but were hurrying along to be someone’s retainers?

Back in the clan, even Lin dao immortals couldn’t keep the two brothers in line, due to their unrivaled mastery of formations.

“Leave them be.” The clan’s origin dao immortal interjected with a smile, “If they can truly use this opportunity to comprehend formations without foundation, that would be a great blessing for our clan.”

.....

A swarm of immortal swords vibrated above the Sword Atlas.

In the three days since returning to Destiny City, Lu Yun had gone back to hell to repair the atlas. Commanding a thousand immortal swords was impossible with his strength alone, but it was very much possible with the Sword Atlas.

At this instant, all thousand flying swords overhead became like a single immortal sword and whizzed toward Wu Tulong the moment the Sword Atlas was fully opened.

A giant illusory sword appeared behind the solemn Wu Tulong, identical in shape to the unadorned longsword in the Sword Divine's hand. When the Sword Atlas drew near, the illusory sword sprang into action and viciously threw itself at the incoming attack.

Boom!

The impact violently shook the arena and a mushroom cloud rose into the sky. Some cultivators hidden nearby, hoping to learn from the fighting, were immediately disintegrated and thereby eliminated.

"Ahhh—" A shriek suddenly came from a place far away. Blood poured out of the little nun's eyes, followed by rueful laughter from her lips. "Sure enough, not every combat art can be copied with my skill."

Crash!

Immediately after, her body crumbled, signaling her elimination.

"Master!" In a small forest outside Destiny City, the little nun opened her eyes and pouted at a middle-aged woman.

The older woman stroked the girl's hair with a smile. "That Qing Yu and her Sidekick are quite remarkable. If the art had been the Sword Atlas from the primordial era, it would've been entirely possible for you to copy it.

"But..." The middle-aged female daoist lifted her head and looked at the arena through the forest's sparse foliage. "But the art has been modified, and it now reaches the threshold of the 'dao'. It's impossible for you to copy something like that.

"Let us go. There's nothing left for us to do here. The will of the immortal dao has been seized by another, and there's nothing left of note about this Sovereign Meet." With a wave of the woman's hand, the small forest vanished from view, turning into a green bead that landed in her palm.

With a pout, the little girl followed her master in spite of her obvious reluctance. Soon, the two of them turned into beams of light and disappeared into the distance. As for the little girl's reward, it appeared soon after their departure, but master and disciple were already somewhere far away by then.

.....

When the mushroom cloud subsided, Lu Yun's figure emerged in front of the crowd; his opponent was nowhere in sight. Sure enough, Wu Tulong hadn't been able to withstand a single move!

"I-is that... Sidekick's true power?" Many people stared at the arena in shock and swallowed dryly. Since they didn't know who Lu Yun was, they simply called him 'Sidekick'.

“It’s best not to provoke someone like him. When he matures and ascends from a void realm cultivator into an immortal, it will take a dao immortal at the very least to rein him in!”

.....

Swish!

But at the very instant Lu Yun eliminated Wu Tulong, a sword fell from the sky and slashed straight in his direction.

The Sword Divine had entered the fray.

#### **Chapter 446: Shitstirrer**

The strike had come precisely when Lu Yun’s strength was spent, right before he could recover. But he remained vigilant nonetheless, so the sneak attack from Sword Divine merely grazed past his left shoulder before landing on the Sovereign Arena, almost cleaving the giant edifice in two.

Blood flowed down Lu Yun’s left arm, and inside Jadeite Manor, a sinister wound likewise appeared on the left shoulder of Lu Yun’s real body.

“What’s the matter! Where did that sword light come from?!” shouted the immortals in Destiny City, including origin dao immortals. They hadn’t seen the attacker at all, nor could they tell where the sword light originated from.

“There’s a really formidable powerhouse inside the arena. We can’t even see him!” Cold wracked the bodies of the already-eliminated cultivators as shivers coursed down their spines.

.....

Lu Yun turned his head to the left and observed the painful wound on his shoulder, surprised to find out he couldn’t immediately heal the damage with his current ability. Clearly, his true body had also been wounded.

