

Emperor 5511

Chapter 5511: I Can't Watch This Anymore

Of course, the actual parties didn't have as much fun. One was drinking and eating while the other seemed happy to play along, seemingly having an implicit understanding.

Qin Baifeng had a faint smile on her face since she couldn't compare to her senior sister in this regard. The latter had a brightness without any pretension, akin to the purity of a newborn.

"Do you notice anything peculiar, Young Noble?" She knew that Li Qiye had a different perspective than anyone else.

"Of course it is peculiar, that is why your ancestor left it behind." He said with a smile.

"Our ancestor left secrets in the manor as well, I wonder if you can spot them." Sunset Glow Goddess said.

"Junior Sister, those are our sect's secrets." Mu Shaoyun couldn't help but remind her.

Ultimately, Li Qiye was still an outsider and no sects would want their secrets to be leaked. The problem was that Sunset Glow's members couldn't figure it out.

"He is not an outsider." She winked at Li Qiye who smiled back at her.

"Wow, I can't watch this couple anymore, I'm so jealous." A female disciple said enviously while holding her cheeks: "It's so obvious that she's in love now."

"Right, has to be love at first sight, a match made in heaven." Another enjoyed the show.

Mu Shaoyun could bear this public affection no longer. He felt as if Li Qiye was stealing something belonging to him.

"What is he if not an outsider?" A surge of jealousy and resentment overwhelmed him as he blurted out.

Unfortunately, she didn't see his vexed expression since she only had eyes for Li Qiye. Her bright smile dazzled the crowd and made them think that she was in love. Of course, Qin Baifeng knew that this was not the case.

Her senior sister had a profound insight, capable of noticing things that would be disregarded by others.

"The young noble can become our Emperor Consort." She said before staring at Li Qiye: "Am I right, Young Noble?"

Li Qiye smiled and sipped his tea without answering. On the other hand, Shaoyun looked as if he was struck by lightning. The crowd clamored as well.

"Emperor Consort? That used to happen, right?" A female disciple became excited.

"Yes, but that was in the distant past." An older disciple didn't dare to make a joke out of this matter.

"According to the historical record, our valley lords can pick their husbands to take control of the sect. This only happened during extraordinary circumstances." Someone who knew of this tradition elaborated.

"I actually like that, no longer need to leave the valley, they can stay here and give birth to some cute babies." One of them would be elated to see this.

"Well, First Sister might not become the valley lord, and the valley lord can't just pick an Emperor Consort." The first disciple knew about the rules.

"Who else is in the running, Senior Sister Qin?" Another glanced at Qin Baifeng and whispered: "Wait, doesn't it look like she'll pick him too? Are they competing for the same guy?"

"No way." The group became surprised.

"She's sitting next to him too, it's just that she's more reserved. In my opinion, she has to like someone to be that close to him." The female disciple insisted.

Everyone looked over and sure enough, Qin Baifeng occasionally stole glances at Li Qiye. They interpreted this as a sign of affection and now, it suddenly became a love triangle. They finally had a love story for the ages.

"Wow, so romantic, two beauties loving the same man." One said: "And just an ordinary outsider too. No need for reason or logic, love triumphs all."

"Right, right." Her friend added: "I understand now, they're competing to be the valley lord because whoever wins will get to pick him as Emperor Consort. So the grand ceremony will be a husband-picking ceremony too."

"Who's gonna win?" A third asked.

"Well, the loser will be so sad, losing both the valley lord position and her love." One of them said: "That's tragic."

"It doesn't have to be like that." Someone stroked her chin and said: "They can both marry him, that's a good ending."

Although they were whispering, Mu Shaoyun still overheard them and became increasingly agitated.

"Shut up!" He shouted.

The girls were startled but after coming to their senses, some stuck out their tongue at him. After all, they were inner disciples and he had no authority over them despite being stronger.

Chapter 5512: Master?

