

## Swordsman 401

### Chapter 401: A Quota for the Expedition

“Flaming Battlefield is a land of opportunities and accessible only to experts!”

“It’s also a cold grave in which countless bones of the dead are buried.”

“All territories belonging to Marquis Piaoxue will send their experts to the battlefield, and so have I. I’ve dispatched nine commanders.”

“Eight fight together in one team, while the remaining one made a breakthrough to Stage Three during the expedition and is striking out alone. A couple of days ago, the team ran into trouble.”

“They were ambushed. Five were killed and two were badly injured.”

“The fighting on Flaming Battlefield rages on, with many experts falling in battle.”

“As the fighting continues, so does the killing!”

“I will replace the five men I’ve lost on the battlefield. Now, I’ll announce the names of the five men who will take their places.”

Iron Saber Lord’s words resounded like thunder through Huoyou Palace.

Iron Saber Lord’s announcement caused a stated of frenzied excitement in the commanders present.

They had been yearning to go to Flaming Battlefield for a long time.

Their enthusiasm was not muted by the fact that it was a place rife with dangers and risks.

It was, after all, through challenges and danger that experts refined their skills and strength.

Flaming Battlefield was precisely a place that could test the mettle of these experts.

“I’ve been dreaming of going to Flaming Battlefield. I really hope I’m among the five lucky ones.” Lei Dao growled in a low voice.

Jian Wushuang also raised his head expectantly on hearing the announcement.

Iron Saber Lord began to read the names of the selected experts.

“The first one, Yan Mo of the Second Army.”

A towering burly man who was over two meters tall came forward. While his expression was grim, his eyes belied his elation at being selected.

“Yan Mo, your strength is mediocre but your defense is excellent. When you arrive at Flaming Battlefield, make full use of your advantages to complement your teammates’ strengths.”

“Understood, your Excellency.”

Yan Mo’s voice was hoarse as he responded to the Iron Saber Lord’s command.

“The second one, Bing Yue of the Second Army.”

A graceful woman clothed in white robes stepped out from the Second Army. Two soft and thin swords were strapped on her back.

“Bing Yue, you’re well-known for your achievement in comprehending the Origin of Waterdrops. You’re an expert among the commanders and highly-skilled at trapping enemies. There will be many opportunities for you on Flaming Battlefield to stretch yourself to your fullest potential. However, you’re not good at defense, so, you can rely on Yan Mo when you get there,” the Lord of the Iron Saber Territory advised.

“Understood, your Excellency.” The woman nodded.

“Lei Dao of the First Army,” the Lord continued.

Lei Dao had been waiting in anticipation and was thrilled when his name was called. He strode forward and stood before the Lord in a respectful posture.

“Lei Dao,” the Lord looked at him. “You made repeated requests to be sent to the Flaming Battlefield. Today, I grant your wish. Your power is explosive and you’re swift. You’ll be a strong force in the team.”

“However, you’ll need to overcome your impatience when you are in Flaming Battlefield.”

“Understood, your Excellency.” Lei Dao nodded. He was overwhelmed with excitement.

“Shi Ling of the First Army,” the Lord continued.

Shi Ling walked forward.

“Unlike the others, you have no special skills or strength but you have no weakness,” the Lord said to Shi Ling, “you are well-rounded in all skills, including speed, power and defense. I believe you’ll find your stage there.”

“Understood, your Excellency.” Shi Ling nodded gravely.

Among the four that had been selected, the first and the second Army each accounted for two people.

Those who had not been called became anxious.

Jian Wushuang realized that the four had been selected because of their respective advantages.

Like Mo Yan, he was good at defending.

Bing Yue was an expert at trapping enemies.

Lei Dao could call upon an incredible amount of power and speed in an instant.

As for Shi Ling, he was balanced in all aspects.

*“The last one must have a unique skill.”*?Jian Wushuang thought to himself.

“The last one...” the Lord spoke slowly as he looked around.

Everyone waited with bated breath.

“Swordsman of the First Army!”

All attention fixed on Jian Wushuang.

He was astonished as he had not expected to be chosen.

The commanders in the hall were similarly stunned.

Jian Wushuang was a newcomer in the army.

And yet he had been selected to fight on Flaming Battlefield?

Jian Wushuang managed to shake off his shock-induced stupor and presented himself to the Iron Saber Lord.

“Swordsman!”

The Lord stared gravely at Jian Wushuang and said, “You’re only just joined my army, so I shouldn’t have selected you. But you are mighty and most importantly, you have a unique Realm Technique.”

“It’s rare and would be very helpful to a strong team.”

Lei Dao, Shi Ling and those who had witnessed Jian Wushuang’s Blood River nodded their agreement.

It was true that during the fight for Blood Gems, Jian Wushuang’s Blood River had nullified their disadvantaged position.

This skill would be an advantage when they fought on Flaming Battlefield.

“Your skill will be of immense help to the team. It’s possibly more useful than the skills of Lei Dao and the other three put together. Moreover, you have strong survival instincts. I believe you’ll survive Flaming Battlefield if you don’t encounter an expert of the Heaven-defying Saint Realm or lord’s level.”

“That’s why I selected you as the last member of my team.”

“Are you willing to go?”

The Lord looked at Jian Wushuang.

## **Chapter 402: Flaming Battlefield!**

“Of course, I’m willing to go.” Jian Wushuang nodded without hesitation.

Like the other commanders, he had been longing to go to Flaming Battlefield.

*“The Iron Saber Territory is small and lacks real experts. Since I’ve been here, I haven’t had a chance to show my full strength or tried my best to fight. On the contrary, Flaming Battlefield will have many experts in Stage Three and at the Heaven-defying level of the Saint Realm.”*

*“When I get there, I can use my power to its full extent.”*

*“Besides, His Excellency was right. I can always protect myself using my trump cards. Even if I encounter an expert at Heaven-defying Level of the Saint Realm, I could still survive.”*

"Since you are fine with the arrangement, don't tarry. Go prepare yourselves. Tomorrow, you'll go to Flaming Battlefield with Gu Man," the Iron Saber Lord said to the five commanders.

"Yes." The five nodded respectfully.

Soon after, the people assembled in the palace dispersed.

In the First Army.

"Swordsman, Lei Dao, and Shi Ling, congratulations to you all."