The Sword Atlas appeared once again in a multicolored cloud of light that curled around him, a dense legion of illusory swords forming an impenetrable shield all around him.

Sword Divine slowly came into view. His figure was shrouded in hazy shadows that hid his true appearance. By comparison, the sword in his hand seemed exceptionally clear: the Sword of Chaos.

“I warned you not to meddle in my affairs.” Somewhat hoarse, Sword Divine’s voice had obviously been muffled on purpose to hide his identity. “But you chose to interfere anyway, so I must get rid of you.”

As his voice fell, he started moving once again.

Like a living thing, the Sword of Chaos streaked across the sky and hacked at Lu Yun. The Dusk lord’s eyes narrowed as he cried out despite himself, “Simplicity is the essence of dao! An attack that contains the greatest of dao itself, who on earth are you?!”

Simplicity was the essence of dao!

The same concept had been showcased by the long-haired black monster standing on the path of cultivation and preventing cultivators from entering the void realm!

However, from what Lu Yun knew, a weapon of dao was also required to perfectly execute such an attack. In the absence of said weapon, Lu Yun himself could at most blend the power of the great dao into his own sword technique in a pale imitation.

Yet Sword Divine had unleashed a perfect version of it!

Although thoroughly aghast, Lu Yun reacted at lightning speed. The moment the sword strike was about to land on him, the Sword Atlas curling around him fashioned a sword formation to block the incoming attack.

One couldn't use supplemental daos in the Sovereign Arena, but Lu Yun's sword formation had evolved into an authentic combat art in its own right.

Boom!

Carrying with it the essence of dao, the Sword of Chaos struck the Sword Atlas and instantly shattered it!

The sword slash lost none of its momentum in the process. It crashed heavily onto Lu Yun's chest and sent him flying far away, an arc of spewed blood trailing behind him.

"This is all you amount to," sneered Sword Divine. His figure suddenly vanished. By the time he reappeared, he was already standing in front of Lu Yun, his sword poised to stab down.

"Master!!" Silver radiance suddenly flashed across the sky as Yuan Tong's giant frame landed in front of Lu Yun, a giant shield shaped like a turtle shell in its hand.

Yuan Tong and the Silvermoon Wolfking had been keeping a close eye on Lu Yun's fight. While they couldn't see Sword Divine, they could feel the terrible sword intent, so Yuan Tong had sprung into action the moment it'd seen the young man sent flying.

It was calling upon the full might of its Scarlet Ape bloodline; the giant shield refined through shamanic arts flickered with rays of blood-red light as it clamped protectively over Lu Yun.

Boom!!!

At the same time, a sword slash landed heavily on the shield. Blood overflowed from Yuan Tong's mouth and its vitality decreased at an alarming rate, but there was a gleam of satisfaction in its eyes.

"In this world, only two have ever treated me well and given me a sense of self-worth. One is the Wolfking, and the other my master..." it murmured even as its vision began to blur.

"To think I'd die like this. I... really am dying," it uttered, conjuring the last of its strength.

"You're not going to die." Lu Yun quickly pressed his hands on the gorilla's chest, forcing its elimination a split second before the Sword of Chaos could land the killing blow. Then, he took the giant shield and hid behind it. Flung into the air again by the terrifying counterforce from the impact, he landed heavily on the ground.

This time around, he too had suffered critical damage. Countless bones in his body were shattered and he was almost completely immobilized.

.....

"I'm still alive!" Yuan Tong lay bonelessly on the ground like a bag filled with rags. Although its wounds were heavy, its life had been saved. And thanks to a pill Scarlet Ape fed it, it quickly recovered from the worst of its injuries.

"Did you see who the attacker was?" Scarlet Ape asked. Beside them, Lu Yun's body was also dyed a bloody crimson. Although Ge Long was tirelessly providing first aid, the young man's wounds couldn't be mended before his return.

"Master called him Sword Divine, but I couldn't see him." Yuan Tong shook its head.