"What is it, Senior Brother?" Qin Baifeng frowned after hearing the rude remark.

Gossip was inevitable considering the circumstances so she didn't actually mind. Mu Shaoyun, on the other hand, was blinded by rage and couldn't tell that Sunset Glow Goddess was merely playing around.

"Picking an Emperor Consort pertains to the prosperity of the sect..." He said with a serious tone.

"You need not worry about this matter, Senior Brother." Baifeng responded seriously as well. Despite the absurdity of the situation, she believed in her senior sister's insight.

Although the senior sister was innocent, she wasn't foolish enough to do anything that might be detrimental to the sect.

"It is of great importance and should be decided unanimously by the ancestors." He replied.

She disliked how idiotic he was being right now and said: "The matron is the sole decider. Senior Brother, don't forget your place."

The atmosphere became solemn due to her stern warning. Everyone was afraid of her since she had both authority and a willingness to dish out punishments.

She and Sunset Glow Goddess were in charge of the sect, not counting their matron. The other ancestors weren't as strong as them at this point and the matron rarely interfered.

Shaoyun had an awkward expression since he was an outer disciple. He had no authority to interfere with the sect's matters despite being a powerful dragon lord.

Qin Baifeng maintained her strong stance while Sunset Glow Goddess shook her head.

Li Qiye ignored the commotion while lamenting the souring atmosphere due to the idiot.

"You are rather invested in this painting, Young Noble." Sunset Glow Goddess said.

"You can just ask me directly whether I've figured out your sect's secret." He said.

"Sounds like you have." She stroked her chin and laughed: "It's no surprise since you and our sect are deeply intertwined by fate."

"Not that deep." he shook his head.

"This is all predetermined, proven by your presence here." She insisted: "Can you truly say that you're only here coincidentally?"

"It's hard to argue otherwise." He said.

"Because of this fateful connection, it's only a matter of time before you find out." She smiled.

"And now you want me to tell you what it is." He said.

Meanwhile, the crowd listened attentively since this pertained to the secret of their sect. Although they were elated to watch the two flirt, they held their breath at this point.

Qin Baifeng became emotional as well since she didn't think Li Qiye was merely boasting.

"How ignorant." Mu Shaoyun raised his voice: "The secret of the manor has been around for eras, an outsider like you has no chance of grasping it. Know your limit."

He truly despised Li Qiye at this moment and thought about killing him. Alas, there were other people around.

“Senior Brother, watch your words.” The goddess glared at him while feeling rather disappointed. It seemed that not letting him join as an inner disciple was the correct decision.

She continued: “As I’ve said, the young noble is deeply connected to our sect so this shouldn’t be surprising. Moreover, he is a true master.”

This prompted him to smile and said: “It’s rare to see someone so aware.”

Their interaction only further infuriated Shaoyun, causing him to be on the verge of losing his temper. Her praises grated him and fueled his jealousy.

‘Dogs.’ He cursed in his mind while wanting to tear Li Qiye to pieces.

“A master? Him?” He no longer possessed the bearing of a dragon lord. He truly believed that it was only a matter of time before he and the goddess would be together.

After all, he was already stronger than many ancestors in Sunset Glow Valley. Now, this bastard came out of nowhere and stole his woman.

“You are being rude.” Qin Baifeng chastised.

“It’s the truth. Letting an outsider to the valley is already a risk, letting him peer into our secret? Far more dangerous.” Shaoyun didn’t back down.

“He is one of us, you worry about nothing, Senior Brother.” The goddess said.

“He is neither a disciple nor an ally, how is he one of us?!” Shaoyun lost his cool.

The goddess grimaced with disappointment.

“Enough, Senior Brother!” Baifeng raised her voice with a command.

Chapter 5513: Bare Surface

This left Shaoyun in an awkward predicament. A four-fruit dragon lord like himself should have enough influence in the valley. Moreover, shouldn’t his junior sisters give him some face?