"I really envy you guys."

Yao Mei, Boozer, and Yun He were full of admiration.

"The Flaming Battlefield is extremely dangerous, please take care of yourselves when you get there," General Qing sounded grave. "Swordsman can protect himself and Shi Ling is well-rounded so I'm not worried about them. But you, Lei Dao."

General Qing looked at Lei Dao and continued, "His Excellency is right. You're too impetuous. This will give you trouble if you don't try to control it on Flaming Battlefield."

"I see." Lei Dao nodded heavily. The words of advice were seared in his mind.

"Ok, let's stop talking and have a good drink," General Qing said with a smile.

The commanders of the First Army didn't need to be told twice to start celebrating.

Early the next morning, Jian Wushuang, Lei Dao, and Shi Ling appeared in the void above Huoyou Palace with Yan Mo and Bing Yue of the Second Army.

They greeted each other.

Before long, Gu Man arrived as well.

"Your Honors, if you're ready, let's go now," Gu Man said humbly.

Gu Man worked for Marquis Piaoxue as a messenger, but he was inferior to the rest of them as he was only at Stage One of the Pinnacle of the Saint Realm. He had to show due respect to Jian Wushuang and the other four, who were in Stage Two.

"Let's go," Jian Wushuang answered.

Led by Gu Man, the five commanders made their way to the Flaming Battlefield.

During their journey, Gu Man said to them, "Your Honors, I have something to tell you about Flaming Battlefield."

The five nodded and listened to him carefully.

"Flaming Battlefield is named after the Flaming Mountains, an unbroken line of ridges."

"The whole battlefield is boundless and spans four million kilometers."

The five were shocked at the information.

Four million kilometers?

Even one territory was smaller than an area of one million square kilometers.

Jian Wushuang's hometown, Nanyang Continent, covered only hundreds of thousand square kilometers.

The Flaming Battlefield was just a battlefield but yet its area was so vast.

Even Stage Two experts like them would take a month or two at full speed to cover the entire area.

"Flaming Battlefield stretches over two Domains and is involved in the conflict between Marquis Piaoxue and Marquis Cangyue."

"Both of them are top experts in Divine Land. They have been fighting for their own interests for a long time. Much of the fighting has taken place on Flaming Battlefield."

Jian Wushuang nodded imperceptibly when he heard this.

In the vast Divine Land, Three Ancestors were supreme.

Second to them were Ten Sovereigns.

After the sovereigns were 72 Marquises.

Since Marquis Piaoxue and Marquis Cangyue were among the 72 Marquises, they had to be the top experts.

Jian Wushuang understood that the two marquises were the top experts among those in the Cloud Realm.

Iron Saber Lord and Silver Wing Lord were Domain Lords and were in the Cloud Realms as well, but they could not hold a candle to the marquises.

Naturally, the battle between the two marquises was intense.

"Many experts from the two marquises' camps have gathered on Flaming Battlefield. The fighting between the two camps has been endless. The weakest experts are in at least Stage Two of the Pinnacle of the Saint Realm."

"Usually, each territory has about 10 experts fighting on Flaming Battlefield. When they perish, their Lords will dispatch other experts to take their places. Just like you guys, you're going there to replace those from our territory who have fallen."

"In addition to the experts from the two camps, there are also many experts from other Domains on the battlefield."

"As a result, the number of the experts fighting on Flaming Battlefield is staggering."

Gu Man's words stunned the five commanders.

As there were hundreds of territories in each domain and 10 experts from each territory, the total number of the experts on the battlefield could be as high as ten thousand!

Everyone was shaken by the thought of so many experts at Stage Two fighting one another.

*"It's indeed a battlefield of experts,"* Jian Wushuang thought to himself.

"By the way, you mentioned opportunities in Flaming Battlefield. What exactly are those opportunities? It can't be fighting all the time, right?" Jian Wushuang asked Gu Man, frowning.

If the opportunities referred only to killing one's opponents and challenging one's own abilities, there would not have been so many experts drawn to the battlefield.

"It's true that there are many opportunities on Flaming Battlefield, including many big ones. The opportunities one has access to depends on his achievements in battle," Gu Man answered.

"Battle achievement?" Jian Wushuang raised his eyebrows.

"One can get battle achievements by killing his opponents or accomplishing certain tasks." Gu Man explained.

### **Chapter 403: "Great Demon" Di Jing!**

"Battle achievement can be exchanged for a dizzying array of treasures and opportunities in the camp's Treasure Vault."

"The treasures are precious, but the experts on Flaming Battlefield value the opportunities more."

"The opportunities refer to the caves and mansions belonging to deceased experts," Gu Man explained.

"Caves and mansions?" Jian Wushuang was in a daze.

Lei Dao and Shi Ling exchanged glances.

The First Army commanders had explored an expert's mansion not long ago and had found many treasures and opportunities. The opportunities were eventually seized by the Iron Saber Lord, so they had no idea of what they were.

"Rumor has it that there are 330 cave mansions on Flaming Battlefield, and all of them were left behind by experts above the Cloud Realm."

"Really?" The five were astonished.

330 cave mansions belonging to experts above the Cloud Realm?

"Yes, this rumor has been verified. It's true," Gu Man smiled.

"Those mansions could date up to a thousand years ago..."

"A millennium ago, there was a great and bloodthirsty demon named Di Jing who killed many experts. He massacred numerous Domains. His cruelty enraged many and finally spurred many experts into action, who gathered to kill him."

"However, Di Jing was very highly skilled and had reached the top level of the Cloud Realm. He managed to escape every siege."

“At last, through a concerted effort, eight marquises and 322 Cloud Realm experts chased Di Jing to Flaming Mountains.”

“A thousand years may have passed but that battle is still praised by people today. It was one of the greatest battles in the history of Divine Land and it left in its wake desolation and innumerable ruins in Flaming Mountains.”

“All eight marquises and 322 experts perished in the battle.”

“Di Jing disappeared. He might have died with them.”

The five commanders were stunned by the story.

Eight marquises and 322 Cloud Realm experts died fighting Di Jing?

How could Di Jing be so terrifying?

“Before the battle began, the marquises and experts knew that Di Jing was very strong, so they had been prepared for the worst. They established their cave mansions on Flaming Mountains and left their treasures and belongings in them.”