The next moment, Silverblaze also regained consciousness with a wry smile on her lips.

She hadn't been wounded; instead, she'd been eliminated by Qing Han's sword. Her mistress had obviously been worried she'd follow in Yuan Tong's footsteps. The two of them had eliminated quite a few cultivators in the arena, so they'd earned ample rewards.

"To think humans would protect monster spirits... Strange, how truly strange." Scarlet Ape looked at the distant Lu Yun in the arena, its eyes filled with incredulity. This would've been utterly unfathomable back in its own era.

When Yuan Tong had taken the blow for Lu Yun just then, it would've been easy for the young man to use this occurrence to escape completely unharmed.

But he hadn't done so. Instead, he'd struck Yuan Tong and sent him out. It was this very palm strike that'd caused him to miss the most optimal timing to dodge the incoming attack and condemned him to suffer the blow from the Sword of Chaos in full, leading to heavy injuries.

.....

"Sidekick isn't invincible, it seems. At the very least, the invisible powerhouse can kill him!" Countless immortals cheered when they saw Lu Yun get wounded. He hadn't eliminated many people, but each of them had been a matchless genius from one of the top clans. By now, he'd offended all of the factions standing behind the ten lords.

More importantly, he'd skinned quite a few powerhouses and refined their bones into shamanic weapons. While those cultivators hadn't truly died, they'd gone through the very real experience of feeling their skins peeled off and their bones ripped away.

"Just now, I saw him betray the silverback gorilla that tried to help him..."

"Whatever the case may be, the Sovereign Ranking battle will return to normal after he's out."

"What a shitstirrer!"

.....

Meanwhile, Lu Yun lay on the ground. The giant shield had landed not far away from him, and Sword Divine was presently standing beside him. He could feel eerie two beams of murderous intent shooting out of the blurry face and stabbing viciously into him.

“I’m going to die anyway, so before I do, let me see who you really are.” Lu Yun heaved a helpless sigh.

“A soon-to-be ghost doesn’t need to know that.” Sword Divine didn’t fall for it, lifting his sword instead and stabbing right at Lu Yun’s forehead.

## **Chapter 447: Seals**

Two moves!

That was all Sword Divine had needed to knock Lu Yun down. While the cultivators and immortals in Destiny City couldn’t see his existence, the sword light was visible to the naked eye.

“Sure enough, there’s always someone better than you. Sidekick is formidable, but there’s still someone above him!” the Dragon Lord lamented in the Untroubled Sea’s camp.

“I need to increase the speed of my cultivation after going home!” The Dragon Lord was one of the cultivators baptized by the Dao Flower, one who’d created his own void realm methods.

But up until now, the most anyone in the world possessed were void realm methods; no one had a void realm combat art! In other words, the void realm cultivators were still using spirit realm combat arts. As a result, they were still far from capable of exhibiting the genuine strength of a true void realm cultivator.

But this time, upon exiting the Sovereign Arena, many cultivators were delighted to discover void realm methods and combat arts among their rewards. The emergence of void realm combat arts meant the battle strength of void realm cultivators would instantly increase many times over.

Geniuses who could withstand golden immortals in the perceived void realm would now be able to overwhelm those same immortals. More importantly, these void realm combat arts were just a foundation.

After ascending to immortality, a cultivator’s previous combat arts would no longer suit them. One had to start afresh with new immortal arts, arts that could be built upon the very base of these void realm combat arts.

“Once I refine these combat arts, I might not be any weaker than this Sidekick!” The Dragon Lord looked at Lu Yun and gnashed his teeth. Instead of fighting face-to-face, Lu Yun had used shamanic arts to overpower him in one surprise move. For the Dragon Lord, and others like him, this was an impossible pill to swallow.

“That being said, I need to go to Dusk Province after I’m done here. The previous title of the First Youth Sovereign in the world is already a thing of the past.”

.....

“Man!” Inside the arena, Lu Yun couldn’t help but sigh ruefully when Sword Divine refused to reveal his identity. At the same time, he shifted to the side and dodged his opponent’s fatal strike while struggling back to his feet at the same time.

