

## The Ages 1311

### Chapter 1311 - Princess Shen Yu

Tianming began to understand. "So time is enough for old grudges to be forgotten to the point where the descendants of the oppressors and oppressed can peacefully coexist."

Wars between stars were too large in scale. Even after the great battle with the specters on the Flameyellow Continent, Tianming hadn't been able to wipe out every single specter there.

"Why are you asking all this?" Liu Wanwan asked oddly.

"Well, I was just testing your historical knowledge. You can't really think that I'm an alien, can you?"

"You're so extra." She rolled her eyes. Though she wasn't that powerful, there was a benefit to talking to her. She didn't really bother looking any deeper into what Tianming said and was rather simpleminded, which made her rather trusting. If Han Xingluan or Liu Xuanxuan had heard what Tianming had said, they would definitely doubt his origins.

"So Orderia and the Violetglory Star have some sort of connection with Skywolf Star. These two nova source worlds might not be as far apart as I thought." Tianming pondered for a while. "Wanwan, how long does the evaluation usually take?"

"A few days, I reckon. Let them take their time. To be honest, I doubt the top ten disciples will accept even if the challenges pass evaluation unless the duel committee orders them to."

"Alright." Even though there wasn't much he could do about it, it made sense. If he were in the top ten himself, he wouldn't bother accepting challenges from any random untalented person. Instead, he would only be itching to challenge the top three.

Lingfeng had already left with Liu Xuanxuan for their private battle. It didn't take long for her to come running back, crying.

"Did you drop out of the ranking?" Liu Wanwan said, shocked, then clutched her belly in laughter.

Dropping from six hundred plus straight to beyond ten thousand was a huge shock. "You're already almost thirty-one but you're still at Octasaint Sky, yet you dare to laugh at me? Leave me alone! I'll get back up in the ranking in a flash!" Liu Xuanxuan snapped. But before she walked far, she turned back and said, "Liu Wanwan, when that guy is going to fight someone in the top ten, tell me. I want to watch him get beat up."

After she left, Lingfeng was officially in the top ten thousand. After that, he made it into the top hundred like Tianming had. He then challenged a ninth-ranking totemancer from the Violetcloud Imperium and waited with Tianming.

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After two hours, there was still no response.

"Let's go to train in the Violetglory Pagoda first. The sixth level should be much better than the Azuresky Bridge," Tianming said.

"Alright."

"Wanwan, thanks for showing us around. See you later."

"Sure thing! I'll be paying attention to the news about you. Tell me when your challenge finally gets accepted."

"No problem."

As Tianming and Lingfeng were about to head to the pagoda, quite a few people around them recognized him.

"Is that Lin Feng?"

"Yes, that's him!"

Many young men and women looked at him worshipfully. The further the news spread, the more people that came to watch. Some even asked Tianming to join their sect.

"Stop inviting him. It's embarrassing. He's almost definitely someone from the Divineglory Dynasty."

"That's already public knowledge."

The reason they didn't attribute him to the Violetcloud Imperium was because he had defeated Han Xingluan.

Right then, a commotion broke out in the crowd ahead of Tianming. He heard a few sharp cries before a sudden silence fell upon them. The crowd parted to form a pathway.

"Lin Feng, someone's looking for you. Don't leave," someone said from far away.

"Huh?" Tianming stayed there, wondering what kind of person had enough of a presence to instill silence in so many people. He could feel the respectful worship the young disciples around him were exuding. The person approaching them was definitely someone from high up. The crowd parted for him, not even daring to look up, though Tianming didn't feel a bit of pressure at all. As far as he was concerned, this wasn't even the real world. It was like he was dreaming.

He heard the young disciples' breathing grow heavier as they muttered, "Princess Shen Yu...." The soft mutters carried a kind of rhythm that rang in his head. Tianming didn't know who they were referring to, so he looked ahead.

He spotted a golden shooting star at the very edges of his vision heading toward his position. Blinking, he noticed that the shooting star was actually a girl. The first look alone shook him. He didn't think that even though they were all caeli within the wondersky realm, someone could have such an impressive presence or could inspire a sense of worship.

The girl was impeccably beautiful. Tianming hadn't seen anyone as beautiful as her here in the wondersky realm. Her beauty came not only from her features, skin, or figure, but also from an abstract, ethereal aura that could hardly be described by words. If a label had to be ascribed to it, it would be that she had a regal, imperial aura to her. She was the same kind of person as Tianming, with gender being the only difference. Though being of the fairer sex slightly dampened her inherent intimidating qualities,

she was a natural-born ruler. Without even speaking, her expression and gaze seemed enough to completely seize one's loyalty.

She landed in front of Tianming. She had a head of long, light-blonde hair, each strand of it glistening with the glow of stars. Her hair curled slightly into multitudes of waves. The color somewhat resembled that of Zhan Yingying, the wargodean. However, they were in completely different leagues. For starters, the girl in front of him now wasn't that tall and not nearly as brutish as the wargodeans seemed. Instead, everything about her screamed subtle refinement.

Within her dark gold eyes were black stars. Tianming could tell from her eyes alone that she was born with high status. She seemed completely accustomed to looking at droves of people at once. That was why her gaze seemed rather empty and emotionless. All kinds of stars adorned her white and violet dress. They looked like countless butterflies dancing around her. Someone like her didn't require a podium or a platform to stand out; no matter where she stood, she would be the focus of attention.

The blood of rulers flowed in her veins, something others couldn't help but worship. It wasn't pride or arrogance. She didn't look the least bit proud, which was why others didn't feel discomfited in the least by adoring her. It just felt natural to submit to her will. Perhaps this was like how beasts of a pack willingly submitted to their leader. There would always be people born with the blood of rulers among humanity.

Tianming felt that she looked rather mature; it had nothing to do with her figure or curves, but solely her aura and demeanor. Her movements and gaze completely lacked any childish energy that young women of Feiling's age had. Though she looked to be only in her twenties, she resembled Sovereign Xi. In fact, her aura was even more powerful than the ruler of the moon, yet she didn't seem seductive like her. Instead, she was pure, lofty, and unattainable.

The reason Tianming was certain that she was a junior were the words above her head that read: Princess Shen Yu, rank 3. Unsurprisingly, she was backed by the strongest faction on the Violetglory Star, the Divineglory Dynasty. If she's a princess, she would have a status as high as Qingyu right now. They're both daughters of sovereigns....

Back then, Tianming had asked Liu Wanwan about the Violetglory Star's two sovereigns. The leaders of both top factions were absolute. Ruling from the apex of the hierarchy was their birthright.

The girl shot him a studying look. Her skirt fluttered, making the stars on it look like they were descending. Standing in front of her, Tianming found that she was emitting a kind of radiance that seemed impossible to miss. Then their gazes met. Everyone looked at the two of them in fearful silence, not daring to interrupt the princess.

"What's the matter, Your Highness?" Tianming asked as he would a girl he saw on the street.

The princess said, "Lin Feng, if you don't have someone backing you yet, will you join the Divineglory Dynasty? I'll make sure you're taken care of in all aspects."

Those words sent the crowd into an uproar. The revelation that the mysterious Lin Feng wasn't backed by either top faction was shocking. It made him seem even more impressive, but what was even more shocking was that the princess had offered to take care of everything for him. Such a promise wasn't

made lightly, especially in front of the public. At the very least, it was a sure sign that his rise to the top was set in stone. This was the daughter of a sovereign that ruled a top faction on the Violetglory Star!

At the very least, the Divineglory Dynasty had surpassed the Violetcloud Imperium in recent years. Little did the others know that despite how badly Tianming wanted the support of an impressive faction, he didn't even know how far away he was from their star. So, all he could say was, "I appreciate the honorable invitation, Your Highness, but I already have backers right now. I'm obligated to live up to their expectations."

Those words made the crowd feel bad for him for missing out on such an opportunity.

"All is well. Let's meet again, fate willing." The princess seemed neither displeased nor happy about the outcome. She wasn't moved at all, regardless of the result.

"Fate willing indeed." Tianming waved back.

After bidding her goodbye, she vanished back into the starlight. Tianming didn't linger either and went straight to the Violetglory Pagoda. "Time for the grind!"

### **Chapter 1312 - Lifesbane Resonance**

Not long after, Tianming found himself standing in front of the Violetglory Pagoda. He looked up at the top of the tower that pierced through the clouds. All he could see were the first and second layers, while the other seven hid above the clouds.

"A hundred caeli imperius, huh? I wonder if the celestial orderians have that many." As he looked to the skies, he let his ambitions soar. "So far, Mu Sha, the fifth ranker, hasn't accepted my challenge. I should check out the higher levels of the pagoda and see if it's any different from the Azuresky Bridge."

Tianming and Lingfeng stepped into the tower together. This time around, they didn't have to issue a challenge for a spot on a specific floor, nor would they have to fend off challengers to stay on their floors. Being rankers in the top hundred bracket, there was a violet glow around them that was visible to others. Though, even without the glow, quite a few people had already started paying attention to them despite them having just left the Violetcloud Battlefield. They shot them envious and worshipful glances. Even these higher life forms of the Violetglory Star began looking up to them.

