

Swordsman 1001

Chapter 1001: The Outcome

"So, Mr Jin Yu. I've shown you the two Chaos Gems I have prepared for you. Will you help me?" Jian Wushuang asked.

Jin Yu looked at Jian Wushuang; now renewed with a faint glimmer of respect for the latter's ability to afford two Chaos Gems.

The mere ability to be able to afford two Chaos Gems alone proved that Jian Wushuang was hardly ordinary.

"I will help you, out of respect for the Dragon Wing Governor; and your promise of the two Chaos Gems," said Jin Yu.

"My thanks to you, Mr Jin Yu." Jian Wushuang said happily. "The person I wish to locate is called Jian Nantian. He is a Reincarnator from the Ancient World who came here 2,000 years ago."

"Jian Nantian?" Jin Yu nodded. "I will do my best. Give me three days and you will have your answer. You may stay here if you will, as you await my answer."

"That is fine with me." Jian Wushuang nodded his head.

"Let us stay here for three days then. I am hardly busy for now," said the Dragon Wing Governor with a laugh.

"Please see to their accommodations, Ye." Jin Yu commanded lazily with a wave of his hand.

"As you wish." The grey-robed elder named Ye responded and immediately led them to their rooms.

As Jian Wushuang and the Dragon Wing Governor left, Jin Yu stood motionless at the mezzanine with his feet still bare. A sly smile crept over his face.

"What luck! To think that I can earn two Chaos Gems through so simple a task!" Jin Yu murmured gleefully.

He had lied to Jian Wushuang, telling him that divulgement of news about Reincarnators would result in terrible comeuppance if caught in the act.

In truth, the news of Reincarnators was not as closely guarded as rumored to be. In fact, the upper echelons of the Temple guarded such secrets with merely a lackadaisical zeal.

Thus, the leak of information about a single Reincarnator would neither alarm the Samsara Temple, and nor would Jin Yu need to suffer any punishment.

"Apart from two Chaos Gems, there is still the Dragon Wing Governor..." Jin Yuyin broke into a hushed sinister glee. He conjured a token in his palm and delivered a message.

"Master Di Yan. I have two people currently taking up lodgings with me. I wager one of them might interest you."

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For the next three days, Jian Wushuang and the Dragon Wing Governor stayed temporarily in the castle.

Anxious that he would finally secure news of his father's whereabouts, Jian Wushuang seethed with excitement. He grew so nervous that he could hardly calm down and focus on his training.

Three days passed quickly.

Jian Wushuang and the Dragon Wing Governor were led back into the grand hall where they once again met Jin Yu.

"Jian Wushuang. There has been an outcome on the errand you have bidden me of." Jin Yu said, looking down at them.

Jian Wushuang clenched his hands tightly with hope as he looked at Jin Yu.

"I've searched for the name of the person you gave me. But no such man exists among all Reincarnators of the Temple below Rank Seven," said Jin Yu.

"No such man exists?" Jian Wushuang's face turned. "How could it be possible?"

"Are you certain that you have examined the names of all the Reincarnators, Mr Jin Yu?" Jian Wushuang asked anxiously.

"Hmph!" Jin Yu scoffed indignantly. "Are you questioning my honor, Jian Wushuang?"

The domineering demeanor of their host left Jian Wushuang speechless.

Standing beside him, the Dragon Wing Governor turned to him and spoke in a low voice, "Be at ease, Jian Wushuang. Jin Yu is a Golden-clothed Deacon of the Samsara Temple and a warrior of great standing across the Samsara Continent. With your promise of reward, I am sure he will do his utmost to see that your bidding is done. His honor is worth this much at least."

"I apologize for the impertinence." Jian Wushuang muttered, aware that he had overreacted.

"Mr Jin Yu. With my companion's promise of so great a reward as two Chaos Gems, I am sure we can agree that he is absolutely certain that his kin must be one of the Reincarnators of the Temple. Is it possible for other reasons for not being able to find him?" The Dragon Wing Governor asked.

From his perch, Jin Yu glowered down once more as he answered, "I've ascertained that there is no such man among all Reincarnators below Rank Seven. There are only two possibilities that can explain this regrettable outcome."

"First, the person may have become a Rank Seven Reincarnator, like me. Information about him will be kept from me since we are of the same rank." Jin Yu said.

Jian Wushuang's expression changed, into one of renewed optimism and promise.

"Yes, yes!"

"That's very likely to be the case."?Jian Wushuang clenched his hands excitedly as flurries of thoughts, delighted yet on the brink of delirium, flowed through his mind.? "My father is a man of great talents. It

is possible that he might have become a Rank Seven Reincarnator. It should be normal that Jin Yu cannot find him."

"And what of the other possibility, Mr Jin Yu?" The Dragon Wing Governor inquired again.

"The one other possibility being that he is dead."

Indifferent to the weight of his grim message, Jin Yu continued, "It is but unfortunate tidings that Reincarnators rarely survive the tests of the Samsara Temple. Reincarnators are required to traverse and navigate their way through the countless trials and tribulations of certain death. It is even likely that not even one from the mass of ten thousand Reincarnators could survive the grueling and deadly trials. Records of Reincarnators who have died are completely erased. Hence, the inability to locate his name."

"Jian Wushuang. Your kin, he hails from the Ancient World, you say? He was chosen to be a Reincarnator 2,000 years ago?"

"Yes." Jian Wushuang nodded his head blankly. "It is not yet 2,000 years since he became a Reincarnator."

"Hahaha..." In spite of that, Jin Yu broke into a giggle. "Then he can only be a Rank One Reincarnator since he was drafted from the Ancient World. It is impossible for a Rank One Reincarnator to reach Rank Seven in less than 2,000 years. Not with the onerous difficulty of the tests of the Temple."

"That would mean that your kin, is more likely than not, dead!"

"Dead?" Jian Wushuang was astounded by shock before he began shaking his head violently in denial. "Impossible! That's impossible!"

His face darkened with despair.

He was certain of his father's ability. The difficulties of the tests of the Samsara Temple might be able to defeat most common warriors, but never his father!

"Be that as it may, I have completed the task as you have bidden me to. I have reported to you the outcome of my errand. You may choose to believe it and you may not. But that is no longer any concern of mine. Now hand me the rest of the Chaos Gems you have promised me." Jin Yu's boomed as he extended his hand.

Jian Wushuang grimaced with anguish and denial. Biting hard, he handed the Chaos Gems to Jin Yu even though the outcome was too hard for him to swallow.

Jin Yu beamed widely as at the sight of the Chaos Gems. He then looked once more at Jian Wushuang.

"Jian Wushuang. There is a favor that I might be able to do for you. I can see that you do not approve of the outcome of my finding." Jin Yu said.

"Ah?" Jian Wushuang looked up at Jin Yu incredulously.

"I am but merely a Rank Seven Reincarnator. I am only allowed access to information on Reincarnators below Rank Seven. However, I am familiar with a certain Rank Eight Reincarnator who might be able to

help you, for he is able to examine the information of all Reincarnators below Rank Eight. I would not mind enlisting his help if you are agreeable to a reasonable reward."

Chapter 1002: Marked

"A Rank Eight Reincarnator?" Jian Wushuang's eyes narrowed with doubt.

The Samsara Temple was a hierarchical organization.

Rank Seven Reincarnators could only procure information about Reincarnators with ranks below theirs, but not of the same rank.

However, information about Rank Seven Reincarnators was available to Rank Eight Reincarnators.

News about his father might be able to be found by a Rank Eight Reincarnator if he had indeed made it to Rank Seven.

"And what will be the price of enlisting the help of a Rank Eight Reincarnator?" Jian Wushuang asked.

"Hardly unreasonable. Ten Chaos Gems." Jin Yu replied, grinning widely.

"What?" The Dragon Wing Governor gasped with disbelief, his expression changing immediately.

"Hehehe... To think that this insolent pup has the impertinence to dare demand ten Chaos Gems from you. As a mere Rank Seven Reincarnator, he would at most be a Rank Three Dao Master. Under no circumstances, a wretch like him would worth ten Chaos Gems." The Gu King snorted.

Jian Wushuang's eyes flashed with simmering displeasure, for he, too, could see that Jin Yu was trying to be demanding.

The price of ten Chaos Gems was so great that not even a Dao Master at the pinnacle of Rank Three could safely agree to such demand.

With the treasures left to him by Dao Yuanzi, Jian Wushuang could still manage the outrageous demand of Jin Yu. But he was hardly a naive fool that would tolerate himself being fleeced for nothing.

"Mr Jin Yu. Will you be able to fully ensure that the Rank Eight Reincarnator will accede to helping me with my errand if the price of the ten gems is promised?" Jian Wushuang asked.

"Well, this..." Jin Yu's brows furrowed uneasily. "If you agree to my terms, I will speak to the Rank Eight Reincarnator. We share a friendship. There's a plausible likelihood that he will agree."

"By your words, there is also the likelihood that he will refuse, no?" Jian Wushuang asked.