Sword Divine gazed back at him with cold, hawkish eyes.

“Struggles of a dying beast. Your death is imminent,” he sniffed coldly before continuing his assault.

Slash after slash, each move of his sword contained the essence of dao. They seemed extremely crude, cruder even than a mountain woodcutter chopping firewood with his axe, yet each locked on to Lu Yun with an irresistible momentum.

Lu Yun’s expression was grave. His left arm was all he had left, having lost the use of the other one; all the bones inside were broken. Nevertheless, he pointed with his left hand and sent out a full ten sword atlases from his figure, each containing one thousand and eighty immortal swords. The glints of sword light intersecting with each other, they formed numerous sword formations that worked relentlessly to counter the terrifying might of the great dao.

.....

Meanwhile, Qing Han was also caught in the throes of a bitter struggle. Zi Chen, Mo Qitian, and the thirty-six other returned void powerhouses attacked her in a concerted battle that was even more intense than the confrontation between Lu Yun and Sword Divine.

But even though she was facing thirty-eight opponents all by herself, Qing Han wasn’t panicked in the slightest.

“Sidekick is already so powerful, and this Qing Yu... Just where did they come from?!”

“It looks like they really aren’t Qing Han and Lu Yun! They use completely different combat arts!” The watching Qing immortals had taken note of this difference. In fact, there were quite a lot of differences between Qing Yu’s subconscious movements and mannerisms versus the Qing Han they all knew.

As for Lu Yun, despite Sword Divine forcing him to fight at full strength, his famed sword arts of Vast Dragon Seaturner, Peng of Kun, and Starstream Sword were nowhere to be seen. Even the sword intent emanating from him was different. Rather than his former sword ocean, it was a sword intent mingled with the stars—vast, boundless, and as deep and immeasurable as the seas, but even more formidable.

As all of the Sovereign Arena shook, some of the cultivators inside fell to shockwaves born from the chaotic fighting and ended up being eliminated.

Swoosh!

Just when things were about to take a dire turn for all onlookers, an illusory stalk of jade-green bamboo shot up from the center of the arena and shed bamboo leaves that quelled the dreadful shockwaves.

It was a young girl not yet fifteen with bright eyes and charming features. Jet-black locks flowed down over an emerald-green chiffon robe, and her figure glowed misty green. An incorporeal bamboo stalk stood behind her, the same stalk that protected the arena. This wasn’t a genuine treasure, but the result of the young girl’s combat art... a void realm art!

Quite a few cultivators inside the arena sighed softly in relief and looked at her in gratitude, but she paid them no heed. Her attention was solely focused on the figure of the young man fighting an invisible enemy.

Wanfeng had already recognized Lu Yun. He, too, knew she'd recognized him.

Back in Destiny City, she'd realized who he was when she helped her junior sister. Their eyes had even met, briefly. She knew how much trouble a public reunion would be for him, so she'd resisted her impulse and acted like they were strangers.

Even now, she couldn't afford to let the pretense slip for a single second, or it'd be a devastating blow for him. His identity couldn't be exposed, otherwise people would raze Dusk Province to the ground.

So, she only took a deep look at him before glancing away.

Milord's goal should be to eliminate the powerhouses in the arena and leave only the weaklings behind! Master said the Sovereign Meet this time around isn't normal. The will of the immortal dao has been seized by another.

However, she made no move to intervene. She had absolute confidence in him. This invisible powerhouse might be formidable, but he was definitely no match for Lu Yun. As for Qing Han... She was as strong as Lu Yun, perhaps even more domineering in some areas.

Boom!!

Sure enough, in a thunderous explosion, Qing Han had detonated a returned void powerhouse.

"A draconic art!" an immortal exclaimed in fear. The hand seal Qing Han had used a moment before resembled the illusory claws of a divine dragon.

"Not a draconic combat art, but an art that belongs to the Azure Dragon tribe!!" another immortal shouted. "And a high-level king-grade art, to boot!"