“After the battle ended, many experts explored the mountains to look for the mansions. As time went by, more and more mansions were found.”

“With those valuable mansions scattered around it, Flaming Mountains became a hotly contested spot. In particular, Marquis Piaoxue and Marquis Cangyue have been fighting fiercely for it, as it’s located between their Domains. The ferocious fighting led to the evolution of the mountains into the Flaming Battlefield,” Gu Man continued.

The five fell silent when they heard this.

They had never imagined that Flaming Battlefield had so much history.

The contents of the 330 cave mansions belonging to the Cloud Realm experts and eight marquises had tremendous value.

“All the experts on Flaming Battlefield had come for the mansions.”

“For the last thousand years, many of those mansions have been discovered. Close to a hundred are now controlled by Marquis Piaoxue. While many of the treasures and opportunities have been seized, there are some that have not been unearthed.”

“For certain mansions, you can get some opportunities as long as you enter them.”

“You’ll need battle achievements to enter the mansions.”

Having heard and understood Gu Man’s explanation, the five commanders nodded.

Battle achievements could be gained by killing enemies or accomplishing certain tasks. The battle achievements could then be exchanged for treasures in the Treasure Vault or used to enter the cave mansions.

The mansions held vast opportunities!

The warriors valued opportunities over the treasures.

Jian Wushuang had achieved much for his young age because of the opportunities of Heavenly Creation Skill and Ancestor's Land.

In particular, Heavenly Creation Skill had been of the greatest help to him.

"Gu Man, you said that among the 330 mansions on Flaming Battlefield, Marquis Piauxue controls close to a hundred of them. Does that mean there are many mansions yet to be found?" asked Jian Wushuang.

"Yes." Gu Man nodded. "At present, we have only discovered two hundred mansions. The other mansions, including those belonging to two marquises, have not been found."

"Flaming Battlefield covers a vast area and the mansions are deeply hidden, so it's almost like looking for a needle in a haystack. Fortunately, there are many experts on the battlefield. Generally, mansions have been discovered at intervals ranging from two to ten years."

"However, new discoveries are always accompanied by fierce battles."

Jian Wushuang agreed with Gu Man inwardly.

Experts would be drawn to newly discovered mansions compared to those that were of common knowledge. Recently unearthed mansions would have more treasures; naturally, experts would fight aggressively for them.

While the five rushed to Flaming Battlefield, Gu Man continued to feed them with information about their destination.

Six days later, they finally arrived at Flaming Battlefield.

"Your Honors, the campsite of Marquis Piauxue is below us. Let's get down there," said Gu Man with a smile.

The five stood in the void and stared down at the huge campsite several kilometers away.

From their vantage point, they saw many figures with magnificent aura.

After an exchange of nods, they charged down to the campsite.

#### **Chapter 404: The Treasure Vault**

As there were numerous experts gathered in the campsite, Jian Wushuang and his four commanders attracted little attention.

"Your Honors, these are your ID tokens. Please refine them first." Gu Man explained as he handed them five tokens. "Those tokens represent your identification and are in the same stage as you, which means Stage Two. Each token can only be refined by its owner, so our rivals will not be able to pass themselves off as our men."



“On Flaming Battlefield, ID tokens claimed from experts you have killed represent your battle achievements.”

“For example, the ID tokens of experts in Stage Two can be exchanged for 100 battle achievement points.”

“ID tokens of Stage Three experts can be exchanged for 1000 battle achievement points.”

As the five commanders listened to Gu Man, they refined their tokens.

When the refinement was completed, they sensed the aura of the tokens belonging to experts near them.

*“Experts within one camp can sense each other’s token. So if I can’t sense a token, it must belong to a rival camp.”*?Jian Wushuang thought to himself.

Jian Wushuang also realized that there was a number inside the token.

The number in his token currently stood at zero.

This meant that he had obtained zero battle achievements.

“Your Honors, let me show you our Treasure Vault.” Gu Man continued.

The five commanders followed Gu Man to the Treasure Vault.

The vault was essentially a big camp, inside which a grey-clothed elder sat with squinted eyes.?As they entered the vault, the elder glanced at them and said, “The list of the treasures is beside you. Tell me what you want and pay me the corresponding battle achievement points. You’ll receive the items you ask for three days later.”

The elder ignored them after he explained the treasure redemption procedure.

The five commanders did not take offense at the elder’s curtness. They took the list off the table and began to peruse it.

The list mentioned various kinds of treasures, each of which required a specified level of battle achievement.

Jian Wushuang spotted Blood Gem on the list with the number “1,000” written behind it.? *“I need 1,000 points of battle achievement to exchange for one Blood Gem.”*

*“So expensive.”*?Jian Wushuang grouched to himself.

Gu Man had just explained how battle achievement points could be earned.

Killing a Stage Two expert would merely earn him 100 battle achievement points.

He would need to kill a Stage Three expert to get 1000 battle achievement points.

In other words, one Blood Gem was worth as much as the life of a Stage Three expert.

*“Luckily, I already have some Blood Gems and don’t need more.”*?Jian Wushuang was relieved.

After a cursory look at the list, Jian Wushuang turned his attention to the list of the cave mansions.

Marquis Piauxue controlled a total of 99 mansions.

These mansions were closely watched by many experts, and the mansions included those that had belonged to three marquises.

Different battle achievements were required to enter different mansions. The level of battle achievement required to enter a cave mansion depended on the skill level of the mansion's owner.

Jian Wushuang's eyes lit up when he read the names of the three marquises.

One mansion had been left by a marquis named Beimo.

Marquis Beimo had a comprehensive understanding of World Origin and had made incredible achievements in it. He had left three opportunities in his mansion.

Every expert who comprehended World Origin would be attracted to them.

Jian Wushuang, having comprehended World Origin for a long time, naturally hoped that he could explore this mansion.

As the three marquis mansions were the most precious ones, gaining entry demanded a higher price.

The price of a single entry of Marquis Beimo's mansion was a hundred thousand points of battle achievement!

Earning 100,000 battle achievement points would require killing 100 experts at Stage Three.

Having gone through the lists, Jian Wushuang left the Treasure Vault sighing.

"Your Honors, it's now time to meet your captain, Sir Axe," Gu Man said.

"Sir Axe?" Lei Dao looked excited.