"Of course. He is, after all, a Rank Eight Reincarnator who holds greater authority over me. I simply cannot command him to do as I wish. Only he himself will decide." Jin Yu replied.

"Is that so?" Jian Wushuang remarked, feigning a troubled look as he sneered quietly at Jin Yu. *"He may be truthful about speaking to the Rank Eight Reincarnator about my plight if I agree to his terms. Then again, he could be lying. He could easily dismiss the matter simply by lying about the Reincarnator's refusal to help and none would be the wiser about his malicious deceit."*

"I see... This Jin Yu does intend to defraud me of my Chaos Gems."

"Has he mistaken me for a complete fool?"

With a cold smile to himself, Jian Wushuang put on an earnest expression and nicely declined. "Mr Jin Yu. It was by an extraordinary fortuitous encounter that I had chanced upon two Chaos Gems. Regardless, I am afraid that is the extent of all I am able to afford. I am afraid I will have to solve my conundrum myself from another direction. Thank you for all your help thus far, Mr Jin Yu, and have a good day."

"Really?" Jin Yu stared at Jian Wushuang strangely. He muttered to himself?, *"Is he telling the truth or not?"*

Despite his suspicions, Jin Yu could only wave his hand scornfully. "I see. I see no merit in pressing the issue then. See off our guests, Ye!"

"This way, please." The grey-robed elder immediately walked up to them.

Jian Wushuang and the Dragon Wing Governor shared a thoughtful glance. In muted silence, they readily followed behind the grey-robed elder who led them out of the castle gates.

Watching them leave, Jin Yu left the chamber and walked down into the dungeons of this castle where another great hall, magnificent but yet dark with gloom, was raised underground beneath the foundations of the castle above.

At a great distance from ground level, the great hall was far from prying eyes and ears, being guarded by many Restrictions and enchantments.

Jin Yu crept into the dark and sinister hall.

"Master Di Yan, the two have just left my castle. They will not be far. You can set off now." Jin Yu spoke into a wall that was embellished with mysterious cracks before him.

"Are you certain that one of them possesses the bloodline of the Winged Dragons, Jin Yu?" An evil and insidious voice croaked from the other side of the wall.

"Of that, I am certain, Sir." Jin Yu nodded with a smile.

"Hahaha... the Winged Dragon Clan... For years I have been seeking for the still-living remnants of this clan ever since its purge so many years ago. I hazard that their number will hardly be more than a handful now... His blood must be very tasty, indeed," said the evil voice.

"Master Di Yan. The Dragon Wing Governor is a very influential person across the societies of the Samsara Continent. There will surely be repercussions once his death is discovered. I am afraid that I might be beset with troubles and inconveniences then. I would like to request for an additional one-tenth increment to my agreed reward." Jin Yu beseeched.

"Fine." The evil voice agreed hastily.

"One other thing. There is a young man; a young warrior of the Eternal Realm who was here with the Dragon Wing Governor. Please leave the young man to me, Master Di Yan." Jin Yu added.

"The Eternal Realm? Hmph. So be it." The evil voice promised.

"Let us commence then."

It was not long after Jian Wushuang and Dragon Wing Governor had left the castle, that two figures fled out of the gargantuan structure of the castle with one close behind the other.

Jian Wushuang was speeding through the air with the Dragon Wing Governor just beside him, tearing across the vast expanse of the sky.

"Jian Wushuang, you have been marked." The Gu King's voice rose suddenly in his mind.

"What?" Jian Wushuang was taken aback by the sudden and startling warning.

"Someone has secretly branded strange magical marks on you and the Dragon Wing Governor," said the Gu King.

"Magical marks?" Jian Wushuang's expression turned heavy.

He knew full well how dangerous could magical marks could be, having experienced it first hand more than once.

Once marked, one could easily be hunted down by foes who have placed upon him the magical spell. There was no way to hide one's scent save by undoing the magic of the mark.

"It must be Jin Yu then?" asked Jian Wushuang.

"Indeed." The Gu King nodded, confirming his suspicion. *"But his methods are most unusual. Neither you nor the Dragon Wing Governor had noticed when he had placed the spell upon you both. Still, his schemes did not escape my keen observation."*

"Is there any way I can erase the Mark?" asked Jian Wushuang.

"Yes, but it will take at least a day for the magic to be undone." The Gu King replied gravely.

At this, Jian Wushuang stopped moving instantly.

"What happened, Jian Wushuang?" The Dragon Wing Governor pulled himself to a stop as he noticed Jian Wushuang stopping strangely.

"I'm afraid, trouble has befallen us, Governor," Jian Wushuang admitted.

"Trouble?" The Dragon Wing Governor's eyes turned wide as his pupils immediately shrank at the shock of the sudden revelation.

Just then, a shrill howl that could send even winds quivering rang menacingly behind them.

The two companions turned around instantly, witnessing a black and ominous mass of cloud sweeping toward them at an amazing speed. In a flash, it loomed precariously over them.

Chapter 1003: The Sky-devouring Clan

The black clouds dissipated over them, disintegrating as the figure of a person dressed in black revealed itself.

Fully cloaked in jet-black robes, it was an old man with black mysterious cracks littered around his gnarly and creased face.

The mysterious cracks looked strange and unusual, adding to the already ghastly and malevolent presence of the elder.

A terrifying and devilish aura emanated strongly from him.

"Hahaha... Here we have a member of the Winged Dragon Clan... One who has become a Rank Three Dao Master..." The black-robed elder stared intently at the Dragon Wing Governor. His tongue dangled maniacally from his mouth as he licked his lips hungrily.

"The Winged Dragon Clan?" Jian Wushuang's brows furrowed questioningly as he peered at the Dragon Wing Governor standing beside him.

"It is me that he is after." The Dragon Wing Governor muttered as he narrowed his eyes.

"Far and wide I've traveled the Samsara Continent. For so many years I have consumed and feasted on the flesh of countless bloodlines. But never have I sampled the taste of one of the Winged Dragon Bloodline. At any rate, I will have you today." The black-robed elder grinned wickedly. The next instant, he transformed himself into a dark gossamer apparition, hurtling towards the Dragon Wing Governor swiftly.

Jian Wushuang was completely been overlooked as if he never existed.

"Damn!"

The Dragon Wing Governor's expression changed at the sight of the black wraith-like mass charging at him. He could feel the staggering presence of the savage old man that left him frozen with panic. The elder was undoubtedly a Rank Three Dao Master; one who wielded incredibly powerful strengths.

A fear he never once felt crept into his heart, paralyzing him with fright and hysteria.

It was a sensation of intense fear that tingled from the blood of the Winged Dragon in his veins.

It was like the panic by a prey when was stalked upon by its predator.

"He is after me, Jian Wushuang. Leave me and run!" The Dragon Wing Governor shouted out to Jian Wushuang frantically as he turned into a crimson lightning bolt that immediately shot into the air and fled!

"The Dragon Wing Governor had escaped without even a fight?" Jian Wushuang was slightly surprised.

Jian Wushuang had noticed that the black-robed elder was a Rank Three Dao Master, as was the Dragon Wing Governor. There should still be ample chance for a fight, for they were of equal rank. The differences between their strengths would hardly be huge.

"Hmph, he has made a right choice."

The Gu King's voice rose suddenly. *"Unless I am very much mistaken, the old man in black possesses the bloodline of the Sky-devouring Clan. This clan is well-known in the Eternal Chaotic World for being a fierce population that lives on the Essence Blood of Exotic Beasts. Common Exotic Beasts will be struck with a strange sensation of innate panic at the sight of one of the Sky-devouring Clan, like how a prey would freeze with extreme fear when encountering a predator."*

"With the extreme stress and anxiety inflicted upon the Governor, no amount of strength will be able to help him defeat the old man in black. The battle has been lost even before it begun."

"Is that so?" Jian Wushuang wondered, bewildered and amazed.

"Then again, the kins of the Sky-devouring Clan are rarely seen even in the Eternal Chaotic World. I didn't expect to see one of the Sky-devouring Clan here in this world." The Gu King mused with interest.

At the same time, Jian Wushuang noticed that the figure of the black-robed elder shook violently. A huge pair of wings, black, strong and webbed, sprouted from his back suddenly. With his speed doubled, the old man shot through the air with his wings flapping relentlessly, trying to catch up to the Dragon Wing Governor.

"Ah... One of the Sky-devouring Clan that possesses the heredity of bats. Their lack of great strength is compensated by immense speed. The Dragon Wing Governor is in danger." The Gu King clicked his tongue in admiration.

Jian Wushuang's eyes narrowed. He too could see that the Governor was in a desperate fight for his life, but he had not made any move to help his companion.

Because, he sensed that their enemy numbered more than one.

"Would you not show yourself, since you've come." Jian Wushuang called with his voice spread around.

As his voice began to trail off, the air near him shimmered, revealing a handsome man dressed in a robe of golden silk.

"And how can I be of assistance, Mr Jin Yu?" Jian Wushuang asked as he regarded the handsome man coldly.