Azure Dragons, White Tigers, Vermillion Birds, and Black Tortoises—the four great divine tribes had vanished a long time ago. All traces of them had been lost eighty thousand years ago, when the divines still ruled the immortal world.

Royalty among the divines, the four cardinal tribes were said to have betrayed the divines in later legends. In any case, the might of the cardinal tribes was undisputed. During the Primordial Era, they were heavyweights that could contend against the ruling immortal dynasty.

There were still many records about them in the current immortal world, especially concerning the four great divine kings of the Azure Dragons, Black Tortoises, Vermillion Birds, and White Tigers.

The art Qing Han had just showcased belonged to the Azure Dragon King! A single hand seal had been enough to defeat a returned void realm powerhouse!

"Awooo!!" A resounding dragon cry spread in every direction as the shadow of a giant azure dragon barreled across the sky, Qing Han standing on top of its head.



"I need to quickly dispose of you lot, so I can go help my Sidekick." A cold smile floated onto Qing Han's lips. The next moment, the dragon beneath her feet charged her opponents in a cloud of dark azure lightning.

"Die!" Zi Chen and Mo Qitian suddenly appeared, their two black longswords merging into one and chopping right down at her.

"I've been waiting for you two... Away with you!!" She jerked her head up and spread her palm upward. Three seals floated out of her hand before flying forward. There was a strange aura about these seals and they sent fierce bouts of violent shaking coursing through the arena.

"This is... a combat art from the founders of immortal dao!!" Scarlet Ape cried out from inside Jadeite Manor, profound dread in its fiery eyes.

"How is that possible? The art of the founders, how can he... he, he, he..." Scarlet Ape repeated "he" several times, uncertain of what else to say.

It had lived through that era and knew full well how terrifying the three founders of the immortal dao were. They were extraordinary beings that had transcended the era of the human dao and were the masters of mankind.

As it happened, those three seals were their signature combat arts.

.....

From three, the seals split into thousands upon thousands in the sky, enveloping Zi Chen and Mo Qitian in dense clusters. Against the art of the founders of immortal dao, the two of them could mount no resistance and were annihilated on the spot.

Qing Han then waved her hand, collecting two black immortal swords in her palms.

"It's not that precise sword, but these nevertheless originate from that sword." The three seals turned around and returned to float above her hand. She looked at the remaining thirty-five people and called out, "Will you leave on your own, or do I need to blow you up too?"

A moment ago, all thirty-five had fought together to dispel the Azure Dragon King's art, and had now surrounded her.

"Fight!!"

Each of these returned void powerhouses was a genius meticulously raised by their clan and blessed with tremendous potential and the pride to match. To surrender without fighting? And kill themselves on top of it? It would be the greatest of humiliation for them, so all of them attacked her together.

Expression icy as frost, she waved her hand and dispatched the three seals again.

Only torn scraps were left of the cultivators a quick breath later. There was absolutely nothing they could do against her full power. Even so, it had also been a great challenge for her to face thirty-five returned void powerhouses by herself. Pale as a sheet, blood seeped out from the corner of her mouth, a testament to the heavy injuries she'd suffered.

“Don’t mind me!” Lu Yun transmitted his voice from far away. “You go and eliminate everyone above unravelled void realm!”

Qing Han’s figure shook when she looked in his direction.

At that moment, Lu Yun was surrounded by ten sword atlases. With ten thousand eight hundred flying swords to attack and defend with, he’d entirely stopped Sword Divine’s assault. While Sword Divine had his opponent firmly on the back foot, there was no opening for the divine to deal a damaging blow.

“Alright!” Qing Han agreed after a moment’s hesitation. She knew Lu Yun still had hidden cards left to play. One hundred and eight thousand immortal swords appearing at the same time would surely be enough to go toe-to-toe with Sword Divine.

“How dare you!” Sword Divine flew into a rage when he saw Qing Han about to go on a killing spree. He swatted Lu Yun away and chased after her.