"Yes, it's him." Shi Ling smiled.

Lei Dao and Shi Ling had been in Iron Saber Territory for a long time. They had been on good terms with Sir Axe as the latter had been from the First Army as well before he left for Flaming Battlefield.

The five commanders followed Gu Man into another camp and saw a burly dark-skinned man drinking alone.

The man appeared to be in low spirits. There were two Origin Marks on his exposed arms.

"Haha, Sir Axe."

Lei Dao and Shi Ling laughed heartily when they saw their old friend.

The man snapped his head up. "Lei Dao, Shi Ling, it's you!"

"Sir Axe." Yan Mo and Bing Yue greeted the man as well. They were acquainted with Sir Axe but did not know him as well as Lei Dao.

Among the five commanders, Jian Wushuang was the only one who had never met Sir Axe before.

"Your Honors, I gotta go now, enjoy your time here!" Gu Man bowed.

Gu Man had completed his task to escort the five commanders to Flaming Battlefield and to apprise them of information about the battlefield. It was now time for him to leave.

"Sir Axe, please allow me to introduce Swordsman. He had only recently become a commander and is now here with us," Lei Dao said to Sir Axe.

"Sir Axe." Jian Wushuang greeted him.

Sir Axe nodded at Jian Wushuang and forced a smile.

It was evident that Sir Axe was in a foul mood. This was no doubt because he and his team had just encountered an attack on Flaming Battlefield and had suffered a great loss.

"Sir Axe, what happened to you and your team several days ago?" Lei Dao frowned as he asked.

"Alas." Sir Axe sighed. "I'm a total mess. Several days ago, two teams attacked us suddenly for no reason while we were doing our own jobs. They seemed to have known that we would be there. We were trapped by them and had no chance to escape."

"If not for the flaws in their teamwork, we would all have died there."

#### **Chapter 405: The Outer Area**

Sir Axe looked glum as he described the incident.

They had lost five teammates in that fight, and only three had survived the attack.

Jian Wushuang and the others sighed.

Everyone had to accept his own fate. Adventuring in Flaming Battlefield was just like dancing on a blade.

"Who are the other two who survived with you?" Lei Dao asked.

"Feng Zi and Zang Feng." Sir Axe answered. "They were badly wounded and are still recovering. I guess they'll regain their peak fitness in two to three days. We'll have to wait until then before we can fight again."

"No problem." Lei Dao nodded gravely.

Since they were very close to the battlefield, they did not mind waiting another two or three days.

Three days later, the two wounded teammates had both recovered. The eight men gathered to prepare for a new adventure.

"Listen up, Flaming Battlefield is dangerous. Your carelessness could kill you. You'll have to follow my orders when we're on the battlefield. Do not hesitate to kill or escape when I tell you to, ok?" Sir Axe warned.

"OK." Jian Wushuang and the others nodded.

Among the eight of them, apart from Jian Wushuang, Sir Axe was the strongest. He also had the most experience and was therefore highly regarded and trusted by his teammates.

"Before we leave, tell me your strength and best skills. Let's get a better understanding of each other," Sir Axe added.

"I'm good at defense." Yan Mo spoke first.

Lei Dao, Shi Ling, and Bing Yue described their strengths to Sir Axe as well.

When it was Jian Wushuang's turn, he smiled. "My body's quite strong and I have strong survival skills. I also know one Realm Technique."

The words were barely out of his mouth when Lei Dao chimed in, "His Realm Technique is brilliant. It's helped us a lot."

"That's fine." Sir Axe glanced at Jian Wushuang, but he didn't take Lei Dao's words seriously.

"Well, let's go now." The eight of them left for Flaming Battlefield.

...

Flaming Battlefield was both a battlefield and grave for experts.

It stretched across four million kilometers and was divided into three parts, Perimeter, Outer Area, and Inner Area.

It took Jian Wushuang and his team five days to arrive at the outer area of Flaming Battlefield from their camp.

"From this moment on, we must be careful," Sir Axe said solemnly.

Unlike the edges of the battlefield, they would encounter many rivals once they stepped into the Outer Area.

"We are a strong team and won't face too much danger unless we encounter another extremely strong team or a joint attack from more than one team. But, we should still be careful," Sir Axe said while surveilling the immediate environment.

"Zang Feng, you have the most acute senses among us, so you go on ahead of us."

"Ok!" Zang Feng, who was clothed in green robes, led the way.

"Yan Mo, you have the best defensive skills, so you stay behind us as a defender. The rest of you, line up between them." Sir Axe ordered.

"Understood!" the teammates nodded and obeyed the order.

They marched forward slowly.

"I hope we don't have to wait too long for our first battle," Lei Dao said excitedly to Jian Wushuang, who walked beside him.

Hearing his words, Jian Wushuang could not help but smile.

He shared Lei Dao's feelings.

But it was not easy to run into rivals in such a vast land.

They did not see a single soul for the next three days on the battlefield.

"Three days have passed, and there has been nothing, not even a ghost!" Lei Dao was impatient.

"Lei Dao, don't you remember what his Excellency told you before we left?" Shi Ling looked at Lei Dao.

Lei Dao curled his lips. He was raring to fight.

At this moment...

Zang Feng suddenly shouted from ahead, "Someone is coming!"

Everyone looked ahead and saw several black figures in the distance.

The black figures were far away but were rapidly closing the distance between them and the Iron Saber commanders.

"They are from our own camp." Zang Feng said as he sensed the aura of black figures' tokens.

Only experts from the same camp could sense each other's tokens.

Everyone was relieved but Lei Dao was disappointed. He was upset that the fight he had expected would not materialize.

"Everyone, stay alert. On Flaming Battlefield, experts from your own side could turn against you because for treasures and battle achievements." Sir Axe warned.

Jian Wushuang was contemplative when he heard Sir Axe's cautionary words.

The black figures finally arrived in front of the team.

A bare-headed man led the team of seven. This man, who had a huge axe mark on his body, looked at Sir Axe with interest.

"Sir Axe, it's been a while since we last met." The man smiled coldly and continued, "I heard that you suffered a devastating defeat and lost most of your men during the fight several days ago. I really admire your courage to return."

"Where I go is none of your business, Feng Zhu," Sir Axe replied coolly.