The man, beyond all doubt, was none other than Jin Yu.

"Hahaha... Nothing. I'm only curious to know how could a mere an Eternal Realm youngling as you could so nonchalantly produce two Chaos Gems. Let me guess... you still have more, right?" Jin Yu grinned thinly.

"Yes, I do." Jian Wushuang nodded indifferently.

Overjoyed, Jin Yu continued, grinning widely. "One Chaos Gem is more than equal to the entire fortune of a Rank Three Dao Master. Would there not be dangers if you were to keep such fortune with you? Why would you not allow me to guard them in your stead?"

"You are right. Such fortune is not safe with me." Jian Wushuang murmured. With a flick of his wrist, the unique glow of more than ten gems radiated brightly as they spewed from the mouth of his sleeves and hovered in mid-air between them.

Jin Yu felt his heart throbbed, beating with an anxiousness of greed and yearning at the sight of the riches before him.

Without a doubt, these were all Chaos Gems!

"The brat has an entire trove of them!" Jin Yu felt his body quivered with excitement.

"The Chaos Gems are right here, Mr Jin Yu. If you want them so badly, why don't you come and claim them?" Jian Wushuang said in a soft voice, the edges of his lips twisting into a suggestive but yet devilish grin.

"I see... I will just be done with all the theatrics then." Jin Yu smiled wickedly. He waved his hand, summoning a strong gust of blowing wind that swept towards the Chaos Gems suspended in stasis, threatening to whisk them away.

The gems floated lazily in the air. The strong currents of air surged at them, ensnaring them and buffeted them towards the direction of the waiting Jin Yu.

Jin Yu could not help feeling overjoyed and jubilant at the impending hoard of riches rolling at him.

But just then... "Whoosh!"

Like a ghastly phantom, Jian Wushuang emerged in front of him abruptly.

There was nothing but cold fury glinting in Jian Wushuang's eyes. He brandished the Blood Mountain Sword, channeling an immense amount of Ancient God Power that churned wildly in his blade as Jian Wushuang readied himself for an assault so powerful and terrible.

"Hmph!"

With a loud snort that thundered forth, Jian Wushuang swung his blade with rage at his foe.

The stroke, with a force that tore the Void asunder, arced dangerously at Jin Yu.

Unperturbed by this, Jin Yu scoffed with disdain, "You dare unleash your feeble might at me? You, a merely weakling of the Eternal Realm!"

Heeding at Jian Wushuang's incoming attack with contempt, he flailed his sleeve, throwing forth a translucent flash of light; an auric blade that smote at Jian Wushuang's sword.

It was a stroke that Jin Yu casually cast forth, yet it held enough force to easily annihilate any warrior of the Eternal Realm.

Not Dao Masters of Rank One, be it a common Rank One or one who was close to reaching Rank Two, could hope to escape unscathed.

He meant to put Wushuang to death and he was clearly certain that the force of his stroke was enough to complete the deed.

Therefore, Jin Yu did not cast even a glance at his quarry after performing his lethal reprisal.

He was confident that the stroke would kill Jian Wushuang.

What happened next, however, left him in complete shock and disbelief.

Chapter 1004: Jin Yu's Doom

"What?" Jin Yu blurted out.

Jin Yu never would have thought that the auric blade he unleashed would be dispelled. His gaze had diverted to the pile of Chaos Gems still hanging in the air.

He had guessed that Jian Wushuang, at most, would be able to parry the ethereal blade that he conjured, if he was lucky to survive his deadly stroke.

But he could feel it. His auric blade had barely hit Jian Wushuang's blade when the sheer might of the Sword Essence released by Jian Wushuang had disintegrated the auric blade.

"With his Sword Essence alone, he had undone the magic of my auric blade! Is he so powerful?" There was a brief flicker of horror that flashed in Jin Yu's eyes. He immediately waved his hand and summoned another auric blade, crimson red in color, that shot from above to defend him.

"Bang!"

A deafening bang resounded, sending ripples of shockwave sweeping into all directions.

Immediately, Jin Yu felt a tremor passing through him. He heard a strange groan from his body before he was instantly thrown off his feet by the residual forces from the earlier clash erupting from his body as he was thrown backward.

He was thrown so far behind for hundreds of miles until he finally stopped.

"How is this possible?" Jin Yu looked at Jian Wushuang in shock.

He was one of the proud and esteemed Rank Seven Reincarnators of the Samsara Temple! Yet, here he was, being ignominiously thrown back like a rag doll during a fight against a mere wretch of the Eternal Realm!

A mere wretch of the Eternal Realm!

"Eh?" Jian Wushuang looked into the distance, casting his sight as far as he could at Jin Yu, who was hundreds of miles away, with astonishment. *"Most of the Rank Seven Reincarnators of the Temple are Dao Masters who have reigned the pinnacle of Rank Two. I suppose Jin Yu is one of the few who have reached Rank Three."*

"Be that as it may... he is but only a Dao Master who has barely grazed the threshold of Rank Three. Such strength is hardly worth any notice in the face of yours." The Gu King remarked.

Jian Wushuang instead looked far into another direction.

Far away in another direction, Jian Wushuang could sense that the black-robed elder had caught up to the Dragon Wing Governor and was engaging him in a fierce battle. The merciless exchange of blows among them was so destructive that even Jian Wushuang could feel the quiver in the air around him.

"The Governor is in great trouble. I have to finish off Jin Yu as soon as possible and assist him."?Jian Wushuang narrowed his eyes and dashed toward Jin Yu instantly.

"How is it possible that an Eternal Realm youngling wields such power?"?Jin Yu was gathering himself when Jian Wushuang had already appeared in his presence.

At the same time... "Crack!"

An earsplitting crack reverberated through the air; a pale purplish lightsaber had appeared before him without him noticing.

"What's this? Such impossible speed!"?Jin Yu was astonished. He instantly threw himself backward, frantically waving his saber as he tried desperately to fend off any incoming attacks.

Out of fear and panic, he was unable to concentrate his powers into the blows he earlier cast. But being well-prepared this time, he mustered his powers and executed a blow with all his might, hewing into the air with a force so great that a huge ray of light tore through the air from his blade with the semblance of a dazzling river of light.

"Clang!"

There came a loud clang of steels gnashing against each other. Jin Yu was thrown back once more; only this time blood trickled from the edge of his lips, adding to the already pitiful state of his demeanor.

"Am I being soundly trampled?"?Jin Yu gasped to himself, astounded beyond measure.

He did not know that what Jian Wushuang had performed was the Second Sword Formation of the Ninth-heaven Sword Formation. That, with the abilities of the Blood-killing Plate Armor fully activated, Jian Wushuang could match the strength of a Dao Master at the pinnacle of Rank Three.

As a Dao Master who has barely grazed the verge of Rank Three, Jin Yu would most undoubtedly be beneath Jian Wushuang in strength and power.

"Crack!"

Once again, the pale purplish lightsaber defied both the laws of Time and Space and appeared before Jin Yu.

"Such speeds are impossible!"?Jin Yu panted, his face turning pale with fright.

The greatest strength of the Ninth-heaven Sword Formation was, after all, in speed.

The Second Sword Formation, otherwise known as the Flash Sword Formation, allowed its user to traverse the distances of thousands of miles in an instant; an ingenuity that was worthy of its name.

Overwhelmed by fits of panic and fright, Jin Yu flailed his sword wildly, trying desperately to fend off the menacing lightsaber.

Again and again, he resisted the blows cast by Jian Wushuang; and each time, he was thrown backward, his internal wounds growing increasingly severe as his strength and power slowly spent, as was his speed.

Death was upon him now.

A fear that he had never known, crept slowly into him, ensnaring what was left of his sanity.

Never would he have believed that a mere warrior of the Eternal Realm would be able to strike such intense fear into him!

"This sword formation... its powers... its swiftness... I cannot keep up... I cannot!" Jin Yu cried manically, looking as if he was on the brink of madness. "Jian Wushuang, stop! stop!"

"Your Chaos Gems... I promise... I will covet of them no longer... and I promise you I 'll help you to persuade the Rank Eight Reincarnator I mentioned to track down your father."

"Please stop!"

"Please, just stop! Stop right now!"

Heeding nothing of his desperate pleas, Jian Wushuang continued unleashing his brutal onslaught with the Ninth-heaven Sword Formation.

Ridden by steel and pain, Jin Yu's life inched closer to death.

"NO! NO!"

"Jian Wushuang! I am a Golden-clothed Deacon of the Samsara Temple, a Rank Seven Reincarnator, you can't kill me!"

"You cannot kill me, Jian Wushuang! You will be visited upon by the consequences of your actions!"

"Wait and see! Just you wait and see!"

"Hahahaha..."

Jin Yu's terrible and painful howls and shrieks of pain slowly subsided, replaced with delirious cries and roars of his final ounces of defiance.