However, another ten sword atlases emerged from Lu Yun and blocked his way.

“Your opponent is me.” Lu Yun glared at Sword Divine and slowly stood up. Twenty sword atlases and twenty-one thousand six hundred immortal swords surrounded the enemy that only the young Dusk lord could see.

Sword Divine froze.

#### **Chapter 448: Fragments of the Ancient Immortal Dao**

Releasing twenty sword atlases broke Lu Yun out of Sword Divine’s restraint and granted him the space he needed to retaliate. He’d been completely at the divine’s mercy and unable to fight back with only ten of them.

All 21,600 immortal swords from the atlases knocked the divine’s sword light back and formed a protective circle around Lu Yun. One of his arms dangling uselessly, the other formed hand seals to manipulate the twenty atlases, launching an unrelenting volley of attacks against the divine.

Eyes glinting with frost, Sword Divine howled with rage. Qing Han had gone on a mission to kill and eliminate the geniuses of the world of immortals. Once all the top geniuses were kicked out of the competition, his plan would fail.

He hadn’t expected Qing Han to use the combat arts of the creators of immortal dao and resonate with the Sovereign Arena!

The arena was a creation of the immortal dao, so it only made sense that the dao creators’ combat arts would draw out the arena’s power. The thirty-five returned void realm cultivators, Zi Chen and Mo Qitian included, couldn’t fight back at all.

Sword Divine was caught completely off guard.

For certain reasons, the divine was able to sway the Sovereign Meet to achieve his goal, but his influence had its limit. He didn’t have full control over everything, and Qing Han’s sudden rampage was completely derailing his plans.

It was he who'd gathered the thirty-six returned void realm cultivators together. Now, only a handful of geniuses whose power hadn't come into fruition were left. Once Qing Han eliminated them as well, Sword Divine's efforts would've been all for nothing.

Lu Yun occupied the divine's attention with his twenty sword atlases as Qing Han wandered through the arena, its power amplifying hers as it was drawn by the great might radiating from the three seals.

The more she fought, the more powerful she became. She'd surpassed the height her cultivation should've allowed her to reach, owing to the might of the immortal dao with her. Even she was surprised by the sheer power of the three seals and how they allowed her to tap into the power of the arena.

The three seals had been hidden in the Scroll of Shepherding Immortals. Emerald Mistfire, Lucent Voidfire, and Daevic Skyfire had once divided the scroll into three paintings and sealed them away. Once the Profile of Harmony, Panorama of Clarity, and Portrait of Emptiness had merged into a singular scroll, the three immortal fires' remaining marks had turned into the three seals.

Qing Han had given the three seals to Lu Yun, but for whatever reason, Lu Yun wasn't able to grasp them. They were now her greatest tools in eliminating the geniuses in the arena.

"They don't need me anymore." Wanfeng smiled faintly at Lu Yun and Qing Han before transforming into a flash of emerald light, the bamboo shadow behind her fading away.

Qing Han had pushed her power to the limit, her eyes glowing faintly with luminescence. With the three seals empowering her, nothing in the arena could escape her attention. Like a ghost, she flashed in and out of existence in the arena. Every time she struck, she eliminated another cultivator.

Her targets were either developing geniuses or powerful cultivators who had exceeded perceived void realm and reached unravelled or returned void realm. No one could survive her attack while she was empowered, despite her severe injuries.

Eventually, the arena fell silent. The most powerful geniuses had all been killed and eliminated. The hundreds of surviving cultivators were mostly initial perceived void realm cultivators. Although they were considered top geniuses in the world of immortals, they were no match for the contestants who'd been eliminated by Qing Han.

Countless immortals in Destiny City were enraged by the proceedings, and seven reclusive origin dao immortals emerged from hiding to encircle Jadeite manor. What Lu Yun and Qing Han had done in the arena had garnered them a lot of enemies, and they'd offended numerous top factions of the world in one fell swoop.

Scarlet Ape's fire incarnation sat atop the roof of the manor, throwing the origin dao immortals a silent glance.