“Junior Sister, we can’t possibly let this happen, an outsider researching the sect’s secret.” Mu Shaoyun said.

“Senior Brother, Sunset Peak is in need of a powerful guard, you should go right now.” The goddess lost her patience.

Shaoyun scowled but preferred this development. At the very least, she gave him a chance to back off while saving face. However, he didn’t want to leave because that would be admitting defeat to this outsider.

Li Qiye, on the other hand, didn’t care about the mess. He closed his eyes and basked in the aura of this place - it truly reminded him of the nine worlds.

He took another sip of tea while enjoying the breeze. This caused the goddess to say: “Young Noble, we’ll get you some more barley tea.”

She ordered someone to bring more of this type and personally prepared a pot for him.

“Young Noble, you seem to enjoy the manor.” Qin Baifeng said.

“It’s a good place.” Li Qiye responded.

“Could you be more exact?” The goddess asked while feeding him more peanuts.

“It evokes memories and warms the heart.” He said.

“You have other memories regarding our sect?” The goddess asked.

Li Qiye didn’t respond.

“The warming effect comes from Sunset Glow Scripture. Our ancestor built a dao foundation here with a warmth capable of reaching the heart.” Qin Baifeng said.

“Seems like you have a decent understanding of the scripture.” Li Qiye smiled.

“You’re too kind, I know nothing compared to our ancestor.” Qin Baifeng said.

As a dragon lord, she had her own dao. However, Sunset Glow had gestated their dao heart since youth. Thus, they continued to use Sunset Glow to nurture their mind and any dao within.

All members of Sunset Glow naturally attempted to learn the scripture, albeit with varying success.

“Yes, you have a long way to go. Not to mention your ancestor, you have a considerable gap compared to your senior sister.” Li Qiye nodded.

This surprised Qin Baifeng since their cultivation was equal. Of course, she was curious, not jealous.

“Junior Sister’s sword dao is impressive, I have only revised Sunset Glow Scripture, nothing more.” The goddess said humbly.

“You are the only one who has inherited your ancestor’s legacy with a focus on the dao heart. The others only saw the bare surface, nothing profound.” Li Qiye commented.

Listeners outside exchanged glances. Sunset Glow Scripture was a required mental mantra upon joining. They had access to imperial merit laws as well but nothing was as familiar to them as the mantra. Thus, they didn’t take his criticism kindly.

“Sure, we’re not as good as the senior sisters but we’ve definitely finished the mantra.” One female disciple complained.

Some of them had spent decades learning this, so for an outsider to criticize them was unacceptable. How could he possibly know more about it than they do?

“Ridiculous and nonsensical.” Mu Shaoyun finally spoke again: “We have become dragon lords after learning it, you do not understand the profundity within the scripture, watch your mouth now.”

Li Qiye finally paid attention to him and said: “I would argue that you have yet to learn it at all given your personality and morality. You should be ashamed for claiming otherwise.”

Shaoyun couldn’t take this criticism in stride, especially when it was in a public setting.

"Ignorant junior!" The dragon lord lost his cool and activated his aura: "How dare you criticize the members of Sunset Glow and incite confusion? What is your intention here?!"

"Does he really understand our scripture?" The others were skeptical since they believed in their accomplishments with the scripture.

"Senior Brother, choose your words wisely. The young noble is an esteemed guest." The goddess said calmly.

This only infuriated Shaoyun and made him more jealous.

"Junior Sister, I am not being disrespectful. It is ludicrous for an outsider to be arrogant enough to comment on our legacy. He's the one disrespecting the sect and all of us." Shaoyun stood proudly and said.

"We all started learning the scripture after joining the sect, some for decades now. Sisters and brothers, how can an outsider understand the scripture more than we do?" He riled up the crowd.

Chapter 5514: What Is There To Be Proud Of?

Although they had no problem and actually welcomed Li Qiye's presence, they still became uncomfortable with his negative remark. Moreover, he had no evidence or reason.