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Tianming finally reached the sixth level of the pagoda. Strong light shone down on him from above. Looking up, he saw a sky covered in purple stars, each of them gigantic beyond measure, like nova source worlds. However, those were actually caeli belonging to solarians.

Transitioning from a constellier to a solarian was a critical part of cultivation. It was said that one could only unleash the true power of the nova source after reaching the Solar stage, becoming something like the sun itself and wielding the light and power of gods.

Even among the countless life forms on a nova source world, those that managed to become a solarian were no doubt among the strongest of the strongest. Tianming knew that the ones around him were also solarians because he was currently at the Azuresoul Sword Mountain's Sword Training Ground. In fact, most of the solarians of the sect gathered at the Azuresoul Sword Mountain, with the sect's other

territories being populated only by those who probably wouldn't even reach the Constellation stage in all their lives. Constellers and solarians were in completely different leagues.

The advantage the sixth level of the pagoda had over the Azuresky Bridge wasn't the quality of the caeli, but rather the number of them. There were so many suns hanging above that one couldn't see the end of them. Each of them contained the entirety of the path a departed senior had tread, which juniors could follow along.

"Let's start! I hope the forebears of the Violetglory Star will help me with what I'm currently struggling with."

The focus of every person's cultivation was different, so merely looking through the experiences of others wouldn't cut it. One had to ponder how that experience might line up with their own focus. This method of making progress required far more patience and solitude than consuming divine pills or caeli, but it was what Tianming was good at. He took a deep breath, settled down, and let his worries go. He pulled his mind away from the challenges he faced on the Azurecloud Continent, as well as the Violetcloud Battlefield.

"If the sixth level of this tower is useful to me, then I must join the top three no matter what! Perhaps even take first place!" The difference between first and second place was too big. It was the difference between access to the eighth and ninth level of the pagoda.

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Three days later, explosive news spread from the Violetcloud Battlefield. Mu Sha of the Skyword Shrine had decided to accept Tianming's challenge. Not only was he the strongest disciple of the third-ranked faction, he was also a skywolf royal and had high status in his sect. Every single person in the top ten was famous in their own right; they were adored by every budding disciple of the Violetglory Star.

The silent battlefield immediately erupted with chatter. Many people had entered the wondersky realm just to watch the battle unfold. Even though competition among the juniors wasn't as intense as that of the senior solarians, Tianming and Mu Sha were both budding young talents that would define the generation to come. Watching their talent and trump cards on full display would surely be interesting. One could only imagine what kind of unparalleled lifebound beasts or totems they had, not to mention they still had room to grow and improve.

After Mu Sha accepted the challenge, Tianming had three days to go to the Violetcloud Battlefield. Once word of it got out, many young disciples went there to wait. The audience seats were filled to the brim in anticipation of such a grand show.

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Tianming got a notification from the wondersky fairy within the pagoda. The response to the challenge had come faster than he'd anticipated. The problem was that he was currently in a crucial stage of his cultivation. He'd finally made some kind of progress after two months of arduous pondering, and he had to follow through with that train of thought and couldn't exactly leave now.

"There's still three days, so it won't hurt to go there later." With that in mind, he continued to search for the will to resist fate and destiny in the experiences of those solarian caeli despite knowing that it would only leave the audience members annoyed by all that waiting. "I don't have a choice."

He calmed himself and allowed the caeli to surround him once more. He had a feeling that his Lifesbane Will was quite different from his Imperial Will. "The traces of Imperial Will I see in these caeli concerns exacting even more control over many things, including seas and rivers, whereas Lifesbane Will focuses more on sympathy, empathy, and understanding.... To put it another way, it's mutual resonance!"

He had finally found the key phrase. Resonance! Resonance with all sentient life in its rebellious struggle against fate!

"People in this world are segregated by power levels. There are the strong and the weak, the noble and lowborn, the rich and the poor, the rulers and the wretches. Some people are destined to be born with the short end of the stick in life, like grass struggling against a strong wind.

"Yet none of that is set in stone! In every person is the potential to change and improve. There will always be people and factions that rise and fall. There's no eternal hierarchy in this world. Changing the status quo and surpassing oneself to change our destiny is an inherent desire in people. Everyone can empathize and resonate with that innate desire!"

He closed his eyes and hugged countless stars. "Godfather, the Li Saint Clan bravely struggles against the lifesbane curse, constantly being pushed to the brink of death and expected to crawl back stronger than before. Their innate wills must also be a manifestation of one of this world's laws!"

He recalled the time he spent in the Grand-Orient Realm. He'd met important benefactors there that had changed his life by instilling in him the will to never settle, never relent, and to keep walking forward.

"The demise of the sky plunderers... the secret behind the Li Saint Clan being used as lab rats... I'll shatter all those veiling mysteries with the will I used to break the curse!"

Resisting destiny, changing his fate, and resonating with all life!

"In other words, Imperial Will controls astralforce through pure domination and assimilation, while Lifesbane Will resonates with astralforce by blending in with it to control its power from within!"

Resonance was a new way that Tianming had never explored before, but he wanted to give it a try. Within his albi there were five astral discs, not including the Grand-Orient Vortices. Infernal, primordial, genesis, radix, and immortal. The five layers of different astralforce vortices orbited under the control of his Grand-Orient-Sword-shaped Imperial Will and the illusory tower that was the manifestation of Tianming's Lifesbane Will. After making it past the mental bottleneck, Tianming left the wondersky realm and returned to Fairman Peak to start breaking through in seclusion!

### **Chapter 1313 - The Second Miracle**

"My Imperial Will needs to be the sole absolute controller above the five astral discs. If my Lifesbane Will tries to ascend to that position, it'll only be subdued. Given the characteristics of Lifesbane Will, it should focus on resonance instead." Tianming wondered if it was possible to break the 'Prime Tower' down into little fragments and let them assimilate into the five astralforces in his albi.

"It won't work if I don't break it down! Let's try it!" It was a daring notion indeed, but it was built on his firm understanding regarding the nature of his Lifesbane Will, so he was rather confident in it. This was the advantage of finding his own way rather than relying on caeli or divine pill consumption. Had he relied on the latter, he would have raised his Lifesbane Will to similar heights of power as his Imperial Will, raising them to the same level and encouraging conflicts to occur. The two incompatible wills might start repelling each other, and trying to cultivate both of them even further would give no benefits. It might even become a roadblock to his progress.

Everyone's circumstances were different. Tianming didn't have a Primordial Gate, nor did he have an odd lifebound beast like the Archaionfiend to help him process consumed caeli. Despite being required to work much harder, it had allowed him to find the optimal path he should take.

"Now, shatter!" Minor Lifesbane and Greater Lifesbane waned before growing stronger. This was a similar principle. Within every single albus, he used his Imperial Will to shatter his Lifesbane Will. The Grand-Orient Swords pierced through the Prime Towers before they had even taken solid form!

"Resonate!" The crushed Lifesbane Will turned into a white mist and began dissipating, causing his five astral discs to reach the point of collapse. His albi began unstably shuddering with energy that threatened to spiral out of control. It was a truly agonizing sensation. Nobody would dare to do something that could destroy their growth. It would no doubt cause many to feel a chill down their spine to hear what he had dared to do with absolute confidence and clarity. He knew where this path led!

"Come back! Morph into a new state of being!" He closed his eyes, visualizing the path he had walked to reach this point, the tales of those around him who had also struggled against destiny, and the millions of caeli he had looked into. He reached the peak of a certain emotional resonance, similar to the resonance between divine will and the energy it controlled.

The five astral discs suddenly began spinning once more. His Lifesbane Will, which had been turned into white mist, assimilated into the astral discs of each of his albi. Then the laws of the world began to resonate with the astralforces. When the Prime Towers entered the astral discs, each individual layer transformed in both capacity and structure. It was a metamorphosis from heavenly to divine will under Tianming's control, achieving a perfectly harmonious resonance between will and energy.

"These five astral discs stacked up look like a tower of energy!" Even though his Lifesbane Will seemed to have disappeared, something had changed. Had it finally turned into a divine will? Tianming knew that it had succeeded for sure, as the rampaging astralforces in his body had completely calmed even though his Lifesbane Will had disintegrated. Not to mention, he had finely-tuned control that allowed him to stabilize the forces even better than before. This greatly increased the capacity of astralforce he could handle. His heavenly will had turned into a divine will and taken the form of energy towers!