Regardless of his foes' plight, Jian Wushuang mercilessly continued with the execution of his blows to rain death upon his adversary, wearing a blank expression of utmost indifference and callousness. Before long, Jin Yu, a once-great Golden-clothed Deacon of the Samsara Temple and a Rank Seven Reincarnator, fell to his doom under the blade of Jian Wushuang.

Jian Wushuang waved his hand and whisked Jin Yu's Interspatial Ring with an unknown current of air into his grasp before he pocketed the ring with a cold and stern look on his face.

"Ridiculous. My earlier courtesy to you was due to my need of your assistance. Your arrogance and haughtiness I have endured, despite your attempt to fleece me, because of your standing as one of the Golden-clothed Deacons of the Temple."

"Yet you dare to attempt murder only because I have eluded your devious scheme?"

"You must have mistaken me for a useless fool!"

Jian Wushuang reflected quietly, his appearance cold with fury.

Throughout their encounter, Jin Yu had shown him not even an ounce of respect, wearing an insufferable air of smugness and pride since they first met at his castle. He had even made unreasonable demands and had tried to defraud him out of his greed.

These had all been tolerated by Jian Wushuang with an atypical patience.

Yet, now Jin Yu had tried to murder Jian Wushuang after he had left his castle because of the Chaos Gems the latter possessed.

Never would Jian Wushuang tolerate this insolence and contempt any longer!

Jin Yu's standing and influence in the Temple meant nothing to Jian Wushuang. Being a brash person that he continually was and one who has a blatant disregard for niceties, not even the threat of reprisals from the Temple would dissuade him for executing the impudent wretch of Jin Yu!

With the deed complete, Jian Wushuang lingered no longer. He took into the air, speeding toward the other direction.

There, he knew, another fierce battle was taking place. The Dragon Wing Governor was at a severe disadvantage and his very life hung on a precarious balance.

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Chapter 1005: 'That' Population

At another site of a battle.

"Hahaha, Dragon Wing Governor... Waste your energy no more... There is no escaping my clutches... Your flesh shall be a pleasure to my palate... The Essence Blood of the Winged Dragon Clan might not be the purest, but still, it should be no less satisfying to my epicurean zeal..." The grey-robed elder licked his lips fervently. He flailed his arm, casting forth a force that struck the Dragon Wing Governor and sent him staggering backward, injured.

"You evil swine!"

Patches of blood stains scattered around the robes of the Dragon Wing Governor with blood still oozing from the wounds around him. Despite his miserable appearance, he was still stout of heart, unwilling to give up until his last.

"This man possesses a bloodline that has a strange predisposition that keeps me restrained. I might have able to fight equally against him if only I can summon the full use of my powers. Yet, a strange, inherent fear overwhelms me, putting a check to my strength that I can use only seven-tenths of my full abilities." The Dragon Wing Governor thought, distraught and anger at his weakness.

He had been troubled and torment ever since his battle against the grey-robed elder began for being unable to fully put to use his complete strength.

Such was the might of the Sky-devouring Clan; the very reason for their notoriety and fame across the Eternal Chaotic World.

The dominion wielded by the Sky-devouring Clan over the rest of the populations made it one of the most powerful races of population in the Eternal Chaotic World. Still, this authority affected only the races or clans of bearing the bloodlines of common Exotic Beasts. Those who possessed stronger and more potent bloodlines such as the bloodline of the Imperial Ancient Gods as borne by Jian Wushuang would hardly be subdued by this ability.

"What should I do?"

"He is so quick that I cannot outrun him! Yet, I am powerless against him in battle!"

"Am I to meet my end here, on this day?"

The Dragon Wing Governor was not willing to resign himself so easily to Fate.

Just then, the figure of a young man tore swiftly through the air and stopped before him.

"Jian Wushuang?" The Dragon Wing Governor gasped upon realization of Jian Wushuang once he saw clearly who it was. But he immediately frowned with angst and doubt.

It was apparent that the grey-robed old man wished only him and not Jian Wushuang. The latter should have earlier heeded his advice and flee as fast as he could. Yet, here was Jian Wushuang, throwing himself into the perilous embrace of Death!

"Governor, are you safe?" Jian Wushuang glanced at the Dragon Wing Governor.

"Why did you not escape, Jian Wushuang?" The Dragon Wing Governor asked in a deep voice.

"Why should I?" Jian Wushuang replied with an unfazed ease, his gaze shifting towards the grey-robed elder.

The old man instantly froze at the sight of Jian Wushuang arriving.

"How is it that you are still alive?" The elder asked with astonishment and surprise. "Where is Jin Yu?"

Together, he and Jin Yu had earlier mounted the assault on Jian Wushuang and the Dragon Wing Governor. They had both agreed that the elder would attack the Dragon Wing Governor while the youngling of the Eternal Realm would be left to Jin Yu.

It was expected that no mishaps should have come to Jin Yu as he would be dealing with a weakling of the Eternal Realm. Yet, the youngling was now before him, still very well alive.

But what of Jin Yu?

"Jin Yu? Hahaha... Surely you are hardly a fool, elder? Do you not know where he is?" Jian Wushuang sneered playfully.

The elder's eyes narrowed with suspicion and he sensed Jin Yu's fate.

"Have you slain him?" The elder asked with a growl.

"Naturally." Jian Wushuang confirmed with a cool nod.

Looks of disbelief and amazement flashed upon the faces of the grey-robed elder and the Dragon Wing Governor at the shocking revelation.

"A mere warrior of the Eternal Realm was able to slay a Rank Seven Reincarnator of the Samsara Temple?"

"Is this even possible?"

"Jian Wushuang, you..." The Dragon Wing Governor was ridden with great amazement that he could hardly speak.

"Say no more. Let us first deal with the old senile before any further prattle." Jian Wushuang flashed a wink at the Governor.

"Agreed." The Dragon Wing Governor nodded heavily, still unable to shake off the torpid lethargy of the stupefying awe.

"I may not know how could you have slain Jin Yu, you mongrel pup. But I am neither he, nor I am as feeble as he is! Defy me, and you taste Death itself!" The grey-robed elder growled menacingly, but he struck immediately without mercy!

The elder cast forth his stroke; a stroke that looked so simple and powerless as a casual pat.

So casual it seemed, yet the stroke had conjured a huge black hole that spanned hundreds of miles wide in the air, bearing a powerful force that threatened to rip and tear at everything that it drew to itself. The huge void of darkness bore swiftly down upon Jian Wushuang.

Watching this, Jian Wushuang's lips curled with contempt as he took one step forward.

"The First Finger of the Ancient God: the Barrier-breaking stroke!"

A churning mass of Ancient God Power gathered in Jian Wushuang's hand as his outstretched arm glowed slowly in dark gold. He pointed his finger towards the incoming eddy of darkness.

"Rumble!" The sky burst into a loud, groaning rumble as a gigantic finger of gold stretched from nowhere and struck furiously at the colossal black hole.

"Bang!"

There was a huge, deafening bang that rocked the earth and shook the mountains.

The terrifying shockwave rippled and swept with a destructive force, ripping apart the Void, pounding all floral and vegetation on the ground into dust and filth.

Jian Wushuang's body trembled as he staggered backward.

With each step he careened, he fell thousands of miles behind.

"You are hardly weak yourself, old man." Jian Wushuang muttered as his eyes flickered with cold fury.

The stroke that he had just performed was, in fact, his full strength. But the old man was able to match him without being on the defensive. It was beyond any doubt that the old man was slightly above him in power.

“With the progress I’ve made recently, especially the Star-river Secret Skill that I have managed to enhance to the 30th level, I should be able to match the strength of a Dao Master at the pinnacle of Rank Three. But this old man was able to subdue me by his sheer raw power. Such is the power of true Rank Three Dao Master, I see.”?Jian Wushuang thought.

There were differences in each rank of a Dao Master’s progression that distinctively varied in terms of power and strength.

Rank Three Dao Masters, for instance, were divided into three separate levels; Elementary, Advanced, and Peak.

Jin Yu, being a hair’s breadth away from reaching Rank Three, was merely a Rank Three Dao Master of elementary proficiency; one who could even be seen as ineffectual, even amongst the rest of those with elementary proficiency.

The Dragon Wing Governor had turned into a Rank Three Dao Master of advanced proficiency ever since he had completed the mastery of his Secret Skill with the help of the Dragon Heart Elixir.

During his time in the Tang of the East, Jian Wushuang’s strength was a match with a Rank Three Dao Master of advanced proficiency. He would hardly be able to hold his own in a match against Master Ku. But his strength had risen in recent years, most notably the mastery of the Star-river Secret Skill. His strength was now equal to a Rank Three Dao Master who was at the pinnacle of advanced proficiency, only inches away from peak levels.

The grey-robed elder’s ability to subdue him with sheer raw strength meant that he was a true Dao Master at the peak proficiency of Rank Three. His powers paled only slightly, if not on a par, when compared to the ilk of Emperor Xiao and Emperor Yun who were very close to the Holy Master Level. Such was a might that Jian Wushuang himself would also have to be wary of.

Jian Wushuang was still in the midst of beholding the greatness of the elder’s strength, but the evil old man’s mind was troubled and disturbed.