"Yeah, you're right. I'm just wondering how many men from your new team will join the bones that are already buried underground." Feng Zhu smirked and gestured to his men. "Let's go!"

Feng Zhu cast a final look at Sir Axe and led his men away.

"This guy..."

It was obvious that Sir Axe and Feng Zhu held grudges against each other.

"Decades ago when I wandered alone, I clashed with him and left that axe mark on his body," Sir Axe said in an expressionless tone. "Two years ago, we met again on Flaming Battlefield and fought a fierce

battle. We were equally strong and from the same camp, so the fight ended without a result. Since then, he has held a grudge against me.”

“Oh, I see.”

Sir Axe’s explanation clarified the situation for Jian Wushuang and the rest.

“Well,?enough about him, let’s continue our march,” Sir Axe continued his journey with the others.

## **Chapter 406: The First Fight**

It was a sweltering summer day. The sun baked the ground and the air was hot and dry.

Jian Wushuang and his teammates had traveled Outer Area for several days, but they had not encountered any teams from the hostile camp.

Lei Dao, who was easily irritable, looked impatient, while the other members were calm.

“Lei Dao, it’s been a long time since we last met. You still haven’t changed.” Sir Axe cast a slight smile at Lei Dao.

“I’ve always been like that,” Lei Dao replied with a shrug.

Suddenly... Boom! A violent roar sounded from a distance, followed by a faint stream of power.

“What’s this?”

They immediately looked in the direction of the noise.

“A fierce fight ahead?” Sir Axe’s eyes lit up.

“Haha, it’s time for us to fight.” Lei Dao laughed.

There were only two camps on the entire Flaming Battlefield. If there was a fierce fight, it must have been initiated by a group from the rival camp.

“Let’s go. Hurry up,” Sir Axe hustled the rest along. The group sped up toward the fighting ahead.

As they approached, understanding dawned on them.

The two groups engaged in the raging battle were both strong. However, one side had lost two members and seemed to be at a huge disadvantage. This squad began to run in the direction of Jian Wushuang and his teammates.

“Hum?”

The leader of this squad, a brown-haired man, had been pleasantly surprised when he saw Jian Wushuang’s group approach.

“We’re in the same camp. Please do me a favor,” the brown-haired man said.

Sir Axe looked from the brown-haired man to the squad of Marquis Cangyue. He nodded. “OK!”

“Go!”

Sir Axe issued his command discreetly. Jian Wushuang, Lei Dao, and the other commanders charged toward the squad of Marquis Cangyue.

The brown-haired man turned to rejoin the fight.

“Hey hey, this our first fight in Flaming Battlefield. We have to win.” Lei Dao licked his lips. His eyes were eager.

Jian Wushuang considered the Marquis Cangyue squad.

Their leader was a young man in cyan clothes who radiated evil. When he realized that he could not sense the tokens of the newcomers, his face fell.

“Damn it. Another squad from Marquis Piaoxue!”

The young man’s eyes were flinty as he gestured to his squad. “Leave now!”

His squad obeyed and retreated.

Their squad was not strong enough to fight against more than a squad of eight people.

They did not have the ability to deal with two squads.

Lei Dao was anxious as the rival squad retreated. He shouted to Jian Wushuang. “Swordsman, we’re depending on you. Don’t let them run away.”

Lei Dao was unwilling to miss this rare opportunity to fight.

“Understood.” Jian Wushuang nodded imperceptibly. An overwhelming surge of Sword Essence rose from his body. Invisible waves of Sword Essence rapidly radiated outwards and covered the entire area.

As the Marquis Cangyue squad was close to Jian Wushuang, they immediately felt the effects of his Sword Realm and were suppressed.

“What?”

The Marquis Cangyue experts were astonished as their movement was greatly hampered. It was as though they were stuck in mud.

Sir Axe and his comrades were elated.

“Swordsman, good job,” Sir Axe praised Jian Wushuang. They began to hunt down their opponents.

“Crap.”

The Marquis Cangyue experts panicked, but they could only try their best to resist the advances of Sir Axe’s squad.

As they launched counterattacks, they realized that Sword Realm also had an effect of suppressing their strength.

“What an odd skill this is!” the rival squad’s leader looked terrified.

With the help of Sword Realm, Jian Wushuang and his comrades gained an advantage over their opponents.

Furthermore, the overall strength of two squads was far superior to that of the Marquis Cangyue squad. They were therefore able to overwhelm the latter with ease.

The Marquis Cangyue squad managed to hold out for a while. Then they started losing ground.

“Run! Run in a different direction!”

The rival squad’s leader looked grave as he cried out. His escape was blocked by Sir Axe and the brown-haired man.

Being team leaders, all three of them were at the Peak of Stage Two and had two Origin Marks. However, the rival squad leader had to fight two leaders while being under the influence of Sword Realm. He faced imminent death.

“You can’t run!”

Lei Dao sneered, eyes shining with frenzied excitement. Together with his comrades, he continued to pursue the rival experts.

The Marquis Cangyue experts were terrified. Under the influence of Sword Realm, they were unable to escape.

But right at this moment...

“Haha, Sir Axe. You’re very lucky.” Laughter reverberated through the area.

A squad appeared nearby.

The Marquis Cangyue experts were in despair.

The squad that had just appeared was also from Marquis Piaoxue Camp.

This squad had previously fought with Jian Wushuang and his teammates. Their leader was Feng Zhu, who had a grudge against Sir Axe.

At the sight of Feng Zhu, Sir Axe’s face darkened.

His team had been on the cusp of winning this fight. They would have shared the battle achievements when their opponents were killed.

Now that Feng Zhu had appeared with his squad, it did not bode well for them.

## **Chapter 407: Swordsman’s Realm**

“Feng Zhu, why are you here?” Sir Axe asked in an icy tone.

“Why? I’m here to help you of course.” Feng Zhu sneered.

“Hum, I don’t need your help. You’d better leave immediately.” Sir Axe snorted.



“Heh heh. It’s not up to you.” Feng Zhu laughed. He gestured to his squad. “Take action!”

Feng Zhu and his people rushed toward the squad of Marquis Cangyue.

“Damn it!”

Jian Wushuang and his teammates were annoyed by the turn of events.

Feng Zhu claimed that he had come to help, but his real intention was to get the battle achievements that would be up for grabs once the Marquis Cangyue squad was vanquished.