The structure of his power had completely changed. Now, in every single one of his albi was the sword-shaped Imperial Will atop the five astral discs, within which his Lifesbane Will had assimilated and achieved resonance and through which he controlled and stabilized that power. The two divine wills no longer conflicted with each other. Instead, they formed a unified whole and complemented each other's weaknesses, affording even more stability and endurance. The five astral discs were now stacked up like a tower, with the topmost infernaldisc being the smallest, and the bottommost immortaldisc of Yin Chen's being the largest. That might have something to do with an innate quality of Primordial Chaos

Beasts, or perhaps the size of their bodies. While the lower discs seemed to have more prominent power, it wasn't a huge difference. The largest immortal disc was only one and a half times larger than the topmost infernal disc.

"This is no doubt a terrifyingly powerful energy arrangement...." Compared to the former arrangement, this seemed completely different. "I suppose I can say that I've completely paved my post-Ascension path now."

He smiled. Unlike others, he'd had to work many times harder to establish firm foundations. Fortunately, his efforts hadn't been for naught. With such a stable foundation, he began absorbing nova source once more, noting the stark difference in quality between the nova source of the Azurecloud Continent and that of the Voidsky Realm.

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Tianming spent a full day stabilizing his power at the second level of the Constellation stage. "I've finally succeeded!"

He stood up, feeling refreshed. He had reached an important milestone in this breakthrough, which would make his future progress much smoother.

"Come to think of it, I have the pagoda's sixth level to thank for this." Thinking of that, his expression changed. "Damn, I was so busy trying to break through that I think I missed the time of my fight!"

He'd had three days to prepare for the battle, yet his breakthrough had taken that time. He hurriedly deployed the heavenly locus formation to record his progress and entered the wondersky realm.

"Take me straight to the Violetcloud Battlefield!" Tianming told the wondersky fairy.

"Understood!"

Light began enveloping him.

"Wait, you haven't changed my location yet! I'm still on top of your junk!" Ying Huo cried, though they didn't have the time.

"You have a message from Liu Wanwan," the wondersky fairy said.

"Read it to me."

"Liu Wanwan said: Hey, Mu Sha and all five billion spectators are fuming at you for missing the appointment! Fool!"

Tianming began panicking as the lights whooshed past him. Then he saw a place filled to the brim with people, so many that he couldn't even begin to imagine their quantity. There were magnitudes more people than before.

"That dastardly Lin Feng!"

"Curse him! I hope he gets his ass blasted by a rhino!"



Tianming was the target of their scorn before he could even stand up properly. Thank the heavens I didn't use my actual name. Otherwise, they would be directing all that animosity at him. What a close call.

He blended in with the crowd, squeezing through them to approach the battlefield. Fortunately, the crowd made it hard for people to spot him among them. Most people didn't know what he looked like anyway.

"What is that idiot doing? He made that challenge so enthusiastically, but now he's a no-show after Mu Sha accepted it? He's been waiting there the whole time!"

"It's been ten hours! What the hell?!"

"Is he taking a shit outside or what?! Why's he not in the wondersky realm yet?"

"Hmph, I bet he chickened out. Bit off more than he could chew."

"To think that so many people call him the second miracle nowadays.... Way to let their hopes down! How disgusting!"

Tianming grit his teeth.

"Lin Feng, you cur!"

Tianming was a whole ten hours late—almost half a day! Now, he desperately wanted to know if the skywolf royal was still waiting for him as he continued squeezing closer to the battlefield.

### **Chapter 1314 - Focal Battle**

"If it weren't for the fact that nobody knows where Lin Feng is outside, people would've found him and beat him up already! Challenging someone in the top ten is no joke!"

Though that sounded cruel, it was completely understandable. He had wasted the time of so many people. One could only imagine how many total hours that was, given that each person had waited an entire ten hours.

Tianming managed to reach the battlefield. When he touched it, he was sucked inside. He was immediately surrounded by blinding light and appeared within the battlefield. "Apologies, everyone. I regrettably had some personal matters to settle, hence the delay," Tianming said before he could even look around him.

The crowd immediately exploded with conflicting opinions the moment he appeared. Many cursed him at the same time and some reprimanded him, while some said it was understandable. All those voices added together were so booming that nothing could be clearly heard. It almost made Tianming lose his balance. Back when he had faced off against Weisheng Moran, there were many times the number of people watching him fight, but they were spread out across the sun, unlike the people who were watching it live right now. It felt completely different, almost asphyxiating to have so many people watching him so intently. The battle itself seemed like it would boil over with excitement as a result.

"Lin Feng," someone said with a low growl from behind him.

Tianming turned back and saw a youth sitting atop a boulder a kilometer behind him. "Is that a person? Oh, he's a specter, so not quite human."

When the youth stood up, Tianming noticed that he was a towering giant, completely unlike the small and slender Kong. This youth was ten meters tall and looked like a gigantic beast. He wore a white bearskin that slid to the ground when he stood up, revealing the bestial muscles that filled up his huge arms and body. His cold gaze and needle-like hair looked really impactful.

"Damn, this man's junk is probably bigger than your whole body! Despair!" Ying Huo said, leaving the tattoo and perching on Tianming's head.

"Despair your ass. If you really had junk that big you'd only be able to fuck pigs!" Tianming said, rolling his eyes.

It was quite hard to place a standard for the size of specters. He recalled that Di Zang, a six-eyed specter, was only about five meters tall, so it wasn't surprising that a skywolf royal would stand ten meters tall.

As Mu Sha walked toward him, the ground shook. Tianming was at least certain about one thing pertaining to specters: their size correlated with the amount of beast flesh they had consumed. Back then, Jiang Wuxin had probably only turned into a monster after consuming so much beast flesh because of some mutation that resulted from his former human form. But Mu Sha was a pureblooded specter through and through. His physique was impressive, to say the least.

"Lin Feng!" Mu Sha yelled.

Tianming seemed to blank out. Even now, he still wasn't used to being called that, often forgetting that he should respond to that name. Putting his hands together, he said, "Apologies for making you wait."

"It's fine. If you're capable enough to not disappoint me and let me have an entertaining fight, I'd even be willing to wait a year for you." Even his deep voice seemed to make the surroundings shake.

"Alright!" Tianming's opponent seemed rather agreeable. Looks like I was a bit judgmental toward skywolf royals. They've already assimilated to the Violetglory Star, so perhaps they see it as their home now.

Though Mu Sha didn't mind, some audience members still felt slighted from being made to wait. "Beat him up!" many cried. Being made to wait ten hours was unacceptable.

"I wonder if there's anyone that'll support me at all." If there were even ten people that did, he would be happy. The pressure from the audience members being against him alone felt really heavy.

"Come." Tianming took a deep breath.

"En garde!" Mu Sha was quite straightforward. His body loudly snapped as he transformed into a huge werewolf-like creature. His transformation was far more explosive than Bodhi's, bringing his height to thirty meters. His gigantic wolf head was already about the same as an actual lifebound beast's, and just as ferocious. While his tall body stood up in a humanoid manner, his limbs were those of beasts. He was armed with cold, glinting claws and talons that could pass as blades. From his rapid and loud breathing alone, Tianming felt the sheer power that coursed through his muscles.

Unlike the elegant totemancers, specters were known to be savage and rough. Their fighting spirit was easily the strongest among all of them. Not only was Mu Sha two levels stronger than Kong, he should be far more powerful in actual combat as well. He was dragging a twenty-meter-long spiked club. The entire weapon was covered in sharp spikes about a meter or two in length, all of which were covered in venom. It crackled with white lightning bolts that loudly snapped. Though it was only a grade-five divine artifact, it was clearly designed to be used to dispatch lifebound beasts.

As specters had to fend off totems and lifebound beasts in fights, they would usually make special accommodations with their weapons to even the odds. This divine artifact was called a Hundredvenom Thunderbolt. Mu Sha's raw strength and astralforce, coupled with this club and its venom, could deal more punishment than normal lifebound beasts could take. Mu Sha's sheer ferocity only hyped the audience up even more. There were quite a number of fervent believers in him from the Skyword Shrine. The crowd cheered far harder than the time Weisheng Moran had used the Lifeless Dreamdance.

"Violetglory Star is filled with talent after all." There was no way fighting the fifth ranker would be that easy.

The crowd turned to look at Tianming to see what he would bring to the table.

"I heard he has seven sword totems. He only needed one strike to take out Han Xingluan."

"Han Xingluan is only a fifth-level constellier. Mu Sha can take care of him with a slap!"

"Only the top two disciples of the Violetcloud Imperium can deal with Mu Sha. Han Xingluan is only in the top five of his sect. They're in completely different leagues."

They were waiting for Tianming to display power that would convince them of his chances. They anxiously awaited his seven totems. According to the rules, one could use lifebound beasts obtained from blood pacts, but totems could only be awakened if one was born with them. Anyone that could use totems was definitely a totemancer; however, five lifebound beasts appeared beside Tianming at the moment.

"He's a full-fledged quintuple beastmaster after all...."

"This is weird. Were they all obtained through blood pacts? That can't be, right? Was I the only one who heard that?"

"That bird on his shoulder, or rather the little phoenix, looks weak as hell. Let's not even think about it."