None of them cared about the arena anymore. For them, the Sovereign Meet had already ended. Those great geniuses were even more talented than Wu Tulong and the other youth sovereigns. Their goal was to ascend the Sovereign Ranking and become one of the thirty-six sovereigns. Now that they'd been eliminated, the gathering was no longer worthy of their attention.

.....

"I've dealt with them all!" Qing Han went up to Lu Yun and took a position by his side.

Lu Yun had now released thirty sword atlases, and still he was barely holding his ground against the increasingly powerful Sword Divine.

"Let's go then," Lu Yun said with a relieved sigh.

"Oh, the two of you aren't going anywhere," the divine said in a chilling voice. "Since you've eliminated all of the geniuses, you'll have to take their place."

"Seal them!" A terrifying presence surged from Sword Divine and transformed his body. In his place above the arena floated a giant, dark-cyan sword.

"What is that?!" someone yelled. "Where did that sword come from and how did it get up there?!"

Those surveilling Jadeite Manor looked up at the arena, startled.

"That's... the sword of legends," muttered an old divine, his gaze bright. "Before the divine race's fall from our greatest glory, we forged a sword, imbuing it with the last hope of our race... It's finally descended upon the world."

.....

Lu Yun and Qing Han were frozen, like flies trapped in amber.

"No wonder, no wonder!" Realization dawned on Qing Han. "No wonder the owner of the Sword of Chaos can manipulate the will of the immortal dao. The sword contains one of its shards! To complete itself, the immortal dao needs the shard in the sword!"

The ancient divine court had once destroyed the immortal dao to create the divine dao. In the process of doing so, they'd acquired the broken shards of the immortal dao. One of those shards had been incorporated into the Sword of Chaos that the divines had forged before their destruction, which became a sliver of hope that the race needed to continue their fortunes.

"The will of the immortal dao is now complete because the shard in the sword has merged with it. The Sword of Chaos allows its owner to influence the immortal dao's will!" Lu Yun tightened his jaw.

Fortunately, the shard of immortal dao within the sword wasn't that large, or the sword's owner would have the immortal dao do his bidding at will. And now, the divine had turned himself into the Sword of Chaos itself to entrap Lu Yun and Qing Han!

#### **Chapter 449: A Hundred and Eight Thousand Swords, Endless Cosmic Ocean**

"What's going on? Why did he transform into a sword?" Qing Han grit her teeth. She couldn't move her mouth anymore, so she was transmitting her thoughts to Lu Yun.

"The bodies we're assuming now are created by our Life Glyphs, while his is conjured by energy from the Sword of Chaos."

That was why Sword Divine was invisible to those outside the arena and those he didn't wish to see him. Qing Han was only able to see him after she'd used the three seals to draw upon the power of the Sovereign Arena.

The divine had now connected to the Sword of Chaos itself and transformed the strand of energy into a physical replica of the sword to suppress Lu Yun and Qing Han.

“The troublemakers have been captured. Let the Sovereign Meet continue!” a tremendous voice echoed across the arena. Immortals in Destiny City couldn’t hear it, but the cultivators here were suddenly gripped by an ineffable viciousness.

“Kill!” Almost involuntarily, they tore into one another.

No one outside the arena could tell that anything was wrong. It was only natural that the weak would fight harder upon seeing a ray of hope after the strong were eliminated.

In fact, smiles flashed across the faces of immortals in Destiny City. Although the greatest geniuses of their factions had been eliminated, those left in the arena were some of their best geniuses as well. Given the chance to mature, they’d become formidable cultivators. Weaker than those who had been eliminated, but not by a great margin.

“What do we do now?” Qing Han transmitted. “Once they determine their ranking, we’ll become part of the thirty-six sovereigns as well. Perhaps then we’ll be under his control!”

Previously, Sword Divine had influenced the will of the immortal dao to trick Qing Han into becoming his thrall with the Sword of Dao, but she’d seen through his attempt.