“You want to grab our battle achievements?” Jian Wushuang’s eyes were cold. His aggression and fury were palpable.

His killing intent materialized as an immense blood-colored river.

It was Road to the Underworld!

Blood River tumbled and covered the whole area.

“Gosh!”

The strength of the Marquis Cangyue experts had already been weakened by Sword Realm. The deterioration in their strength was now exacerbated by Blood River and they were unable to stabilize their stances.

Their strength was suppressed to a new low.

The Blood River surged toward Feng Zhu and his people, causing their speed to decrease.

“What’s this?”

Feng Zhu and his people looked at the Blood River in shock.

“Hurry up. Go kill the experts of Marquis Cangyue.” Jian Wushuang shouted.

“OK.” Lei Dao and the other commanders started to strike with their best moves.

As the Marquis Cangyue experts were greatly weakened, they were unable to withstand the attacks. All of them perished, including their leader, who was killed by Sir Axe.

Calm was restored to the area.

Feng Zhu and his people looked grave as they fixed their eyes on Jian Wushuang.

“This man has a powerful skill!”

“That Realm he displayed was so powerful?”

“The Blood River slowed the Marquis Cangyue squad so much that they were unable to escape! The Realm is too terrifying!”

It was terrifying indeed!

Jian Wushuang's Realm Technique would make it possible for one squad to defeat an equally skilled squad.

The Realm Technique could also restrict speed of opponents so that they could not run away.

Any squad that had such an odd and terrifying technique at their disposal would be a force to reckon with.

Feng Zhu was envious of Sir Axe.

"Feng Zhu, sorry, it looks like you will get nothing from this trip." Sir Axe sneered as he looked at Feng Zhu.

Feng Zhu and his squad had been affected by Jian Wushuang's Realm Technique. They had not been able to attack the Marquis Cangyue experts and therefore could not share the battle achievements.

"Hum, you're lucky to have such brilliant expert." Feng Zhu considered Jian Wushuang

Sir Axe could not help but laugh as he looked at Jian Wushuang with the same appraising look.

He recalled Jian Wushuang's words. "I have a strong body and won't be easily killed. I've also mastered one Realm Technique."

Jian Wushuang's tone had been casual.

Lei Dao had commented that Jian Wushuang's Realm Technique was formidable and would be of great help to the squad. At that time, Sir Axe had not taken him seriously.

Sir Axe now knew that he had a valuable asset.

Jian Wushuang's technique was something that every squad desired.

Jian Wushuang had fully exerted the effect of the Realm Technique.

"Boy, what's your name?" Feng Zhu looked at Jian Wushuang and asked.

"Swordsman," replied Jian Wushuang indifferently.

"Swordsman?" Feng Zhu frowned. "Your Realm Technique is very useful. Would you be interested to join my squad? If you agree, you'll get 30 percent of all the battle achievements we earn. What do you think?"

"Feng Zhu..." Sir Axe voiced his objections.

Lei Dao and his teammates looked at Jian Wushuang.

Feng Zhu had given Jian Wushuang very attractive terms.

However, Jian Wushuang did not hesitate and shook his head. "Sorry, I'm not interested."

"Oh?" Feng Zhu frowned. "In that case, let me know if you change your mind."

Feng Zhu then left with his people.

"Gentlemen, thanks a lot. See you!"

The experts who had been attacked by the Marquis Cangyue squad clasped their hands with Jian Wushuang and his teammates. Then they left.

All the battle achievements belonged to Jian Wushuang and his teammates.

Sir Axe began to distribute the battle achievements to his squad.

Allocation was easy. They had killed eight opponents and received eight ID tokens which represented 800 battle achievements, so each of them would get 100 battle achievements.

But if the treasures were distributed equally, it would be unfair to Jian Wushuang who had contributed the most. Therefore, Sir Axe decided to give Jian Wushuang more treasures.

The eight dead experts had held numerous treasures in their Interspatial Rings. Jian Wushuang received 30 percent of the treasures.

No one disagreed with it.

It was an unspoken agreement that whoever contributed the most in Flaming Battlefield would get the most treasures.

#### **Chapter 408: The Same Ending?**

Scenes of slaughter were seen throughout Flaming Battlefield.

Jian Wushuang and his teammates had been on the battlefield for half a month.

A magnificent blood river spread across the vast sky and cast a shadow over the entire area.

A squad of Marquis Cangyue experts was mired in the blood river.

Being heavily suppressed by the blood river, they were in a state of fright and shock.

“Haha, kill them all!”

Sir Axe growled a command and his people charged forward. Helped by the blood river, they had an advantage over their opponents.

The Marquis Cangyue squad could not escape as their mobility was curtailed under the influence of the Blood River.

A ferocious battle ensued, with the seven experts killed by Jian Wushuang and his comrades.

“This feels so good!” Sir Axe was delighted.

He looked over at Jian Wushuang. “Swordsman, your Realm Technique is really awesome!”

The other commanders shared his sentiments.

Over the past half month, they had encountered three squads from Marquis Cangyue.

For the first encounter, they had vanquished an enemy squad with the help of Realm Technique.

The second time, they had met a more powerful squad. Fighting had been intense and they had almost lost. Fortunately, the Realm Technique had enabled them to eventually draw with the hostile squad.

The third time, they had slaughtered the enemy squad they encountered.

Their success on the battlefield could be attributed to Jian Wushuang's Blood River.

The powerful technique affected strength and speed, rendering their opponents helpless against their attacks. This made it easy to dispatch their opponents.

Sir Axe and the other six experts were ecstatic at their battle successes.

While they were engaged with slaughtering the third squad, Jian Wushuang and his comrades were unaware that a black-robed woman had appeared on a barren mountain a distance away.

"Shadow, what's up?" An elder with sword-shaped eyebrows looked over.

The black-robed woman belonged to a powerful squad. Two of its 10 members had reached the Peak of Stage Two.

"I left a mark on that magic weapon. Now I can feel it," the black-robed woman said tonelessly.

"Oh?" the elder responded, eyes lighting up. "That means that the person I intentionally released has returned to Flaming Battlefield?"

"Yeah, I think so." The black-robed woman nodded.

"It seems that we'll be getting more battle achievements." The elder smirked. He issued an order to an expert next to him. "Tell Wu Hong to bring his squad."