"I do believe that this is not a trivial claim." An older disciple said.

"If you say that we have only learned the bare surface, tell us what true mastery should be like." A lively disciple shouted.

"Tell us!" Others raised their voice. All eyes were on Li Qiye, awaiting a response.

Qin Baifeng's brows furrowed. She could control the crowd but this wasn't a favorable development for Li Qiye.

She turned toward the goddess who still had a smile on her face, seemingly in no rush to do anything.

As for Shaoyun, he was glad to have the support of the crowd and became bolder: "If you can't give us a reasonable answer, we will take your words as malicious insults and potentially a treacherous scheme, punishable ranging from kicking you out or even death!"

"Senior Brother." The goddess' smile disappeared after seeing his aggression.

Mu Shaoyun no longer cared for the only thing on his mind was to remove Li Qiye from the valley. With that done, he could easily crush the guy like an ant.

He arched his chest and said: "Junior Sister, am I wrong here? He came to our home and spewed insults, just removing him is already merciful enough."

Her expression turned to anger after her words fell upon deaf ears.

"So you take pride in your accomplishment with the scripture?" Li Qiye smiled.

"I believe I have its essence within my grasp. If you are capable, then give me a pointer or two, but if you can't articulate anything insightful, then punishments are justified." Shaoyun said, wanting to get rid of this potential threat.

"Essence is certainly the wrong word here." Li Qiye smirked.

The crowd members found his statement offensive. After all, Mu Shaoyun could be the third strongest cultivator in the valley. They believed that he had a strong grasp of the scripture, only losing to their senior sisters.

"Senior Brother, show him your mastery!" One disciple shouted.

"Right, broaden his horizon and make him stop thinking that we're all incapable!" Another joined in.

Their support emboldened him, causing him to challenge: "Let's see what you can do then. You can only blame yourself if you fail to back up your claim."

"Go for it." Li Qiye smiled.

"Very well, activate!" He roared and became resplendent.

Rays of light exuded along with auspicious energy, culminating in the image of a boundless sunset.

This was a world brimming with energy, capable of crushing anyone standing too close to him.

"Buzz." Runes manifested into reality and seemed powerful enough to lift the heaven. They connected and turned into thick dao laws resembling heavenly waterfalls with a red glow coiling downward.

Sunset Glow Goddess and Qin Baifeng used their grand dao power to prevent anyone else from being suppressed.

"Incredible, it's taking on the form of an independent world, that's grand completion, right?" One disciple shouted.

"It's more than just grand completion." A senior disciple said: "First Brother is a dragon lord with perfect mastery over the scripture. This is as good as it gets, enough to surpass the previous generation."

All in all, everyone had nothing but praise for his accomplishment.

"What do you have to say now, brat?!" Shaoyun shouted at Li Qiye.

The crowd thought that his technique was impeccable. It would be impossible to point out a flaw.

"There's nothing to be proud of, you don't even understand where you stand." Li Qiye shook his head after one glance at the visual phenomenon.

"You speak boldly but I'm still waiting to hear an actual response. Otherwise, I will end your dog life as punishment for insulting our sect!" The furious Shaoyun bellowed.

"Can't he see that this is a perfect manifestation of the scripture?" One disciple said.

"Right, there's no flaw to speak of." Another agreed.

“Young Noble, please guide us away from ignorance.” The goddess, on the other hand, showed no sign of doubt.

Qin Baifeng remained curious, wondering if Li Qiye could actually spot any flaw in their scripture itself, not this manifestation from Shaoyun.

Chapter 5515: Shaming The Ancestor

“What are you waiting for, brat? Accept your death if you have nothing to say!” Shaoyun said with murderous intent while looking at the goddess’ expression toward Li Qiye.

“Fool, you are throwing away your ancestor’s face. I will educate you all in her stead.” Li Qiye said before raising one hand into the air.

“Buzz.” Everyone felt as if the valley was sinking and that they were standing on water.