“This wretched pup’s powers! A mere Eternal Realm fledgling could wield such powers against me! My powers have barely been able to subdue him!”

“Wait... That power he just used... is that the Bloodline Power? Could it be that he belongs to ‘that’ race of population?”

“Yes... There is no questioning... I can sense the strength of ‘that’ potent bloodline in him... and one of incredible standing and bearing within their ranks.”

“Things would indeed be vexing and bothersome if ‘that’ very race of population decides to interfere...”

Chapter 1006: Consider Yourself Fortunate

Not even the grey-robed elder could resist a creeping fear slinking into him at the notion of “that” very race.

They were one of the most powerful races of populations on the Samsara Continent.

"You can never hope to match my powers, brat. Leave now while you can." The elder uttered as he cast a cold glance at Jian Wushuang.

"Ridiculous. You seem to imply that you can easily kill me like how you raise a finger. Show me if you dare." Jian Wushuang taunted without fear, a faint smile lined across his face.

"Very well... It is you who seeks Death on your own volition, I am not to be blamed." The elder hissed as his eyes flared murderously.

The elder knew that he would only have to ensure no loose ends were left and he would not have to worry of vengeful reprisals from "that" very race.

"Hmph!"

With a furious and contemptuous snort, the mysterious runic symbols on the face of the grey-robed elder began to shine with a dark, glowy luster. The evil and sinister illumination grew, slowly enveloping him awhole, bathing him fully in the faint brightness. The elder spread his bat-like wings to their entirety, his figure too growing in size.

In mere seconds, the grey-robed elder had morphed into a hulking giant, bearing an uncanny resemblance to that of a monstrous bat.

"Ah" Jian Wushuan looked with his eyes wide at the spectacle of the bat-like giant before him.

"Hahaha... Remarkable. His Secret Skill allows him to manifest the primeval form of his Bloodline." The Gu King said.

The blood-red eyes of the giant black bat flashed with malice and it took into the sky with tremendous speed like a lightning bolt.

"Screech!"

The gigantic bat emitted a cry that shook all heaven and earth.

With the fierce and shrilling cry, came a powerful sonic wave with effects that would disorient foes and enemies rushed and swept towards Jian Wushuang.

"Ah... This is vexing..." Jian Wushuang muttered, his face turning gloomy as even he was discombobulated himself.

Suddenly, the huge black bat reappeared over Jian Wushuang with the intensity of a lightning strike, baring its fangs ravenously at him. So fast was its blitzing assault that its jaws snapped and its fangs sank deep into Jian Wushuang's chest as the bat clenched him in its vice-like grip before he could recover himself.

The giant bat mustered its strength for a fatal bite... unleashing a powerful and terrifying force!

"Jian Wushuang!" The Dragon Wing Governor cried with distress and great astonishment.

"Crack!"

There came an abrupt groan from between its jaws. The pupils of the black bat contracted fiercely all of a sudden, laced with horror and panic. Immediately, from its throat, the bat spat out Jian Wushuang and lurched backward.

The figure of Jian Wushuang was belched out violently, along with a broken half of one of the bat's fang.

The fang, without no doubt, belonged to the giant bat. But it was broken when it was thrown out of the monster's mouth.

"The monster morphed by the elder had attempted to clamp its jaws upon Jian Wushuang, but only to have its fang broken instead? "The Dragon Wing Governor stammered, dazed and bewildered.

The giant bat had retreated some distance away to safety. It shrank and returned into the form of the elder in grey robes, whose eyes regarded Jian Wushuang with fear and horror.

"I, I..." The grey-robed elder grimaced with agony and paid as well as the panic that now gripped him.

He had morphed into his strongest form, used his greatest might and had used his most powerful attack. It was an attack which would have even shredded a true Rank Three Dao Master into nothing but globs of lifeless flesh, viscera, and blood.

With great effort he had exerted great force, yet, not only Jian Wushuang was hardly hurt, it was the elder himself who had got injured.

"This is impossible. Not even a powerful Dao Master of 'that' race would be able to withstand the force of my bite, much less damaging my fangs! Unless..." The grey-robed elder stared with at Jian Wushuang, finally noticing his blood-red robes.

Twice he had struck, most notably his recent attack in the form of a monstrous bat. Nonetheless, the Jian Wushuang's blood-red robes remained intact, creaseless and wrinkleless.

"The blood-red robes he wears must be a treasure. It's a potent treasure of protection." The grey-robed elder muttered, understanding finally.

Jian Wushuang taunted him with a sneer, "I see your fangs are no less softer than even my body, old man?"

"Jian Wushuang," The Dragon Wing Governor approached him and spoke to him, "I've sent a word to a friend of mine. He'll come to our help."

"Oh?" Jian Wushuang remarked, his brows twitching dramatically. He turned to the grey-robed elder and shouted, "Did you not hear, you old senile? Why are you still here? Do you intend to bite me again? Come if you will, we will see how many more fangs you can afford to lose."

The older man's face grew dark with suppressed rage, but there was nothing he could say to retort.

Never would he dare to venture another bite on Jian Wushuang once more.

"The young knave's strong defensive capabilities makes it impossible for me to kill him. More so, with his remarkable strength. It's impossible for me to kill the Dragon Wing Governor, now that he is here." The old man deliberated over his decision, finally relenting and gave up.

“What a pity. It seems that today I won’t have the chance to relish the taste of Essence Blood of Winged Dragon Clan.”

“Consider yourself fortunate, you young knave!”

The grey-robed elder licked his lips and shot a hateful glance at Jian Wushuang. “But don’t be conceited. Jin Yu is a Rank Seven Reincarnator of the Samsara Temple with considerable influence and allies. With his death, many will hunt for your blood to avenge him.”

“Not even your race will be able to defend you!”

“Just you wait!”

With a final look at Jian Wushuang, the grey-robed elder snorted furiously and vanished into thin air with a swing of his sleeves.

Jian Wushuang and the Dragon Wing Governor watched as the older man vanished, showing no intentions of pursuing him.

They both knew full well that the grey-robed elder wielded greater strength over them both. They would never be able to prevent his flight.

“Finally he’s left.” The Dragon Wing Governor breathed heavily, relieved.

It was not until the old man had fully disappeared that the panic that throbbed at his heart began to calm and subside.

“Thank you, Jian Wushuang. It was by your help that I was able to survive this ordeal.” The Governor expressed his gratitude sincerely.

“It is my pleasure, Master Governor. I have enjoyed your hospitality and your advice for the three years of my stay at your residence.” Jian Wushuang replied with a smile.

The Dragon Wing Governor was instead faintly surprised before he continued weakly. “Nay. I’ve been conceited and vain. You have great strength; much greater than mine, yet I tried to give you instructions and advise you. This is...”

The Dragon Wing Governor’s voice faltered as he could only sigh with somberly.

Feeling that he owe Jian Wushuang for his gift, he had tried to return the favor by giving him instructions and advice to help him improve his swordsmanship.

Trying to advise Jian Wushuang as an elder, he under the impression that Jian Wushuang was indeed a mere youngling of the Eternal Realm, believing himself to be qualified to counsel, instruct and advise the young warrior.

It was not until today that he finally realized that the young warrior was, in fact, a stronger warrior that he was.

Chapter 1007: The First Sword Principle

"The old senile has left, Governor. There is no longer any need for your friend to come." Jian Wushuang said.

"Indeed. I've sent him a message." The Dragon Wing Governor replied and eyed Jian Wushuang strangely, "Jian Wushuang... A-Are... are you truly of the Eternal Realm level?"

"About this..." Jian Wushuang rubbed his nose awkwardly before he muttered, "Let's have this conversation when we reach the city."

"Agreed." The Dragon Wing Governor assented with a nod.

With that, Jian Wushuang immediately set off for the Dragon Wing City with the Dragon Wing Governor.

Back at the Governor's mansion of the Dragon Wing City, Jian Wushuang and the Dragon Wing Governor sat together and began their talk.

"Unless I am very much mistaken, Jian Wushuang, you're not a native of the Samsara Continent, no" The Dragon Wing Governor spoke with a thoughtful smile.

"Why do you think so?" Jian Wushuang asked with surprise.

"It would have been impossible for a person of your potential to remain unknown in the Samsara Continent. This would only mean that you must be from the outside of the Continent. You are a warrior from the Void Continent, I wager?" The Dragon Wing Governor hazarded a guess.

"You are quite perceptive, Master Governor." Jian Wushuang couldn't help grinning and admitted truthfully, "Indeed, I come from the Void Continent. I am here only to seek for the close kin of mine."

"It is as I expected." The Dragon Wing Governor remarked with a smile, "That is why I have been communicating with others to help you ascertain the matter. Jin Yu had spoken the truth. His failure of securing information about your kin would mean that your close kin could either have risen above Rank Seven; or, he might already be dead!"

"Then again, I daresay there is no way you would readily accept the second result. That leaves you with only one option: you will have to find a Rank Eight Reincarnator of the Samsara Temple."