"Look at that cat! How cute! What's it gonna do? Pummel Mu Sha with its puffy beanies?"

"Is that a tortoise or a two-headed dragon? It looks weird, huge, and dumb."

"Is that a tree I see? Don't all plant beastmasters only have plant-type beasts? That tree looks rather interesting."

"It's confirmed! Look at his disuniform beast roster. It's clear that he wasn't naturally born with them. No bloodline could possibly have such a diverse array of beasts. They must be from blood pacts. He must've intentionally chosen beasts of different types."

"Don't blood pacts fail often? How could he have succeeded five times?"

It was puzzling for many of them. Even the seniors wondered about their origins.

"Five lifebound beasts, eh?"

"Wow, a metal broodmother-type beast!"

They looked at the hundred and fifty thousand silver eggs that circled around Tianming as they transformed into locusts. This was Yin Chen's peak combat form. It was the first time Tianming had all five of his beasts out for combat, making for a rather impactful sight.

However, Mu Sha was rather unhappy with what he saw. "Where's your totems? Don't mess around with me using these blood pact toys of yours."

"I don't need totems to defeat you," Tianming said, shocking the entire area silent. He had looked so humble moments before; where did all that arrogance suddenly come from? He seemed so confident!

"Hahahaha...." The werewolf chuckled loudly. "I love fighting those like you that don't recognize their own limits. I'll turn you into meat paste."

Tianming summoned the Grand-Orient Sword to his right hand and the Lifesteal Silverdragon to his left. This was the greatest sign of respect he could afford his opponent. Even so, the mockery still hadn't stopped. Then his gaze clashed furiously with Mu Sha's. Tianming loved fighting specters, though, since he could swarm them with numbers without feeling bad about it. Taking a deep breath, he ordered, "Go!"

He and his five beasts began surrounding the gigantic specter.

### **Chapter 1315 - Celestial Astral Storm**

Mu Sha, having entered the battlefield first, had chosen a rocky terrain as their battleground. The moment his powerful body landed on the battlefield, cracks appeared on the ground beneath him. Then countless white lightning bolts appeared in the entire battlefield as white clouds gathered above. They weren't actual clouds, but rather huge concentrations of white lightning bolts. A gigantic lightning bolt struck Mu Sha and caused a fifty-meter-diameter electric sphere to form, enveloping his entire body in a lightning shield that made him look even more intimidating.

Since it was lightning-related, Tianming had Meow Meow attack first. It was a clash between black and white lightning bolts. Meow Meow turned into its Regal Chaosfiend form and used its Ninefold Chaos Thunderscape to protect itself. Black lightning bolts gathered and emerged from the ground to reach Meow Meow. Then it used Misty Hellthunder and caused it to rain black lightning in the hundreds of meters around it, striking even Mu Sha.

The crackling interactions of the two kinds of lightning reverberated throughout the battlefield, flashing brilliantly. In that clash, the white lightning on Mu Sha ended up being overwhelmed and absorbed by the black lightning, sending him smashing to the ground. Even though Meow Meow's astralforce couldn't rival Mu Sha's, its abilities were still powerful enough to put pressure on the skywolf royal.

"Interesting." Even though Mu Sha's build was huge, he was still fit and agile. He stably stood up as the lightning barrier around him reformed. Thanks to his toughness, he hadn't been hurt by the attack at all. "Lightning Abyss Body." This was his specter ability. A cloud of white lightning was still above him,

causing every strand of hair on his body to be electrified. Even though his combat form was relatively compact, all the power was concentrated in a single body, making for quite the image of perfection.

Right then, Lan Huang charged toward Mu Sha and gave its sword tail a fierce swing using Worldbreak Slash.

"Buzz off!" Mu Sha raised his gigantic spiked club and swung it. The venomous club clashed with Lan Huang's tail. Even though Mu Sha's physical body couldn't rival Lan Huang's, he had the advantage of better astralforce and was able to send the dragon tumbling back.

Then, the brilliance of starlight enveloped him as he unleashed his venomwolf constellation. A sea of white stars spread throughout the battlefield. The white astral dots that surrounded him were toxins of his constellation. They immediately shot toward Tianming and the rest. If it struck, the poison would spread quickly.

"This is the wondersky realm, not the real world." Putting aside the matter of his pandemonium constellation, not even the Greenspark Tower worked. The fights here were more mechanical, taking place within the artificial limits set by the Eternal Wondersky Formation. As such, Tianming suffered quite a lot of disadvantages. Even though he should have no issue with some of the clashes in the real world, the battlefield decided that he would be blown back by them.

"Let's end this quickly." When Lan Huang got back up, Tianming and the rest began an all-out attack from all directions.

Mu Sha, however, seemed like he could handle everything alone. His muscles pulsed and eyes tensed as he used Celestial Astral Storm. The starlight, storm, and lightning fused together as his ability was unleashed in all directions with him in the center, vaporizing the rocks and stones nearby. A searing light saturated the entire battlefield, forcing many to close their eyes. The ear-shaking sound that came after forced them to cover their ears, too. The ability contained the full power of a seventh-level constellier, immediately neutralizing Ying Huo and Meow Meow's abilities and forcing Tianming, Lan Huang, and Xian Xian to back off. Usually, Tianming had the Greenspark Tower, so this ability wouldn't be much of a setback to him, but he soon realized that line of thinking wouldn't hold up in the wondersky realm.

"Is that all you're made of?" Mu Sha roared, instantly closing the distance with Tianming.

Tianming's eyes glinted coldly as he lashed out with the Lifesteal Silverdragon, piercing it toward Mu Sha's eyes. The specter quickly avoided it, only for the chain to loop back and strike the back of his waist. The whole spike and a few blades of the chain dug their way into his flesh.

"What kind of trick is this?" Mu Sha didn't know that it was a grade-seven divine artifact and tried tearing it apart with his bare hands in vain. "Why's it so tough? Is it grade seven?"

His expression immediately changed. The next instant, he turned to the other end of the chain where Tianming was. The chain was wrapped around Lan Huang, and the gigantic beast began running with abandon. Mu Sha, losing his footing, smashed hard into the ground. However, he flipped himself over with brute force and dug his feet into the ground, pulling on the chain and stopping Lan Huang in its tracks. His blood began profusely flowing; while it wasn't a real injury, he could still feel the pain. He pulled Lan Huang using one arm and tried to undo the knot the chain had formed around him. However, he was pinned down, allowing Tianming and the rest an opportunity for a group attack.

"Take my sword strike!" Ying Huo used the Ninedragon Tribulation behind Mu Sha. Then, Xian Xian's Radiant Vines came bursting out of the ground as its five flowers bloomed. The sword petals of the Scarlet Lilies also impaled him all over and began draining his blood.

"Gaaaah!" Mu Sha roared as his body exploded with the Celestial Astral Storm once more, reducing the vines and petals to dust. Then lightning gathered again to block Ying Huo's attack. Not to mention, he had finally freed himself from the chains! "Hmph!" Annoyed, his anger soared. Right as he was about to counterattack, the little bird came striking from behind once more, this time launching all of its sword-like feathers.

"Hehe." Mu Sha was only a little annoyed at the ability, though he didn't think that the feathers would pierce straight through his flesh. Even so, the wondersky realm didn't recognize Cosmic Blade's effects, so they didn't dig themselves in too deeply. "What is it this time?!" Mu Sha's expression immediately changed when he noticed countless silver spiders crawling around him. They had spun a lot of thread around him, tightly binding him.

He exerted a lot of force to break free, only to cause the threads to draw even more blood from him. It was driving him insane, and that was all before he properly clashed with Tianming! First, there was the Lifesteal Silverdragon, then the vines and petals, and now he was bound by the metallic threads. All of them were methods that Tianming had employed to limit his movements, and that wasn't the end of it. As if the endless swarm of spiders that couldn't all be swatted away wasn't bad enough, they began transforming into scorpions and stung him all over, filling his body with their venom. The layer under his skin began radiating a metallic sheen that was visible through close inspection. His skin was being transformed into metal by the venom! If this went on, he would become a frozen statue. The threads and venom had him completely locked down and had put him at the mercy of the countless bugs.

"Explode!" He used an ability, Demonslayer Hellthunder, to vaporize all of the insects on his body. That took out fifty or sixty thousand of Yin Chen's bodies, but Yin Chen wouldn't die. It only got smaller in number, not to mention that death in the wondersky realm was never permanent. Using the chance Yin Chen had created for it, Lan Huang used one head to bite Mu Sha's head, and the other to bite his waist. Then Ying Huo leapt off Lan Huang's head and used the Ninedragon Tribulation while Meow Meow used its abilities to cancel out the lightning around Mu Sha.

"This is unfair! You're only overwhelming me with numbers!" Mu Sha said something incredibly laughable at the last moment.

"That's not my problem!"

Even though Mu Sha could shake off the beasts and take care of them, the beastmaster himself hadn't struck yet. Once more, the Lifesteal Silverdragon came wrapping around Mu Sha.