"Yes." The expert responded and left to deliver the message.

Half a day later, a squad of 10 experts arrived. They were led by a savage-looking man with unruly hair.

The elder smiled. "Wu Hong, my brother, we'll make a bundle."

"A bundle?" Wu Hong was surprised. "Is it the man whom we released?"

"Yes, it's him." The elder nodded with a smile. "When I let him go, I guessed that he would return. Just as I expected! This time, I'm sure he must have brought a squad with him..."

Wu Hong grinned. "Well, what are we waiting for? Let's go right now."

"No hurry. Shadow left a mark on them so they can't escape us. We don't need to rush," the elder explained laughingly.

"You need to exercise caution. It hasn't been peaceful in Outer Area recently. Many squads disappeared without a trace. They must have been killed by others. Don't follow in their footsteps," Shadow said with a frown.

"Our two squads are strong. Do we need to worry? Moreover, we've done this several times. It'll be easy for us to manage." The elder sneered.

The two squads, including three experts at the Peak of Stage Two, set off from the mountain. They headed toward Jian Wushuang and his comrades.

...

Jian Wushuang and his comrades slowly glided through the sky.

His comrades were in a celebratory mood as they had gained much over the past half month.

However, Jian Wushuang was ambivalent.

He had felt unchallenged during the fights.

He had come to the battlefield to test himself against experts at higher levels. In Outer Area, squads were usually comprised of Stage Two experts, who posed little threat to him.

Jian Wushuang was raring to enter Inner Area to fight with more powerful experts.

As Jian Wushuang was deep in contemplation, 10 black figures appeared on the horizon.

"Someone is coming."

Zang Feng, who was leading the group, sounded a warning.

The others raised their heads to look. They were surprised to see the approaching figures in front of them. Soon, they realized that another 10 figures had appeared behind them.

"What?"

The sudden appearance of these people startled the group. Sir Axe stared at the leader of the approaching squad and was shocked when he realized who it was.

Zang Feng and Feng Zi were also dumbstruck.

"That's them!"

Sir Axe, Zang Feng, and Feng Zi recognized the group.

Not long ago, before Jian Wushuang had arrived at Flaming Battlefield, their squad had encountered the same people in Outer Area.

Then, they had been surrounded by 20 people, making it impossible for them to escape.

Five of their teammates had been killed; three of them were lucky enough to escape.

But now...

The same people!

The same situation!

Would the outcome be the same?

**Chapter 409: Jian Wushuang, Erupt!**

“How can it be possible? ”

Sir Axe, Zang Feng, and Feng Zi were petrified.

There were so many squads in the vast Outer Area that it was almost impossible for two squads to meet twice. However... they had now run into the same people.

The situation was exactly the same!

“It’s a trap!”

“These people must have left marks on us or on our treasures.”

Having fallen for the same trap twice, Sir Axe realized that the rival squad had specifically targeted them.

Lei Dao, Shi Ling, Yan Mo, and Bing Yue looked sick with worry.

The two hostile squads had surrounded them, cutting off all openings for escape.

It was difficult for them to escape, but if they had a head-on confrontation... three of the 20 opponents were experts at the Peak of Stage Two.

As for Sir Axe’s squad, only Sir Axe himself had the battle strength of the Peak of Stage Two.

The immense gap in strength between the two groups could not be bridged even with Jian Wushuang’s Realm Technique.

“It’s over.”

Sir Axe involuntarily trembled in fear.

“Swordsman, Zang Feng, Feng Zi, Lei Dao, Shi Ling, Yan Mo, Bing Yue,” Sir Axe called. There was a hint of despair in his eyes. “The two squads must have left a mark on me or on one of my treasures. I’m afraid that they deliberately released me after they ambushed my squad the last time.

“Their intention was to ambush me again.

“They have 20 experts, including three at the Peak of Stage Two. We will not be able to fight them, so follow my orders later and find an opportunity to escape. We might yet survive with the help of Swordsman’s Realm Technique.

“Let’s do our best.” Sir Axe roared.

“Bastard, even if I have to die, I’ll drag you down with me,” Lei Dao said. His eyes were frenzied.

“Try our best!”

“We won’t make it easy for them to kill us!”

Zang Feng, Shi Ling, and the other comrades were resolute. Crazy determination shone in their eyes.

Jian Wushuang’s eyes narrowed. *“I have to use my full strength this time.”*

The two hostile squads approached. Jian Wushuang and his comrades were besieged by them.

The elder with sword-shaped eyebrows looked at his opponents and sneered. "I let them go the last time to catch a bigger fish. It's now time to take my hook back."

"Right, we can't use the same trick again," a fat middle-aged man, an expert at the Peak of Stage Two, said.

"We don't need to show mercy. Let's kill them all!" the elder with sword-shaped eyebrows responded in an icy voice.

"Let's do it!" The two hostile squads obeyed the elder's order and charged forward.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Strong waves of power propagated through the area and shook the ground.

The 20 experts darted toward Jian Wushuang and his comrades from all directions. Most of them had fevered looks in their eyes. Some of the attackers cackled loudly.

"Swordsman, display your Realm. Gentlemen, let's fight," Sir Axe said, barely hiding the desperation in his voice.

The battle started.

A terrifying Sword Essence suddenly erupted from the squad of eight experts. Sir Axe and Lei Dao looked toward its source and saw two tremendous Sword Soul Phantoms rise.

Each being almost 100 feet tall, the Sword Soul Phantoms towered above them like mountains.

Splendid, terrifying Sword Essence radiated from the two Sword Soul Phantoms.

30 feet of Sword Soul Phantom was third-grade while 100 feet of Sword Soul Phantom was considered first-grade. This meant that there were two first-grade Sword Souls.

It was therefore not surprising that the Sword Essence was so powerful.

"Gosh!"

"What's this?"

"Sword Soul Phantom?"

Sir Axe, Lei Dao, Shi Ling, Yan Mo and other comrades were stunned.

The two Sword Soul Phantoms were so close to them that they could feel their effects more than the others.

"Swordsman!"

Sir Axe looked at the owner of the two Sword Soul Phantoms. It was Jian Wushuang.

Jian Wushuang was emotionless as he turned his palm upwards. The Triple-kill Sword appeared in his hand.