Rays emanated from all corners of the manor and turned into the image of a paradisaical sunset. Dao laws came from every brick and tile, eventually gathering together to form a scripture.

Everyone could sense its power and lost control of their own dao. Their dao harmonized and released their power. This included mighty existences such as the goddess and Qin Baifeng.

“Rumble!” The manor seemingly disappeared, replaced by a boundless grand dao.

This made the crowd want to kowtow as if their ancestor was now before them.

“The true scripture left behind by our ancestor...” Some murmured in a daze.

Li Qiye casually flipped his hand and special runes appeared on the scripture. They flew out in the direction of Shaoyun’s visual phenomenon, embedding themselves into certain spots and exposing flaws.

Due to the imperfection in his dao, his dao laws were instantly nullified.

“Boom! Boom! Boom!” After loud explosions, the overall phenomenon collapsed and he could do nothing to stabilize.

“Boom!” The final blast sent him flying out of the town while vomiting blood. He flew and flew before hitting a peak.

Everyone was left speechless. Li Qiye didn’t do anything, only revealing the innate flaws and instability of his dao. Alas, this nearly killed Shaoyun.

They then stared at the scripture in his hand - the very treasure left behind by Cloudsweep Fairy.

No one had been able to summon it in history. Since they couldn’t truly understand the mantra, they had no way of seeing the real scripture.

The goddess and Qin Baifeng realized how far they were from true mastery over the scripture.

“Is that real...?” A female disciple murmured in disbelief. An outsider had done something unprecedented.

“How did he do it? He trained with the scripture too?” Another asked because this had to be the case. However, an outsider certainly didn’t have access to it.

“The arrogance.” Li Qiye shook his head and dropped the scripture. It dispersed into particles and runes, returning to the manor once more.

No one uttered a single word. Li Qiye had mentioned them only learning the “bare surface” previously or even worse. They once took it as an insult but now, he had summoned the real scripture - something their senior sisters couldn’t do.

They were utterly convinced by his ability and thought that he had the right to make those comments.

With the scripture returning to the manor, the visual phenomenon disappeared as well.

“Young Noble, this is more than just having a fateful connection with our sect. You are basically our lord.” The goddess sighed and said.

“The valley is meant to be governed by all of you, I am just a passerby.” He said.

“I would argue otherwise.” The goddess thought differently.

Meanwhile, Qin Baifeng was at a loss for words. Only the goddess was calm enough to have a conversation.

“Young Noble, since you can summon the true scripture easily, you must know the secret left behind by our ancestor as well.” She said with a smile.

Chapter 5516: Still Underestimated

“Have you ever thought that there might not be a hidden secret at all in this manor?” Li Qiye asked.

“No secret?” The goddess and Qin Baifeng didn’t expect this answer, the same for the rest of the disciples.

This has been passed down for eras now but none had been able to find it.

“What kind of secret do you think it is?” Li Qiye smiled.

The group started ruminating. One legend mentioned an invincible weapon from the previous epoch that had been in the hands of an immortal.

Another brought up a potential connection with the immortal artifact. Figuring out this secret meant gaining control over it just like Cloudsweep Fairy back then.

The third account stated that it was a personal matter relating to the fairy’s background and origin. Although she was the spiritual totem of the sect, everyone knew that she came from Eight Desolaces and chose to save them, nothing more. Of course, this wasn’t particularly important either.

“Whatever it may be, I know that only you can figure it out, Young Noble.” The goddess smiled.

Li Qiye sighed and nodded before speaking: “Fate indeed, perhaps it is time to end this thread.”

Having said that, he whistled and produced a unique melody with a special rhythm.

“Buzz.” A white cloud flew out of the painting and landed before him to everyone’s astonishment.

In history, members of Sunset Glow have researched the manor extensively. They paid special attention to every inch of land, this painting included. No matter how many times they tried, they didn’t notice anything peculiar about this ordinary painting.