"Die!" Tianming descended from the skies with the Grand-Orient Sword in hand. Mu Sha had been able to shake off Ying Huo's sword strike to the head, so it would be up to Tianming to deal the finishing blow. He used the four-fusion strike, Quaddragon Tribulation. The four dragons blended together into the sword as it crashed down like a meteor, piercing into Mu Sha's chest. It went straight through and out of his back!

"You!" Mu Sha roared as his heart was completely turned into dust alongside his other internal organs. He had been deemed defeated by the system, and now he had no control over his body at all, a sensation that endlessly vexed him. Yet he had to admit that making up for a weaker body with numbers was a perfectly valid strategy for beastmasters. He hadn't feared beastmasters before, because most of their lifebound beasts could easily be fended off by him.

"Mu Sha, don't forget that I haven't even used my totems yet," Tianming said as his body dematerialized.

"Fine, you're indeed powerful. You have won fair and square. From now on, you'll be ranked fifth on the Violetglory ranking." Mu Sha finally admitted his loss.

"Ranked fifth? Are you looking down on me?" Tianming said, smiling.

Mu Sha looked at Tianming's confident demeanor, both speechless and impressed at the same time. "This is the wondersky realm. There are many tricks that I'm not able to use here, so you might not necessarily defeat me out there. If you have the time, seek me out. Let's have an actual duel outside."

"Sure thing!" Tianming didn't bother explaining anything, including the fact that he actually had ten totems, the pandemonium constellation, and Greenspark Tower outside. Mu Sha vanished, leaving Tianming alone in the battlefield. Billions of people were looking straight at him.

### **Chapter 1316 - First Miracle**

Everything in the Violetcloud Battlefield was controlled by the duel committee, including the final victory judgments. Even after Mu Sha had been defeated, Tianming still remained at the center of the battlefield for all to see. Looking up, he saw a glowing purple light coming from the vortex-shaped Violetglory ranking.

The name of the first ranker was flanked on both sides by those of the second and third ranker, which were in turn surrounded by those of the rest of the top ten. All of their names looked humongous, being hundreds of times larger than most other names. Taking the place of Mu Sha's name was 'Lin Feng', a name that Tianming had no real affinity with.

"Dammit, if I knew it would receive so much attention, I would have come up with an impressive name. Maybe something like Zhao Ritian."

Tianming noticed that Mu Sha's name didn't swap places with his old one. Instead, he was merely bumped down to sixth place while the former tenth place fell out of the top ten. Perhaps that was a special privilege afforded to those in the top ten. Names outside their bracket simply swapped ranks with the names of the winner.

"I see, so Mu Sha only fell one place and can still train at the seventh level of the Violetglory Pagoda. Too bad for the tenth ranker though."

Even so, it was still rather fair. The tenth was ranked at that position simply because they were the weakest among the top ten. If one didn't want to be eliminated, they had better grow stronger and occupy a position higher up the bracket. Hanging at the edge of the bracket would always be risky.

"Next, I'll challenge the top three." Tianming looked at those blindingly radiant names. Princess Shen Yu of the Divineglory Dynasty was ranked third. He wondered if he really wanted to challenge the star child that had invited him to join her faction. "Let's pick her, then. I have to join the top three anyway, so no matter who I defeat, she'll be pushed to fourth place."

Xiaoxiao had come to challenge herself in the Violetglory ranking as well. The goal of the three was to occupy all top three spots on the ranking. Tianming couldn't wait to make his next challenge, though he also wanted to leave the battlefield and stay out of the view of the public. However, he was still in there like a caged animal in the zoo.

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The crowd outside had grown to billions in number. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that most of the disciples of the Violetglory Star had been there to witness Tianming's battle for themselves.

"Mu Sha wasn't his match at all."

"He's the top disciple of the Skyword Shrine, isn't he? Those above and below him in the ranking are disciples from the Divineglory Dynasty or Violetcloud Imperium. Where in the world did this Lin Feng come from?"

"What kind of person raised this monster?"

Tianming's mysterious origins spawned many questions. He had popped out of nowhere and completely shocked everyone involved.

"Even though he's a totemancer, he used lifebound beasts to defeat a specter."

"That's far too impressive."

"I wonder if he can rival the top three."

"A disciple like that can only belong to the Divineglory Dynasty or Violetcloud Imperium, right? If he isn't from either of them, that means those two factions might start fighting over him."

"That's right."

"He defeated Han Xingluan and refused Princess Shen Yu. How interesting."

"Some called him the second miracle of the ranking. Let's see if that's really the case."

Tianming's feat with the ancient idols wasn't much to speak of, especially when compared to his current place in fifth rank. That was the thing that truly spread his name far and wide.

Within the crowd, Liu Xuanxuan rushed over. "Liu Wanwan!"

"What?" she said, turning back.

"The sect master wants to see you, quick! It's to ask about Lin Feng."

"Wait, even the sect master wants to know about this?" Liu Wanwan felt a little faint at Tianming's ridiculous feats.



"Of course! The Violetcloud Imperium came looking for our sect master. You'd better work well with them. They know that you have a good relationship with Lin Feng and will reach out to you to sway him to their side. You know that our sect is allied with the Violetcloud Imperium, right?" Liu Xuanxuan said.

"Yeah. Jeez, this is getting troublesome...."

There were two main alliances on the Violetglory Star, the Violetcloud Alliance and Divineglory Alliance.

I don't think Lin Feng himself knows that once his performance exceeds a certain point, he'll trigger many chain reactions. However, his own feelings about the matter are the most important, she thought as she went back with Liu Xuanxuan. She turned back and looked at him; now, he was so far out of reach from a normal person like her.

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There were many booths within the Violetcloud Battlefield near the top for people of high status to watch the battle. Within one of those booths were two people, one of them a slender, graceful woman in a violet, astral dress. She wore golden accessories to complement her chest-length light-blonde hair. Her skin was fair and tender, so tender that it seemed that a rogue breeze could pop it. On her nearly-perfect face were two cold and aloof eyes that cast a forlorn gaze at the white-haired youth below. She was Princess Shen Yu.

Beside her was a middle-aged man in a black and gold robe whose face was shrouded in darkness. He had long, thin lips and eyes that glowed in the darkness. He smiled and said, "Did you notice it? He's a little similar to that person."

"Ye Chen?" Shen Yu said.

"Yes."

"Are you talking about their plain-sounding names?" she said, smiling.

"That's part of it. There's other aspects, such as his sudden appearance and rapid progress. There's also a sly arrogance in the both of them, as well as a calculative wit and a penchant for pranks. His bumpkin-like happy-go-lucky attitude is charming to most women, complemented further by a face that's really easy on the eyes. It's the perfect kind of rustic that'll make a proud highborn like you swoon for him. He's the archetypal protagonist of legend, the everyman that always ends up charming the princess of the realm."

"Surely you jest, Imperial Uncle. We needed someone to make Ye Chen stay on our side. I just happened to be that person. Not to mention, he's a charming man himself, and favored by the heavens." Even a princess of her stature wore a genuine smile when talking about the man often known as the first miracle. Before him, even someone others couldn't dream of touching like her seemed like an average girl in love.

"What level is he at now?" asked the middle-aged man.

"He's a fifth-level constellier."

"What about you?"

"I'm at the eighth level."

### **Chapter 1317: Honey Trap**

"Despite him being only at the fifth level, he was ranked higher than you and let others mistake him for a ninth-level constellier. He's indeed deserving of the status currently bestowed on him. How fitting for a princess like you," the man said.

"Uncle, our relationship hasn't progressed to that point yet," the princess said softly.

"Not bad. Keep him hanging on a thread. If he gets the prize, he'll start losing interest in you and your temptation will no longer be as powerful."

"Uncle, you're looking down on me. He shall never escape from the palm of my hand for the rest of his life, unless... he becomes important."

"With those lifebound beasts around, this protagonistic fellow can never become impotent. Make sure to keep your wits about you. He's no fool. If you rush things, he'll definitely feel it."

"Yes, I understand."

"No matter what, you must ensure that this first ranker serves our dynasty with all he has, even his life."

"But if we treat him like the protagonist, won't he eventually replace the divineglorians and rule over our empire for real?"

"That's where you're mistaken. He doesn't have anyone backing him up. He doesn't even have parents. Even if he becomes the emperor, he'll eventually die, while the children you bear for him will be divineglorians all the same, as long as they have divinesprings. Our lineage won't end. In fact, it'll only grow stronger."

"Understood."

"Seriously though, do you love him?"

"I do, but I love our dynasty and kin even more. There's no conflict in either of those feelings."

"As long as you don't forget that. You're right, there's no conflict in loving him and loving us. There can't be." The middle-aged man pointed at the white-haired youth and continued, "After the first miracle Ye Chen comes another miracle called Lin Feng. He also seemingly has no backing. I doubt you'll be able to use the honey trap on him this time around, huh?"