"Rank Eight Reincarnators are Dao Masters at the pinnacle of Rank Three. Even amongst the horde of warriors that throngs the Samsara Temple, there are but only a handful of warriors of such caliber. One would hardly expect to be able to even catch a glimpse of such elusive individuals. Even with my extensive influence, I am afraid I will not be able to help you in this errand. You have much to delve on your own from this point now." The Dragon Wing Governor acknowledged his regret for his inability to assist Jian Wushuang.

"I understand." Jian Wushuang nodded gently, then he said, "Nevertheless, there is no longer need for hurry since my father is not among the Reincarnators below Rank Seven. The large and wide Samsara Continent teems with numerous warriors. I can travel around while looking for him."

Reincarnators of the Samsara Temple did not have to worry much about their own safety once they had reached the level of Rank Six. Rank-Seven Reincarnators were at an even higher level, which made it more difficult to kill them.

His father would surely be safe if he has surpassed Rank Seven. Thus, there would be hardly any need for haste.

"Where're you going next?" The Dragon Wing Governor asked.

"Well... I did liberate the warrior slave from the gladiator's arena who is of the Rock Demon Clan. I was once indebted to another great warrior of their clan. I intend to go there first." Jian Wushuang said.

"When do you intend to set off?" The Governor pressed on.

"Now." Jian Wushuang said.

"I see. In that case, I will delay you no longer." The Governor smiled, waving his hand as he conjured two magical tokens, "Here are two tokens. One of them is my Message Token. Send word to me at need. I will do my utmost to have you as best I can."

"The other token is the most detailed Star Map of the Samsara Continent available. Nine-tenths of the territories of the Samsara Continent is mapped upon it. I think it would be useful to you."

"Thank you very much, Master Governor." Jian Wushuang replied. He accepted gladly the two tokens and bid his farewell to the Dragon Wing Governor.

"I shall hope that we will be able to meet again, Master Governor."

On the same day, Jian Wushuang began his journey to the bastion of the Rock Demon Clan with Qing Bin with him.

Gliding over the swards of a broad and wide plain, Jian Wushuang pored over the Star Map that was given to him by the Dragon Wing Governor.

"It is still a great distance between here and the region of the dwellings of the Rock Demon Clan. With hardly any usable wormholes on the Samsara Continent, we will have to traverse over the entire stretch on foot. Given our traveling speed, it'll take Qing Bin and me at least five years to complete the journey." Jian Wushuang murmured to himself.

Five years was hardly a long time for Jian Wushuang now.

"In the coming days, I will delve into the studies of Sword Principles during my journey." Jian Wushuang said, smiling cheerfully. He cast a look to his companion behind him and beckoned, "Let us continue then, Qing Bin."

"Yes, Master." Qing Bin said, nodding with respect.

Together, they slowly glided towards the lands of the Rock Demon Clan.

And so their journey began. Jian Wushuang would often continue his studies on Sword Principles during their journey. For the past three years at the Governor's mansion, he had greatly improved his grasp on swordsmanship. It would not be long until he created his own Sword Principle.

He was rapidly making good progress, devoting himself to intense research of Sword Principles with the 19 Sword Principles from the scroll as invaluable reference materials.

During the journey, Wushuang would occasionally stop to find a quiet place to meditate and assimilate the things that he learned.

There were times when he would join in with fights against other warriors when they stumbled upon duels or battles, using only his skills with the sword as a means of training by deliberately suppressing his might.

He would sometimes look for a place to sleep, where he would slumber for days or even months.

Thus, with the odd behaviors of Jian Wushuang making sporadic stops and delays during his journey, what was at first a five-year journey, had turned into a fifteen-year pilgrimage before he reached the lands of the Rock Demon Clan's dwelling.

It was midnight, where the same blood-red moon he once saw shone eerily from the sky.

Jian Wushuang was practicing his skills with the sword alone in a forest.

The strokes he performed looked odd and peculiar.

Indeed, "peculiar" would be an apt way of describing him.

At times, his strokes were swift like lightning and yet at times, they seemed slow and frail before turning furious again like an angry serpent, intense and vicious.

The strokes he demonstrated were all similar in nature, yet they were displayed in various different styles, merged together as one unique Sword Principle.

The Principle was a bizarre amalgam of different styles and philosophy, a wild and audacious blend of differing Principles unified into one morbidly coalesced Sword Principle.

At length, Jian Wushuang finally stopped.

"My applause, Jian Wushuang. You've finally created the first Sword Principle of your own." The Gu King's approving voice came.

"Hahaha..." Jian Wushuang grinned brightly.

He had been studying extensively the 19 Sword Principles from the scroll and the acumen of creating the strongest Sword Principle.

He continued studying and buried himself in profound study and training.

At long last, after 15 years, he had finally created a Sword Principle of his own.

The Sword Principle might look crude and simple, it was, nonetheless, a beginning for him.

"What do you make of my newly-created Sword Principle, Gu King?" Jian Wushuang asked, beaming with delight.

"This Sword Principle..." The Gu King's voice faltered. After a moment's hesitation, he continued, "Well... How can I say... It seems odd and peculiar."

Chapter 1008: Turbulence

"Peculiar?" Jian Wushuang asked in return, confused.

"The Sword Principle you created seems like a cluttered blend of several different Sword Principles. It may be a Sword Principle you created on your own, the Sword Principle seems nevertheless a tad chaotic." The Gu King said.

"Chaotic?" Jian Wushuang murmured in stunned silence. Even so, he could understand the reason for the Gu King's opinion.

Having created the Sword Principle himself, yet even he knew neither what to call it nor how should he name it.

The Sword Principle was forged by fusing the several styles of the many Sword Principles from the scroll, embodying the differing doctrines of several Sword Principles. It should be expected that the Sword Principle would most undoubtedly be disorganized.

"I agree, it is chaotic now. But this Sword Principle can be greatly improved when I am fully able to completely coalesce all the Swords Principles as one." Jian Wushuang remarked earnestly.

"Well... There is a sense in forging a brand new Sword Principle by integrating hundreds or even thousands of Sword Principles. Nevertheless, no one can truly tell if this Sword Principle can still be enhanced into your strongest Sword Principle." The Gu King said.

"Patience." Jian Wushuang said, smiling. "This is but merely my first time. I will learn the ropes gradually."

Jian Wushuang was rather delighted that he had finally created a Sword Principle of his own. He would ponder on the rest when the time was ripe.

"It may be a most ordinary Sword Principle, but with its creation came the power that now elevates my power. At last, I truly possess a Dao Master's battle strength at the pinnacle of Rank Three."

Jian Wushuang smiled, feeling pleased with himself before he turned to his side. "Qing Bin."

"Master." Qing Bin acknowledged.

Qing Bin appeared before Jian Wushuang, towering at more than three meters tall, clad in armor of crimson scarlet.

For fifteen years, Qing Bin had tirelessly followed Jian Wushuang everywhere, accommodating to Jian Wushuang's whimsical and sporadic delays during the journey that have cost them substantial time. Still, Qing Bin had always been loyal and respectful to Jian Wushuang without complaint.

Never once he had forgotten that it was Jian Wushuang who saved him from the gladiators' arena.

"Is that the territory of the Rock Demon Clan just ahead, Qing Bin?" Jian Wushuang asked.

"Indeed, Master. We will be within the territory after crossing over this plain." Qing Bin answered.

"Very well, we should continue without delay then." Jian Wushuang said.

“Yes, Master.” Qing Bin replied. There was a hint of delight and joy in his voice.

With that, Jian Wushuang and Qing Bin set off immediately, crossing over the pasture of meadows and reach the lands of the Rock Demon Clan.

“Soon, I will finally return to my population!”

As they venture closer and closer in the direction of the bastion of the Rock Demon Clan, Qing Bin grew more and more excited, with a noticeable spring of delight in his steps. Even Jian Wushuang could feel the joy radiating from him.

But they had only just reached the lands of the Clan, when...

“Boom! Boom!”

The clamor and bedlam of battle and carnage could be heard from afar. From a distance, Jian Wushuang could see that there were fighting and bloodshed from where he stood.

There were dozens of people of opposing factions fighting in the battle.

The warriors of one faction were quite large in built. Even the shortest one was more than two meters tall. The titanic giants attacked violently in a crude and clumsy fashion, in great part, due to their awfully strong physique. Nonetheless, they evidently weaker in number.

The other faction had more than twenty men, all of whom were of the Eternal Realm and one-third of them had reached its peak. Despite being weaker in brute strength and defensive capabilities, these men were more agile and nimble in their movements and maneuvers.

The battle waged brutally between both sides, with the giants at an absolute disadvantage.

“Kill them all!”

“The entire Rock Demon Clan must die!”

“Leave none of them alive!”

A peal of harsh roars came from the battlefield, the tremors of the pandemonium shaking even the heaven and earth.