“I... Hm?” Lu Yun suddenly felt rejuvenated as a great power streamed from his real body into the Life Glyph replica. It was foreign, but also somewhat familiar. It granted him some mobility, but he refrained from making a move just yet.

“Prepare yourself,” he transmitted quietly. “Detonate yourself and leave the arena as soon as I break out of the sword’s hold!”

Qing Han perked up, but didn’t send a response.

Bam!!

Imposing sword energy burst out of Lu Yun and slammed into the sword above his head, knocking it awry. The sword rumbled and trembled violently for a moment, then its restraint on them cracked.

“Kill!!!” Lu Yun snarled. A hundred sword atlases shot out of his body and a hundred and eight thousand immortal swords shot toward the Sword of Chaos in unison.

A powerful explosion ripped through the air, the great impact sweeping over the entire arena and disintegrating cultivators who’d been fighting among themselves. The great sword that had towered into the heavens was knocked away.

“Go!” Lu Yun growled with blood streaking down his lips.

Without hesitation, Qing Han detonated her nascent spirit and left the arena. Lu Yun knew what he was doing. She would only be a burden if she stayed.

Sword Divine had transformed back into human form, his dark gaze fixed on Lu Yun. Behind him floated the shadow of a giant sword. He would kill Lu Yun, he decided. Otherwise he'd never be able to clear the hate looming over his heart.

Gone, everyone was gone!

All the other cultivators had been eliminated and Qing Han had destroyed herself, leaving only Lu Yun in the arena. However, there was a strange power on Lu Yun that concealed him from even the will of the immortal dao.

In other words, the third round of the Sovereign Meet continued, but the arena had been effectively emptied. This was a battle that was strictly between Lu Yun and Sword Divine.

.....

"Ahhhh!" Lu Yun tipped his head up with a long howl. His tied hair burst free and his long hair danced about him. A hundred and eight thousand flying swords arranged themselves into constellations of twinkling stars around him.

"Sword Divine!" he shouted. "Will you take my greatest attack?!"

The divine didn't say anything. The mist over his face had dissipated, but the great sword shadow shrouded over his entire body and prevented Lu Yun from getting a clear look at his opponent.

Bam!

The Sword of Chaos descended from the sky and slashed at Lu Yun, fueled with enough might to destroy heaven and earth. The arena beneath Lu Yun's feet began cracking under the pressure.

"Well met!!" shouted Lu Yun. The hundred sword atlases became one and the swords sparkled like stars, transforming the deteriorating arena into a cosmic ocean.

Bam!

The Sword of Chaos slammed brutally into the cosmic ocean, shattering the arena immediately. In its place emerged a giant plate formed of light.

It was a tremendously magnificent treasure. As soon as it appeared, it seemed to resonate with Destiny City. The city itself radiated a jade-like glow, but the plate was covered in ugly cracks, as if it'd been hurriedly pieced together after having been broken into pieces.

"A treasure of the immortal dao..." Scarlet Ape muttered at the sight of the plate of light.

.....

Lu Yun was covered in blood, but his cosmic sea remained.

"This isn't a sword formation, but a combat art!" Sword Divine tightly grasped the Sword of Chaos with both hands, his figure covered by a layer of sword aura. He threw Lu Yun a look of disbelief.

"Although that strand of sword energy contained only a ten thousandth of Sword of Chaos' power, it's not something a cultivator should've been able to withstand!" He was so stunned that his voice cracked.

Lu Yun had no treasures on him to counter the will of the immortal dao; even shamanic items would crack like eggshells under the might of the Sword of Chaos.

Yet he'd managed to block the attack with only his combat art!

Lu Yun laughed heartily, hovering in the air as a figure of blood. With a point of his finger, the cosmic sword energy surged and lunged at Sword Divine. It felt like a vast cosmic ocean was bearing down on him with cutting sword energy. The sword in his hand trembled and cracked.

"Die!!" Teeth gritted, the divine took another swing. It wasn't an attack of the essence of dao, but an even more powerful combat art.

Bam!

Only silence reigned between heaven and earth.