"It won't work. I met Ye Chen in the real world and helped him when he was at a low point, whereas Lin Feng is already standing at the peak. He's even more mysterious and far harder to control."

"This will be troubling."

"Yes. Last time when I extended an invitation to him, I got flatly rejected. Without the perfect circumstances, it'll be really difficult to force someone like this to join our dynasty for good. Not to mention, we already have Ye Chen. A mountain can't house more than one tiger...."

"What, then?"

"To stop him from becoming the Ye Chen of the Violetcloud Imperium, we can just eliminate his body in the real world if we find him. That'll save us the trouble, won't it?"

The middle-aged man froze for a moment, then broke out laughing. Another voice in the booth joined in the laughter, coarse and ancient. When the middle-aged man raised his hand there were two eyes and a mouth on it. Apart from the lack of nose and ears, they made up an entire face. The ancient laughter had come from the mouth on his palm.

"Da Huang, what're you laughing at?" the man asked.

"I'm laughing because even though the girl makes it sound so good, she's actually smitten with the boy."

"What do you mean?"

"Think about it. The first reaction she had after meeting another youth like Ye Chen wasn't to accept him, but to eliminate him so that her precious Ye Chen wouldn't have any competition. She's subconsciously thinking of what's best for him already."

"Lord Da Huang, please refrain from such slander," Princess Shen Yu said, simmering with anger.

"If I'm not mistaken, you've already given your body to him, right?" Da Huang teased.

The princess froze.

"But you're right. A mountain can only house one tiger, not more. You had no fateful encounter with Lin Feng and already got Ye Chen for yourself. Anything that Ye Chen gains, you gain, not to mention the dynasty gains. As such, preventing the Violetcloud Imperium from getting an ultimate genius of their own is the optimal choice."

"Da Huang is right. We divineglorians won't treat Ye Chen like an outsider, either. Since the two of you have already reached this point in your relationship, it no longer makes sense to pick between Ye Chen and Lin Feng. Not to mention, Lin Feng is a totemancer that diverts his attention to lifebound beasts, too, so he's inferior to Ye Chen. We only need one favored child of the heavens, not two. Compared to Lin Feng, Ye Chen's also far more ambitious. It's in his bones, and he's ruthless enough to kill decisively. He's a prime talent to be cultivated. Yet this Lin Feng didn't desire you in the slightest when he saw you. How could someone who doesn't yearn for a prime woman like you have any real ambitions to speak of?" the middle-aged man said.

"I see...." Princess Shen Yu breathed a long sigh. "The question now is how we can find where he really is."

"As long as he's on the Violetglory Star, he won't be able to escape my detection," said the face on the palm with a confident smile.

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"Lin Feng, you have a message," said the wondersky fairy.

Tianming finally left the battlefield. Right as he was about to return to the real world, the wondersky fairy started saying something, but he didn't respond.

"Lin Feng!" it cried.

"Are you talking to me?" Tianming still wasn't used to his fake name.

"Who else but you?" it said in annoyance.

"Can I change my name now?" Tianming asked. He wanted his own name back. His alias was far too old-fashioned. There were tens of other Lin Fengs on the ranking alone.

"No."

Tianming finally accepted the reality of the situation. Fine, Lin Feng it is. It's still better than the first ranker, Ye Chen. There's more than fifty Ye Chens on the ranking alone... I wonder if being named something old fashioned makes one powerful....

"Alright, fairy, what's the message?"

"Princess Shen Yu has invited you to her secret room for a meeting."

"Secret room? What's that?"

"It's somewhere people with important statuses can entertain guests in the wondersky realm."

"Alright, take me there." Tianming was about to challenge her, so it would be much better to directly meet her.

"Very well." The wondersky fairy sucked Tianming into itself. An instant later, Tianming appeared in a bright garden. There was a lake in front of him with a pavilion in the middle. The multi-colored stars above the lake were reflected on the surface of the water.

A beautifully dressed girl stood in the middle of the grand pavilion. Everything about her looked regal and refined, giving her a rather impressive aura. Her beauty was something that could topple nations, and her status and cold, aloof attitude made her even more tempting. Only those high up in the hierarchy would dare to dream of conquering someone like her.

Princess Shen Yu was a beauty on the level of Weisheng Moran. There were some aspects of her looks that differed from Feiling and the rest; she looked far too elegant and seemed to be an imperial, perhaps even an empress.

Even so, Tianming wasn't the least bit interested. The kind of girls he liked were the free-spirited, pixie-like ones—pure, simple, innocent girls that liked to play silly tricks. People like Feiling. Being with her was pure bliss for him, whereas being with a woman like Shen Yu would make him wonder what she was plotting every morning he woke up beside her.

"This humble Li—Lin Feng greets the princess." Tianming almost let his real name slip.

"So, your surname is Li, eh?" the princess asked, smiling.

"A name is but a label people use to address others by. It matters not," Tianming said.

"Come here." Her voice had an authoritative pull to it that made her requests hard to refuse.

"Out of respect for appropriate conventions between men and women, I'll stay where I am. I wouldn't want to transgress against Your Highness." He figured getting close to her would make it harder for him to beat her up after challenging her, so it would be best to keep his distance.

"Do as you please." Though she appeared to smile, a hint of annoyance flashed across her eyes. The distance Tianming maintained between them had proven her conjectures.

She sat straight within the pavilion. Tianming noticed that something in front of her chest was glowing. It looked like some sort of large jewel. Wearing it made her stand out even more. Tianming knew that this was a divinespring of the imperial family of the Divineglory Dynasty. It was a trait unique to their race and seemed to be shaped similarly to Lingfeng's miniaturized Primordial Gate. However, it wasn't a vortex, but rather a radiant wellspring of energy. The divineglorians had an extra source of energy that didn't come from the albi in their bodies. This divinespring could store large amounts of astralforce and would also grow as one's divine will progressed.

The astralforce inside the divinespring could be used by the albi of their body. In essence, they had far more energy compared to others of the same level. Many divineglorians were able to fight others of higher levels than them as a result. As the race with the longest history on the Violetglory Star, they had always been blessed with this talent. People often called them super beastmasters.

Despite the distance, Tianming could feel the power coming from her divinespring. It was almost like a miniature nova source that had been embedded straight into her human body that also served to bring her aura to new heights. It was the foundation of her race's power and rule over much of the star. Those born with divinesprings were fated to be better than the average person. Throughout history, many other races had wanted to marry divineglorian women in the hopes that their descendants would have divinesprings as well, but divineglorian women never married those who weren't their own.

In the event of rare exceptions, the divineglorians would always bring those people into their fold, allowing them to preserve a really pure bloodline. Like the divine moonrace, any male that fell for a divineglorian female would be brought into their empire to strengthen them even further. The most obvious example was the first ranker. As for the others, they could only dream about conquering a girl such as the princess.

### **Chapter 1318 - Divinespring**

Divinesprings were graded according to their diameters. For instance, those smaller than two centimeters were grade one, and those between two and three centimeters were grade two. Those that were nine centimeters and beyond were grade nine and almost larger than an open palm. In the legends of the divineglorians, divinesprings as large as ten centimeters existed and were considered grade ten. However, nobody could say for sure if they had actually existed.

Usually, any divinespring wider than seven centimeters would be considered the mark of a top talent, with a grade-eight divinespring being the absolute peak. As for those with nine centimeter or wider divinesprings, they would be considered ruler material. More than eighty percent of divineglorian rulers had grade-nine divinesprings.

With that said, the status of Princess Shen Yu was clear to see. Tianming noted that the violet divinespring at the center of her chest was more or less nine centimeters in diameter despite being

under her clothes. While staring like that was quite impolite, it was hard to resist the glow of a divinespring. Little did Tianming know that among divineglorians, staring at one's divinespring was an act of disrespect without regard to gender. That was why most people only dared to look down when standing in front of the princess. Only an outsider like Tianming would be completely ignorant of such conventions.

Feeling the divinespring's power, he thought, the universe truly is diverse. There's races with both male and female characteristics in every individual, as well as divineglorians and wargodeans.... There were all kinds of races, even the wondersky race and sky plunderers. Perhaps that was why the phrase 'the myriad races of the cosmic aether' existed.

"Have you stared enough?" the princess said with a smile. She didn't seem the least bit offended. In fact, she seemed like she enjoyed the attention.

"Your Highness's grade-nine divinespring is too impressive. I'm sorry for the hard stare. I wonder for what reason I was summoned here?" Surely it wasn't just for a leisurely chat.

"Straight to the point, eh? Then I'll be direct." While the princess seemed proud and aloof, it wasn't to the point of distaste. Her beauty made almost whatever she did forgivable, and she had more than enough inner character to complement that beauty.

"Please do."

"Yes. Last time, I asked you whether you had a faction backing you, right?"

"Yes."

"If the faction backing you isn't the Violetcloud Imperium, then I would like to know if it's related to them at all."