Jian Wushuang and Qing Bin came closer to the site of battle. Another group of over a dozen men joined in the battle; they were apparently the reinforcements of the smaller and more agile group. Already suffering a hard-fought battle, the side of the Rock Demon Clan were immediately being subdued and trampled in an instant.

“Oh, no!”

Seeing this, Qing Bin turned angry and furious, his eyes flared with murderous rage. He cursed, “Damned Black Python Clan.”

“Those are my kin, Master Wushuang, the people of the Rock Demon Clan. They are in danger. I need to help them right now.” As he spoke, Qing Bin hurled himself forward.

Jian Wushuang stood motionless, merely watching as his eyes slightly narrowed.

The aura of Qing Bin erupted in its fullness. His long adventures in the outside world and the many life-and-death fights at the gladiators' arena had welled within him a blend of brooding anger, remorse, resentment and hate. These emotions helped shape the savage and violent aura that he unleashed, sweeping forth like a ripple of shockwave and instantly overwhelming everyone at the site of the battle. With the unexpected appearance of Qing Bin who had returned, looks of relief and hope filled the faces of his kins of the Rock Demon Clan.

"You are... Qing Bin?"

"It's Brother Qing Bin. It's Brother Qing Bin!"

"Quick, Qing Bin! Stop them!"

But the enemies from the other faction, the Black Python Clan, merely sneer mockingly at the sight of Qing Bin's appearance.

"Qing Bin? That is a name we have long heard before. It's said that he was once well known within the Rock Demon Clan. However, he vanished afterward. There were rumors that he had left for an adventure. But I didn't expect his return. Nevertheless, there is nothing that a lone giant of the Eternal Realm can do to defy our might!"

"Hmph! Qing Bin returns to seek his own doom!"

"Say no more, just butcher him along with the rest!"

Several warriors of the Black Python Clan immediately threw themselves at Qing Bin

Qing Bin's strength was at the peak of the Eternal Realm. No one here could hope to be able to match him in strength in single combat.

But there were simply just too many enemies against him like a lone tree trying its best to weather a horrific storm. The warriors of the Black Python Clan were all of the Eternal Realm too. Any three of them who wielded strengths at the peak of the Eternal Realm could easily subdue Qing Bin. The tide of battle had hardly shifted even with Qing Bin's arrival.

"So life is also turbulent even in the lands of the Rock Demon Clan..." Jian Wushuang murmured. Noticing his cue to act, his figure shimmered abruptly and he directly appeared at the center of the battle.

His sudden leap into the fray shocked and surprised everyone.

"Another one?"

"But he seems different... is he not from the Rock Demon Clan?"

"Pay no heed! Just slaughter him along with others!"

Burning deeply in a fit of bloodlust, several warriors of the Black Python Clan rushed over at once to attack Jian Wushuang.

Jian Wushuang shot them a sharp look with a cold gaze and opened his mouth suddenly.

“Get lost!”

He emitted so angry a roar that held tremendous Ancient God Powers which were immediately dispersed like a powerful wave of force that swept across the site of battle.

Everyone ceased their movements in astonishment and bewilderment.

The kinsmen of the Rock Demon Clan all looked at Jian Wushuang with awe. Panic rose from their hearts.

At the same time, the marauders from the Black Python Clan clutched and clawed at their eyes and ears in agony as they crumbled to the ground, wailing and crying in pain. Blood trickled out of their damaged ears and eyes. None of them were dead, but the people from the Black Python Clan were all shocked, discombobulated and paralyzed by this angry roar.

“R-Retreat! Retreat now!”

The chieftain of the Black Python Clan, a warrior of the Eternal Realm himself, howled a harsh cry, signaling the withdrawal of his men. None of them dared to remain as they fled back to where they came from miserably. Some ventured a final glimpse of fear and terror at Jian Wushuang as they leave, hoping a final glance at the person who had effortlessly routed them with a mere roar that struck despair and panic into them.

Chapter 1009: God Hong

In mere moments, the numerous warriors of the Black Python Clan who were formerly seething with bloodthirsty rage were all routed.

Jian Wushuang’s angry roar had struck so great a fear into their hearts that their blood froze. None of them dared to stay and endure his wrath.

“Master Wushuang.” Qing Bin went to Jian Wushuang immediately. The rest of the Rock Demon Clan gazed at Jian Wushuang with gratitude and awe.

“Thank you for rescuing us, Master Wushuang.” Qing Bin said.

If it were not for Jian Wushuang’s help, he and his kin would have been slaughtered by the Black Python Clan.

“Why the hostilities by the Black Python Clan?” Jian Wushuang asked.

“It is as thus.”

Qing Bin explained, “There are nearly a hundred races and clans in this region. Among these populations, the Rock Demon Clan and the Black Python Clan reigned the strongest; both are the stronger populations around here. Hence, conflicts and battles ensue tirelessly as both clans fought to maintain their influence and interests. Animosity between both clans have persisted for many years now.”

"I see..." Jian Wushuang remarked, his eyebrows raising with faint surprise.?"*The Rock Demon Clan one of the stronger populations?*"

Prior to arriving here, he had presumed that the Rock Demon Clan was a common or lesser population. Never did he knew that the Clan was a stronger population that commanded a minor degree of authority.

Even across the entire Samsara Continent, the stronger populations numbered few and scarce. They were clans or race that possessed considerably potent overall strength.

"Take me to God Hong, Qing Bin." Jian Wushuang said promptly.

"Yes."

Qing Bin immediately led the way. Before long, they reached the stronghold of the Rock Demon Clan.

The stronghold of the Rock Demon Clan was surrounded by a ring of mountains. Within the bastion of the clan were numerous buildings and structures that housed millions of their kin.

Even among the stronger populations, it was rare for a race to have a population of millions of kinsmen. The Rock Demon Clan, was beyond any doubt, one of the stronger populations that commanded respectable overall strength over the lesser races and clans. Still, it was among the weakest of stronger populations across the Continent. They have ten Dao Masters in their midst, the least possible number of Dao Masters for stronger populations.

The greatest warrior of the clan, was none other than God Hong, a Dao Master of Rank Three. Still, he wielded only the elementary proficiency of Rank Three. It was the awakened Rock Demon bloodline that flowed through his veins which had endowed him with an extremely sturdy physique, allowing him a slight edge even in fights against Rank Three Dao Masters with advanced proficiency.

Following closely behind Qing Bin, Jian Wushuang was led directly into the bastion of the Rock Demon Clan, where he was arranged for an audience with God Hong in a grand hall.

Clad in armor of cyan hue, God Hong was a bald man who towered at an intimidating height of more than five meters. There he stood, they saw, at the forefront of the hall like a huge mountain.

"Is he God Hong?" Jian Wushuang asked himself, staring at God Hong with astonishment and disbelief.

The mere shred of consciousness of God Hong during their encounter in the Ancient World had left a vivid and lasting impression that had never ceased to awe him. Jian Wushuang could hardly forget the amazement and awe that he reserved especially for the consciousness that was shaped by the residual powers left in a mere severed finger of God Hong.

Yet, now, meeting God Hong for the first time in person, Jian Wushuang could hardly feel neither admiration nor adoration for the person he once respected.

"Brother Hong, it is I, Qing Bin, who has returned!"

Qing Bin rushed over to God Hong and fell to his knees before the hulking man with great excitement, bowing his head down on the ground with utmost reverence as his voice echoed through the alcoves of the hall.

"It is good that you have returned. On your feet now." Relieved and comforted, God Hong dismissed with a simple wave of his hand as he watched his long-lost kin immediately get to his feet.

"This is Master Jian Wushuang, Brother Hong. He is the reason that I am able to return alive. More so, it was he who had earlier saved our kinsmen from the Black Python Clan and had routed their warriors."

"Oh?" God Hong turned to look at Jian Wushuang.

"My name is Jian Wushuang, Senior. My deepest respects to you." Jian Wushuang greeted him.

"Jian Wushuang?" God Hong asked strangely. There was a faint glimpse of recognition in his eyes.

"You might remember, Senior, that many years before, a severed finger of yours had fallen into a domain called the Ancient World. The finger contained a sliver of your consciousness. The consciousness from the severed finger had encountered a young fellow and had taught him the Immortality Secret Skill. The young fellow was also imparted with the technique of Enhanced Magic: Thunderbolt." Jian Wushuang said, smiling.

God Hong's gaze instantly transfixed upon Jian Wushuang with a surprised stare as he realized who Jian Wushuang was. He said, "You were the young man from the Ancient World?"

"I am." Jian Wushuang said.

"How is this possible?" God Hong looked at Jian Wushuang with amazement. He said, "You were but a fresh sapling then, still young and untrained in combat and martial skills when the shred of my consciousness met you. It has hardly been two thousand years... and yet, in such a short time, you have managed to achieve such power and strength."

God Hong was filled with astonishment.

He had merely intended to show some kindness to a helpless weakling when they first met. Despite once encouraging Jian Wushuang to reach for greater heights and proposing that the young man visit him in the future, he did not expect that Jian Wushuang would indeed thrive and progress so swiftly.

But now... Jian Wushuang had indeed come to him in less than two thousand years?