Nonetheless, it became obvious to everyone that the long-awaited secret was hidden in this painting. Activation required knowledge of how to whistle properly to summon this cloud, not a technique or dao.

Moreover, how did this cloud fly out? Was everything in the painting “alive”?

“I’ve still underestimated his connection.” The goddess murmured.

Li Qiye sat on the cloud and it took him into the painting before anyone could react. They rushed over and could see him in the painting as well.

“This is a thing?” Qin Baifeng thought that this was magical.

“He’s the one our ancestor has been waiting for, that’s why he can open this secret.” The goddess sighed.

The painting captivated the crowd. How could a living person enter the painting? This idea had never crossed their mind before but alas, it was actually happening.

A single white cloud drifted amidst the azure sky. The gentle breeze carried a faint scent of grass - the first sign of spring.

The sunlight soothed the soul on this plain. One could lie on the grass and take perhaps the best nap in their life.

Alas, this seemed to have been unchanging for eras now, resulting in a feeling of loneliness. Although this place was full of life, only one person was here to enjoy it.

Fortunately, she wasn’t entirely alone due to the presence of a cloud. Today, it had brought back a friend for her.

She stood there patiently while wearing a plain dress, looking like a villager. Her hair was tied up by a single wooden hairpin and she had no makeup on. Nonetheless, her simplicity only accentuated her charm.

She sensed Li Qiye’s arrival and slowly turned around. Her face invoked a feeling of awe since she contained a special spirituality and purity that could seep into the heart. It also displayed her unswerving determination regardless of any potential challenges.

Chapter 5517: Path In Life

Ripples appeared in her clear eyes - a sign of disbelief.

"You've found me." Li Qiye said with a smile.

"Young Noble!" Two pearl-like teardrops streamed down her cheeks.

"So we meet again." Li Qiye sighed sentimentally before spreading his arms.

She couldn't control her emotions and ran into his embrace. For eras, she walked alone from the nine worlds to the six continents, only wanting to follow in his footsteps.

In the end, she couldn't catch up to meet him, not even during her last moment. Nonetheless, her wish still remained after death, resulting in this painting. This moment justified her effort and perseverance.

"The heart is the strongest force in this world." Li Qiye sighed and said.

"All to see you, Young Noble." She revealed a wonderful smile. The mysteries of the dao and their power couldn't compare to this moment of satisfaction.

They embraced for who knows how long. She looked up to see his face while he gently caressed her cheek.

"You have done an amazing job, an indomitable dao heart." He said.

"I never forgot your guidance." She said: "Walk with me, Young Noble."

He nodded and they held hands, interlocking their fingers. They strolled through the plain at a leisurely pace. The breeze accompanied by the scene of nature accompanied them.

This time around, the white cloud didn't follow her, seemingly wanting to give them space.

"I entered the immortal city and witnessed its mysteries, allowing me to live longer." She said softly while staring at him.

"Your determination allowed you to overcome it." Li Qiye said.

"I thought that it would have been enough to catch up to your pace." She said.

"It's paradoxical." Li Qiye said: "Taking the next step and reaching the other shore require an indomitable dao heart. Faltering means falling into the darkness, just one wrong thought and it's over. However, someone with an indomitable dao heart would never take this step in the first place. So this means that there is only one possible result - damnation."

"Yes, and no longer fit to see you then, Young Noble." She said.

He smiled and glanced toward the horizon: "Immortal Dao City. Look at what they did, expending all of your lifespan."

The reason for her death was due to running out of lifespan after comprehending the immortal artifact. Otherwise, she could have lived for much longer in a dormant state.

"My wish is fulfilled with our meeting, Young Noble." She smiled brightly and said: "Life isn't perfect and I was just a normal person. To be able to go this far was due to the path you showed me."

"A single thought led you down a lifelong path, not necessarily for the better." He sighed.