"Is Your Highness trying to ascertain whether I am friend or foe?" This was the first time Tianming had met a princess of such high status. From every aspect, including her looks, aura, and demeanor, she was indisputably regal.

"Answer me first."

"I'm not part of the Violetcloud Imperium and have nothing to do with them."

"That's good." Her brows seemed to relax somewhat. "Then you should know that there are only two large factions on our star, us and the Violetcloud Imperium. While this world is vast, there is no middle ground. It's either black or white. The middle is for the common rabble to dwell in, and your shocking talent is definitely not common. Do you understand that someone like you can't afford to stand in the middle?"

"Of course. Your Highness's words are clear."

"I'm glad you understand. Then let me be straightforward with you. Before we met the last time, I had yet to see you fight Mu Sha. Since then, our dynasty has greatly increased our evaluation of you. The elders think the faction that's backing you can no longer afford to not pick a side. Since you're willing to come to me for a talk, that shows that we might still have a chance. I represent the dynasty in extending an invitation to your faction, including your master, family, friends, and all of your associates to join the

Divineglory Alliance. We'll give you the best protection and offer you the best of resources. Your associates will also be cared for. If your backers are a sect, we'll make sure they prosper. Additionally, I've asked my imperial father to personally grant you a gift."

There was extra emphasis on the word 'gift'. Even someone like Tianming knew that such a gift definitely wouldn't come cheap. He was quite troubled by what he heard. He had thought that simply mentioning that he already had a backer would be enough to keep people away from inviting him. He didn't think that the dynasty would even want to absorb his entire secret faction. The problem was that the faction had never existed in the first place and he wasn't even on the Violetglory Star, so no promise of gifts would be useful to him.

Right as he was about to refuse, the princess said, "The divineglorians will grant you two seven-star universal manna."

Tianming was stunned. Weisheng Moran had only gotten one of them from a dragon palace in the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb. Not even the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect might be able to give him something like that. He didn't think the dynasty would be so generous as to offer two.

"Coming to join our dynasty won't conflict with you being a member of your original faction." As she had said, there were only two sides on the Violetglory Star. If Tianming and his backers weren't part of the Violetcloud Imperium, it would be easy to deal with. "You can have those backing you, perhaps even your master, directly negotiate with us. My uncle, the Minister Supreme, will personally negotiate with them. We'll give you all kinds of allowances as a sign of our sincerity."

Being talented truly opened doors anywhere. The divineglorians knew that it was crucial to snatch up any talent that wasn't affiliated with either side as soon as they could. The princess was sincere in everything she had said.

"This...."

Before Tianming could speak, she interrupted again. "I know you must have qualms about your safety. Don't worry. I'll personally send those two universal manna to you. You can even specify the elemental attributes. If a princess like me dares to come to you alone, surely you wouldn't be afraid, right?"

Tianming's head was about to explode. He desperately wanted to ask her to come to Orderia with the manna, but he had a feeling that he shouldn't reveal his location; otherwise even his access privileges to the Violetglory Pagoda might be affected.

### **Chapter 1319 - The Fruit Has Ripened**

At that moment, the princess was looking deep into his eyes, waiting for his answer.

"How about this, princess? I have some difficulties I'm unable to share, so please give me a bit more time. I can, however, assure you that I will never join the Violetcloud Imperium no matter what. If I have to make a choice to join one side or the other, I'll definitely choose the Divineglory Dynasty."

He had expected that the princess would try recruiting him again, and it turned out to be the case. He had a feeling that she was a little annoyed, but he couldn't be sure.

"How long will you need?" she asked, seemingly not displeased in any way.

“Maybe wait until I get first place in the ranking! After that, we’ll negotiate the conditions with more clarity. After all, two seven-star universal manna wouldn’t quite be enough for the first ranker, right?” Tianming said stubbornly.

The princess looked stunned. “You want to take first place?”

“Yes.”

“Hmm, that’s ambitious.” There was an undetectable hint of contempt in her look. However, it wasn’t that she looked down on Tianming. Rather, it had spawned due to her trust in someone else.

“I might have to challenge Your Highness. I hope Your Highness wouldn’t mind dropping down to fourth place since the dynasty surely has more than enough caeli.”

“I won’t mind.” She couldn’t help but smile, though it looked a little off. She felt that Tianming was surprisingly cute at times. Logically, top talent like him wouldn’t behave like that. So he’s quite different from Ye Chen, after all. “Alright, once you take first place, come to us. Never go to the Violetcloud Imperium no matter what, or you’ll have hell to pay. Haha!” Her threat was made in a teasing, almost cute manner.

“Of course, Your Highness! So, if there isn’t anything else, may I excuse myself?”

“Are you so unwilling to spend time with me?” she asked, hand on her chin.

“Your Highness is overthinking it.” Tianming was in too much of a rush and didn’t want to waste any more time with her. The conflict between the factions of the Violetglory Star didn’t concern him in the slightest. If he wasn’t worried that the princess’s authority would be able to affect his access privileges, he wouldn’t have bothered. He would only have to care about her status if he ever went there.

“Fine. You’re dismissed,” the princess said.

“Goodbye!” To him, people he could see but couldn’t touch were a waste of time.

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The lake was silent again after Tianming left. Then a person appeared next to the princess.

“I’d wanted to use seven-star universal manna as bait to trick him to reveal his location. I don’t know if he’s just daft or if he really figured out my intentions. He actually refused me.”

“I think he’s just daft,” said the middle-aged man.

“So what do you intend to do, Uncle?”

“Didn’t he say he wanted to take first place? We’ll keep watching. Eventually, he’ll expose something. There are currently two possibilities. The first is that he’s actually being raised by the Violetcloud Imperium, which would mean he was just playing the fool and knew what was going on. The second is that he’s just a fool that managed to get lucky.”

“What if the latter is the case?”



“We’ll keep doing what we’re doing and use even more bait. He’s just a brat, so there must be something that can sway him. If he’s easy to control, there’s no need to eliminate him either. Letting him serve as Ye Chen’s rival isn’t a bad idea.”

“Alright.”

For now, they still didn’t have a definitive answer as to how they should deal with Tianming. Right as the princess was about to say something else, her face flushed red and she disappeared. That was the sign of her leaving the wondersky realm and returning to the real world. There was only one person on the entire star that could do something like that to her.

“This child... Isn’t she hedging everything into her bet a little too soon? Is this Ye Chen truly that miraculous! He came from a small town wielding a top-tier weapon and stormed through the entire star with his five odd lifebound beasts. He even defeated Shen Yu and won her heart, crushing many Violetcloud Imperium disciples in the process and taking first place, then eventually receiving the summons of the emperor. He rocketed to the peak of power and survived countless deathly ordeals, emerging with benefits every single time. Someone like that is... interesting, to say the least.”

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Having spent some time in the wondersky realm, Tianming now had a rough idea about the state of the Violetglory Star. He temporarily stopped making challenges after defeating Mu Sha. Making progress at the Violetglory Pagoda wasn’t something that would happen overnight, though he wasn’t in too much of a hurry now that he was a Sky Palace disciple.

“Now that I’ve started cultivating at the seventh level of the tower, I’m making much faster progress than training at the Azuresky Bridge. It’s more or less equal to the caeli of the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect, so I can keep doing what I’m doing here. The third ranker is Princess Shen Yu, an eighth-level constellier and top beastmaster with a grade-nine divinespring. She’s someone who could become the divineglory emperor in the future. I should take some time and grow before challenging her next.”

Haste makes waste, so he decided to take it step by step. His recent days were simple and peaceful. Day after day, he alternated between the Violetglory Pagoda’s seventh floor and training his sword moves at the Azuresoul Palace. Lingfeng had also made it to the top-ten bracket in the Violetglory ranking, causing quite a bit of a commotion. Xiaoxiao had made it to the top hundred. She was now a fifth-level constellier with the Dragonblood Desecration, but she was still some way from making it to the top ten.

Tianming had also been paying attention to the matter of the divine tree. One day when he was at the Violetglory Pagoda, he heard Yu Ziqian calling out to him and left the heavenly locus formation. “What’d the chief instructor say?”

“He refused. That fellow is super stingy ever since Soulbreak Mountain was emptied out. He said he’d no longer let you go to other mines to protect the future of Azuresoul Palace,” Yu Ziqian said.

Back then, Tianming had asked Yu Ziqian to ask for access to more mines on his behalf so he could make more bodies for Yin Chen. That way he would be able to expand his surveillance to the Azurecloud Divine Tree. It would be of huge benefit to the Azuresoul Palace.

“Forget it. It’s his right to refuse. These ores are supposed to be used to make divine artifacts for the sect, after all.” Divine artifacts could be damaged over time. In some sense, they were consumables, yet they heavily contributed to the power of a cultivator. Tianming didn’t have a choice on the matter since, at the end of the day, the Azuresoul Palace wasn’t going to nurture someone that would eventually leave their sect. Yin Chen needs far too much divine ore. In the short term, it’s a huge problem. The Azuresoul Palace has quite a lot of them, though. If I can grow stronger that way, I’ll be a huge help to them too. It’s a win-win situation.