"You had saved Qing Bin, and had repelled our enemies from the Black Python Clan. I simply don't know how to express my gratitude to you." God Hong said with a smile.

"You are being too polite, Senior. I would not be here if it were not for the kindness that you have shown me so many years ago." Jian Wushuang said.

Nevertheless, Jian Wushuang spoke true. His encounter with God Hong had given him the means which enabled the breakthrough of his strength and granted him the Immortality Secret Skill.

The very same Immortality Secret Skill had been key to his continued success.

It was hardly an exaggeration that it was God Hong who had paved the way for Jian Wushuang's climb to power.

"Hahaha... I had helped you then because I had perceived you as a pleasant and likable young man. Yet, never would I be able to foretell that you would be able to blossom and thrive to such greatness." God Hong burst into laughter as all semblances of his intimidating and stern self immediately diminished.

Just then...

"Eh?" God Hong muttered with surprise. His expression took a drastic change.

"What is wrong, Brother Hong?" Qing Bin asked, looking at God Hong.

"It's a beacon calling for help. I must look into it right away." God Hong said grimly.

"Could it be the Black Python Clan again?" Qing Bin asked, his face darkened with gloom.

"I am afraid it is true. There have been many changes within the Black Python Clan while you were away. They have revolutionized their inner workings that they have now landed us, the Rock Demon Clan in a very dire and disadvantaged position." God Hong lamented with a sigh before he turned to glance at Jian Wushuang.

"I am afraid I have business to attend to, young friend. Our conversation will have to continue some other time. Please stay with us and enjoy our hospitality while you're here. Qing Bin will show you around our clan. There is an area which might interest you; it is a place where it might be useful to students in the skills of swordsmanship like you. Qing Bin will lead you there as well."

With that, God Hong took his leave and left.

"Please come with me, Master Wushuang." Qing Bin said with a smile.

"Very well." Jian Wushuang replied curiously as he nodded.

"God Hong had mentioned of a site which will help greatly the students of the mastery of swordsmanship. What manner of place could that be?"

Chapter 1010: The Legacy of the Sword Emperor

The bastion of the Rock Demon Clan was a wide and large city. Qing Bin and Jian Wushuang had wandered long before they finally came to the bottom of a huge mountain gorge that was deep behind one of the great mountains that overlooked the city.

They were between the massive rocky-faced walls of the deep ravine.

"Here we are, Master Wushuang." Qing Bin said as they came to a stop, the finger of his outstretched arm pointed to the huge jagged walls. "Look, Master."

Jian Wushuang looked closely into the distant. What he saw made him froze.

"It's..."

With his eyes twinkling with awe and amazement, Jian Wushuang saw many marks upon the walls. Unlike the rough faces of the walls, the marks were incredibly precise and smooth with varying depths and declinations, very much similar to the marks left upon a slab of butter by a hot and keen blade.

These were all marks left by swords.

Marks that have cleaved and hewed deep into the solid walls of rock with differing depth; there were nine of them in all.

Jian Wushuang looked at the nine sword marks on the walls of the chasm, feeling horrified and yet amazed.

“Too smooth... These sword marks are just too smooth. How sharp would a sword have to be, to be capable of carving so deeply and smoothly into solid rock? How swift would the skills of its wielder have to be, to be able to harness such power?” Jian Wushuang breathed absent-mindedly as he studied the first sword mark.

The first sword mark was the shallowest of the nine. Despite its age, Jian Wushuang could still faintly perceive the aura left by the stroke; a destructive will to inflict damage that appalled him.

As he examined the mark, Jian Wushuang could slowly envision a figure; the silhouette of a swordsman who swung his sword and left the mark on the wall with finesse and grace.

“Too fast. This stroke is too fast!” Jian Wushuang gasped, astonished before he moved on to the second sword mark.

The second mark was deeper still, containing a richer residue of aura left so long ago.

Jian Wushuang could envision once more the figure of the swordsman brandishing his blade. The dance of his sword bore the vestiges of the same swordsmanship, the only difference that this second mark was left by a stroke swifter than the first!

Already the stroke which had birthed the first sword mark was fast enough to amaze Jian Wushuang, but the stroke that had created the second mark was even faster still.

Then he saw the third, the fourth and the subsequent marks that followed. As the marks became deeper and deeper, the swordsman from his vision demonstrated the strokes of his swordsmanship with speeds that outvied one after another, growing increasingly faster and faster.

Finally, he saw the ninth and the final sword mark...

The mark cleaved deep into the rock that it appeared it could even sunder the mountain half. It clearly bore the traces of the strongest force unleashed by the swiftest stroke.

In his vision, Jian Wushuang could fully visualize the silhouette of the swordsman showing to him the swordsmanship in its fullness.

The speed of the stroke was what left him horrified.

It was so fast that not even Jian Wushuang could see it clearly.

It bore such terrible swiftness that Jian Wushuang knew, even he himself would only be helpless before such an overwhelming speed.

Finally, he saw the ninth and the final sword mark...

"I believe it was an incredibly powerful swordsman who was once here to meditate on his mastery of swordsmanship and hone them to perfection. The nine marks on the wall of the gorge were left during his training." Jian Wushuang thought to himself.

All nine marks were left by the very same stroke, repeated again and again. But the differences in the depths of the strokes showed the gradual rise in force that was accorded by the increase of speed in the execution of the stroke.

It was, beyond a doubt, the manifestation of how the swordsman had pushed his skills to its limits step by step.

"What do you think of them, Master Wushuang?" Qing Bin asked as he looked at Jian Wushuang.

"Extremely shocked." Jian Wushuang answered truthfully.

"Everyone from our clan, those who study swordsmanship, wore the very same amazed and shocked expression that you now wear when they first laid eyes on these marks." Qing Bin said with a smile.

"It was about twenty thousand years ago when a mysterious swordsman happened to venture here. Struck by a sudden glimpse of inspiration, he stopped here and meditated on his skills. He was then discovered by some of my kin, who had tried to drive him away. But in his act to ward off those who disturbed his meditation, he carelessly cast a blow from his sword that had then created the first mark that you had seen earlier. This terrified everyone present, including Brother Hong."

"With respects for his skills, Brother Hong commanded that no one were to disturb the meditation of the swordsman. In fact, he had even assigned sentinels who watched for the safety of the swordsman, guarding him peacefully at the entrances of the gorge."

"For two years, the swordsman remained until his departure. We then discovered the nine sword marks that he had left on the granite wall of the chasm. They were gifts from him, in return for the hospitality that we have accorded him for two years."

"Compensation?" Jian Wushuang uttered, breaking in into a giggle.

The nine sword marks were a great boon to any swordsman seeking to hone their skills. It was a very heavy gift from the swordsman to the Rock Demon Clan for his two-year-long stay in the ravine.

"Do you know of the name of this master swordsman, Qing Bin?" Jian Wushuang asked.

"I do." Qing Bin promptly said, "Before he left, he had revealed that his name was Sunrise!"

"Sunrise? The Sunrise Sword Emperor?" Jian Wushuang gasped, his eyes opening wide.

There was but only one swordsman in the entire Green Fire World who bore the name of "Sunrise". He was none other than the Sunrise Sword Emperor, the undisputed greatest swordsman of the Green Fire World!

"No wonder." Jian Wushuang said, "No wonder these marks are so powerful and incredible. These are the hallmarks of the skills of the Sunrise Sword Emperor himself."

Jian Wushuang felt a rapturous delight in his heart as he looked in awe at the sword marks.

It was imperative that he created a stronger Sword Principle. The nine sword marks left by the Sunrise Sword Emperor would be of great hope to that vocation.

Most importantly, the nine swords marks showcased a gradual process to pursue perfection.

“These sword marks...” Jian Wushuang stared at the first sword scar carefully, instantly fascinated by the inspiration it embodied. Within moments, his eyes blinked shut.

“Master Wushuang.”

Qing Bin tried to call out to him, but he saw Jian Wushuang closing his eyes suddenly before he drew his sword and began waving it around as he practiced his strokes in the middle of two lofty mountain faces.

Realizing that Jian Wushuang was ensnared by a similar reverie of an awakening inspiration, Qing Bin retreated silently out of the gorge, leaving Jian Wushuang alone deep in his meditation peacefully.

Completely awashed with a euphoric delirium, Jian Wushuang fell into a deep trance of meditation, losing completely all sense of Time.

In a mere flash, three days had passed, but Jian Wushuang was still deep in his trance, waving his sword in practice. But the speed of his skills had increased substantially.

Floating in mid-air, God Hong, who had returned from his business, and Qing Bin stood abreast side by side, watching at Jian Wushuang who was still inside the gorge.

“Our young friend shares a certain kismet with me and he has great potential. In only two thousand years, he had managed to reach such immense strength. It will be hardly long before he truly becomes an invincible warrior.”

God Hong smiled and then glanced at Qing Bin beside him, saying, “Let no one into the gorge for now. We will leave our young friend here on his own as he mediates peacefully.”