The power of the first-grade magic weapon immediately radiated outwards.

This was accompanied by a mighty Blood River which swept out and covered the entire area. The two hostile squads were trapped in it.

The invisible Sword Realm hung over the Blood River.

Jian Wushuang had just performed Road to the Underworld and Tenfold Realm.

The power from the Double First-grade Sword Souls gathered in Jian Wushuang's body.

Jian Wushuang had reached his peak strength when he produced the Triple-kill Sword.

He stepped forward, crossed in front of his comrades and stood in front of the elder, who had been leading the charge.

Jian Wushuang brandished his Triple-kill Sword ruthlessly.

The strike was silent and was accompanied by neither sword light nor shadow.

Nevertheless, the elder with sword-shaped eyebrows and his squad felt an impending sense of doom.

"Damn it!"

The elder had recognized the two Sword Soul Phantoms.

The Blood River also imposed great pressure on them.

Jian Wushuang's strike chilled the elder's blood.

"Quick, let's block him together!" The elder with sword-shaped eyebrows shouted.

His people started to display their best Killing Moves.

The elder with sword-shaped eyebrows and the fat middle-aged man also exerted their full strength.

However...

Shua!

An invisible wave gave off a faint glow in the dazzling sunshine.

It was a streak of sword light, which was almost imperceptible as it flashed across the sky.

## **Chapter 410: Solitary Travel**

"Ah!"

"How is this possible!"

The Marquis Cangyue experts were hysterical. They looked at Jian Wushuang in fury.

They were well aware that the strike had been powerful.



"This stroke!" The elder widened his eyes and murmured. He spat out a mouthful of blood.

With the exception of the fat middle-aged man, all his people were terrified.

Some had their bodies cleaved into halves; others had their magic weapons smashed; still others had been decapitated or had their organs pulverized.

Eight of his people collapsed while he and the fat middle-aged man were seriously injured.

It had only been one strike!

*"He is in Stage Three!"* The elder with sword-shaped eyebrows thought in a daze.

Jian Wushuang's attack was more powerful than that of an ordinary Stage Three expert.

Jian Wushuang's Realm had suppressed the strength of the elder and his comrades. This had resulted in eight of them perishing.

"Stage Three experts are rare in the vast Outer Area. How did I run into one?" The elder was petrified.

Using their special tactics, he and his squad had been relatively successful in hunting the squads of Marquis Piaoxue.

Nonetheless, setting a trap was not foolproof. Now, he was encountering a powerful opponent.

A Stage Three expert was much stronger than a Stage Two expert. He would be able to take on an entire squad on his own. A stronger Stage Three expert would even be able to slaughter all its members. With Double First-grade Sword Soul and Realm Technique, Jian Wushuang's battle strength could be compared to a more powerful Stage Three expert, so he was able to kill eight opponents with ease.

Whoosh!

A lightning bolt flashed across the Blood River and appeared in front of the elder and the fat middle-aged man.

Two streaks of sword light slashed out. Aided by the Sword Souls' power, the sword light pierced the air and headed towards the two opponents, who tried to parry the attack.

However, they were much weaker than Jian Wushuang.

Chi! Chi!

The two streaks of sword light easily penetrated their bodies.

Jian Wushuang had just killed all 10 opponents.

The barbarian witnessed Jian Wushuang's massacre of the other squad and immediately beat a hasty retreat with his people.

Having dispatched the elder and the fat middle-aged man, Jian Wushuang realized he could not hunt the other squad down as they had disappeared.

Calm was restored in the area.

Jian Wushuang's comrades had witnessed the events and were in shock.

Jian Wushuang withdrew his aura. The two Sword Soul Phantoms and the Blood River gradually dissipated.

Jian Wushuang walked over to them.

"Swordsman, you..." Sir Axe stared speechlessly at Jian Wushuang.

"This was an intense battle, and must have aroused the attention of many people. Let's leave now and talk later," Jian Wushuang suggested.

"Okay." Sir Axe nodded. The squad departed.

Half a day later, they stopped at a mountain.

"Haha, Swordsman, you're amazing!"

Lei Dao, who was on good terms with Jian Wushuang, gave him a big hug.

"Swordsman!"

"Swordsman!"

Sir Axe, Shi Ling, and the other comrades looked at Jian Wushuang in admiration and gratitude.

They had been prepared to fight to the death.

Unexpectedly, Jian Wushuang had killed all members of the elder's squad.

"I should have thought of it. How could an expert who owns Realm Technique be only at Stage Two?" Sir Axe exclaimed, "Sword Soul Phantom has always been something we aspired to."

On the topic of Sword Soul Phantom, the other experts could not hold back their acclaim.

The Soul strength was powerful but strange.

There was a level higher than the Three Ultimate Stages of the Saint Realm—the Nature-defying Level.

An expert at Nature-defying Level was not much weaker than a lord, a Cloud Realm expert.

This was because he held the power from the awakening Soul.

Jian Wushuang had awakened Double First-grade Sword Souls and would be the subject of much envy.

"You have great battle strength although you have not condensed any Origin Marks. When you do so, your strength will increase exponentially. Then, you may become as strong as experts at Nature-defying Level. If you condense more Origin Marks, you will catch up with lords," Sir Axe said enviously.

"Swordsman, you hid your strengths well."

"Too powerful!"

The others sighed with emotion.

Jian Wushuang smiled faintly but his expression soon turned grave. "Sir Axe, gentlemen, I have to tell you something."

Lei Dao, and the others looked at Jian Wushuang.

"I want to go to Inner Area alone," Jian Wushuang said.

His comrades exchanged looks and laughed.

"We've all guessed what you want," Sir Axe said with a smile, "All experts who possess the battle strength of Stage Three travel alone in Flaming Battlefield, and most of them will stay in Inner Area. Only we, experts at Stage Two, team up and stay in Outer Area.

"Based on your battle strength, you're even stronger than an expert at Stage Three. Inner Area is the right place for you."

Sir Axe and others were not surprised by Jian Wushuang's decision.

His Realm Technique was useful and they were reluctant to let him go.

But they knew that someone with his abilities should go to Inner Area.

Outer Area was a place for experts at Stage Two; it would not challenge Jian Wushuang.

Inner Area, which was full of the experts at Stage Three, was more suitable for Jian Wushuang.