Back then, Tianming had felt like he’d belonged to the Grand-Orient Sect. After Li Wudi’s triumphant return, Tianming could get anything he wanted. But Gujian Qingshuang wasn’t prepared to be that generous to a Sky Palace disciple, though he had already been made to give Tianming the six-star universal manna and many grade-six divine hazard sword ki strands. Even if Jiang Qingliu went to ask for more resources for him now, it wouldn’t do anything.

Long Wanying was quite displeased about it and wanted to help as well. However, it was beyond her capability now. The treasury of the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect was now in the hands of the Veildragon Palace. Even their mines were controlled by them, and were also far away. If it weren’t for the Veildragon Palace, Tianming would have been having a much easier time.

“Boss, I went to see the chief instructor with my master. We’re all from the same sect, so it’s much easier discussing matters like these. However, those from the Dongye house were also there, and they’ve never been the friendly sort. To be honest, sword ki strands and divine ores are the wealth of the sect as a whole, not a single person’s. But still, we’re Sky Palace disciples and deserve to be rewarded for contributing to our sect. It’s one thing for Gujian Qingshuang to refuse us, but he also brought up that matter again.” Yu Ziqian sat on the floor unhappily.

“What is it?”

“He said that some of the ‘fruits’ of the divine tree are starting to ripen, so he wants to start preparing our defenses to pick the fruits. He had my master join the first group of people being sent to the tree, and even said that those from the Supracloud Sanctuary won’t fight us for the normal divine herbs that ripen near the start, calling it an easy mission.”

Gujian Qingshuang cultivated at the very top of the Azuresoul Sword Mountain and there were many defensive formations there. For now, Yin Chen’s bodies weren’t able to sneak in. It wouldn’t be easy for Tianming to gain access and bring Yin Chen in, either. Though, even if Yin Chen could hear what they said, it still couldn’t hear the dark thoughts in their hearts. Based on the arrangements, it seemed like Gujian Qingshuang was dead set on getting rid of Jiang Qingliu, though it would seem like a normal thing they would do whether or not the Emyrean Sword Sect was there. After all, it wasn’t like Jiang Qingliu could remain cooped up for life, not to mention they wouldn’t be the ones to pull the trigger. Even if matters soured with the Emyrean Sword Sect and caused their agreement to be exposed, Gujian Qingshuang still had plausible deniability.

“And to think I’d considered telling Gujian Qingshuang everything. It seems like it’s completely pointless now.” There was little chance that Gujian Qingshuang would side with them now, after hearing their secret.

“Even my master was shocked. He’s always been someone who didn’t struggle for authority and kept a low profile, apart from the short decades of his prime. Why would these people look down on him and treat him like trash?” Yu Ziqian said.

Tianming didn’t understand either. Was the threat of the Emyrean Sword Sect too much, or were the promised benefits far too tempting to refuse? “So your master’s supposed to head out soon, right? What’s he going to do about it?”

“He excused himself by saying he’s at a crucial point in his cultivation, so he had my senior sister Yin Qing take his place.”

### **Chapter 1320 - Lady Wushuang**

Yin Qing was Jiang Qingliu’s first disciple and the vice branch master of the Sixth Sword Branch. She was a rather powerful grade-four swordpupil.

“What’d they say about letting her go in your master’s stead?” Tianming asked.

“They looked at one another and said that it’ll be fine as long as things don’t go wrong,” Yu Ziqian answered.

Tianming was a little speechless. This matter wasn’t that hard to deal with. As long as Jiang Qingliu didn’t leave, nothing would happen. However, knowing what was happening behind the scenes made it even harder to deal with. “Alright, just get your master to stay no matter what. Never take any rash action.”

“Yeah, I already told him that.”

“He shouldn’t have anything that’ll affect him too much outside, should he?”

“There shouldn’t be...”

“Then that’s good. I’m sure the Emyrean Sword Sect will soon learn that we have a really good relationship with Aunt Ying already, so getting rid of your master won’t help their cause at all.”

“Let’s hope it’ll turn out that way.”

So far, the Emyrean Sword Sect hadn’t sent anyone out to negotiate with Tianming; they were banking on making their approach after Jiang Qingliu’s death. However, if he stubbornly survived, Tianming felt like they would directly come to him regardless, much in the same manner the Divineglory Dynasty had. Standing at a tall place, he looked in the direction of the divine tree. “So the blooming has started, eh?”

“Yeah, but it’s only the early stage, so there’ll only be grade-three divine herbs or worse. There’ll be a high quantity, but little quality. Most other sects don’t really care about it, and our sect and the Supracloud Sanctuary would keep our harvesting efforts near our territories. But when the better stuff comes later, we might cross into their territory to fight and vice versa.”

“Shouldn’t the herbs belong to those in whose territory the herbs grow?”

“Yeah.”

“Then how can a fight be justified?”

“The problem is that the Azurecloud Continent has many other smaller sects apart from ours. There’s many territorial disputes. Whenever something good appears in disputed territory, there’ll be trouble.” That was when the arguments would start. If one side couldn’t get the other to back down, there would be conflict.

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A few days later, Long Wanying and her fruity friends led an entire army to help with the harvest. Tianming wanted her to help him bring fifty thousand of Yin Chen’s eggs to the divine tree. They turned into invisible cockroaches when they arrived and spread throughout the leaves and branches of the tree.

“There’s still far too few of them. One cockroach can only cover a range of a few kilometers, so much information will still be beyond our grasp.” Tianming really wanted Yin Chen to make more bodies, but it couldn’t be helped since the Azuresoul Palace didn’t want to support him. He knew where their mines were, but letting Yin Chen eat them dry without permission would lead to a huge conflict. He had no choice but to seek out another way. Nowadays, the Azuresoul Palace had deployed most of their swordpupils, swordtroops, and swordcitizens around the branches in their territory. There were far more of them than Tianming’s cockroaches. Amidst the hidden undercurrents, a storm was brewing.

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The Azurecloud Divine Tree was rooted in the center of the Azurecloud Continent and stood millions of meters tall. Even its branches themselves looked like a continent of their own. Countless roots stretched out from the tree and spawned an endless forest around it. One could already see the colorful divine herbs of all shapes and sizes, some even reaching up to hundreds of meters in diameter, while others were as small as flies, in between the branches and leaves. All of them had divine ordered patterns. The higher grade the patterns were, the stronger the fragrance. Most of them were still unripened with yet-unformed divine patterns. Their medicinal effects would be only average at best, making them bad ingredients for pill refining, so picking unripe divine herbs was rather pointless.

Most divine herbs from a single plant were usually of the same type. For instance, one would only expect to see apples from an apple tree. But things were different for the divine tree—it had millions of kinds of fruits of different grades, even up to grade eight or nine. It was truly a rare miracle plant.

Countless cultivators were circling about near the tree, picking up any fruits the moment they ripened. It was a risk-taker’s playground. All kinds of lifebound beasts were unleashing their abilities all over the place. Yin Chen, for instance, spread out across the tree branches far more methodically than most cultivators.

The branches of the tree that stretched to the north were mostly under the Supracloud Sanctuary’s control, and there were many wargodeans and cultivators from the Blueblood Starocean there. At the very least, the part they claimed was impenetrable. They weren’t going to let others take anything that belonged to them.

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Heat radiated from the sky above. At the northernmost part of the tree’s branches was a thick branch that pointed skyward. This branch in particular was hundreds of meters thick and many fresh leaves sprouted from its bark. Tens of people were standing on it, every one of them among the strongest

elites on the continent. The wargodeans' Tumulus Pill God stood at the very center of the group, looking to the north in a forlorn manner.

To his left and right were the Blueblood Starocean's Lan Sha and Supracloud Sanctuary's Yun Tianque, and the rest were their subordinates, all of whom were equivalent to grade-four swordpupils. They took a deep breath as they watched what was happening.

"It's about to happen soon, right? What do you think, Brother Lan, Pill God?" Yun Tianque asked in a hoarse voice.

"Yes. I hear it now," said the Tumulus Pill God.

"Brother Yun, I'm sure you don't need to remind me, right? All we need to do is to coordinate our efforts to match his," Lan Sha said.

"Understood. I'll definitely follow his lead."

"Don't worry. This is the Supracloud Sanctuary's chance. It's not often you get to show off your prowess."

Some of the people behind them didn't know what was actually happening. Those who knew the identity of the others present actually numbered rather few. When they received word of their arrival, they hurried to welcome them. Everyone, including the wargodeans' Warlord and Blueblood Starocean's Deluge Emperor, made sure they cooperated with the efforts.

Many of them breathed a long sigh when they saw two figures descending from the flaming clouds above. Two flaming pillars shot down onto the branch as a male and female emerged. Even the Tumulus Pill God had to greet them with respect. "This humble wargodean greets the Lady Wushuang."