"I would have been another cultivator, one among the masses, who will die of old age in Crimson Night." She said and held his hand: "I have no regrets, from our nine worlds to Eight Desolaces then the six continents, and now, here you are before me, Young Noble. I was but an insect but you showed me the vastness of the world."

He let out a sigh again and gently touched her cheek. In the end, she had to rely on this special method to see him.

Was it worth it? Nearly an epoch of time spent on a lonely journey only to fail. On the other hand, she was right about her own limitations.

Without his interference, she would have died as a member of Crimson Night, unable to witness the flow of history. Which was the better outcome? Perhaps there was no right answer.

Nonetheless, she followed her heart bravely and tirelessly, always moving forward without regrets.

The scent of grass lingered in the air, sweet and bittersweet. A second in the painting was akin to a thousand years as they took a walk together.

"Young Noble, my heart is content. If there is another life, I would still make the same choice." Eventually, she looked at him and said softly.

"I hope you will find happiness in the next life." He responded.

"Buzz." Particles appeared in the field and were blown away by the winds.

"Goodbye." He felt disappointed, unlike her. Nonetheless, their past and emotions remained in this realm. He jumped on the particles to leave this world.

Meanwhile, the members of Sunset Glow were staring intensely at the painting. They saw a freeze in the painting as if the last moments had become eternal and indestructible.

They suddenly got the impression that even if this entire world was destroyed, the painting would still remain.

Chapter 5518: Immortal Artifact

"Buzz." The white cloud carried Li Qiye out of the painting.

All eyes were on him instantly but they had nothing to say. No one asked about the secret of the manor or what had transpired in the painting.

Li Qiye smiled at them and didn't elaborate on the matter for there was no need. This time around, the cloud didn't return to the painting and soared toward Sunset Peak instead.

"Boom!" A wondrous beam shot upward and illuminated the region.

Li Qiye knew what this was - the power of the immortal artifact taken from Immortal Dao City.

"The artifact!" Everyone was startled, especially Qin Baifeng and Sunset Glow Goddess since this hasn't happened since their ancestor's era.

"The grand ceremony starts today, be ready." She then told everyone.

They listened and prepared for the grand ceremony while still thinking about the phenomenon earlier and the next leader of the valley.

"Young Noble, will you participate? The valley needs you." The goddess asked Li Qiye.

"I won't be staying here or anywhere else." He smiled.

"I see, at the very least, it's a shame that I am too weak to be a part of your journey, but please be a part of ours." She said softly while staring at him. Her gentle eyes also contained an unyielding determination, hoping for him to agree.

"Sunset Glow has a successor." He commented and nodded: "You should know that the dao is endless and not as good as you imagine. The only certainty on this path is how lonely you will be."

"I am willing to follow your footsteps, Young Noble." She took a deep breath and said.

"Everyone is free to pick their dao. Let's go." He smiled.

"This way, Young Noble." She happily led the way.

Qin Baifeng bowed and made a gesture of invitation as well.

The sound of horns reverberated across the valley. Disciples set aside their tasks and hurried back to Sunset Peak. The ceremony seemed to be starting earlier than expected. Even the mortals ran for the peak, wanting to observe the ceremony.

This was because a new valley lord might be appointed during this session. With the recognition and approval of the artifact, this new leader would be able to take charge and possess enough power to guarantee the valley's safety.

"Rumble!" The peak seemingly became a colossal gate; its two halves creaked and gradually spread apart.

An auspicious energy engulfed the valley with the hue of the sunset - a truly poetic and picturesque scene. Alas, there was a hint of melancholy as if the sunset had come too late.

With the peak parted, a narrow and elongated valley appeared before everyone. There existed a flickering immortal light deeper inside, seemingly eternal.

Disciples felt that as long as this light was around, nothing would be able to destroy their sect.

"That's our artifact!" Some shouted excitedly.

Rumor has it that this artifact was the foundation for their current sect. After all, they had nearly faced destruction and the blessings of emperors and monarchs weren't enough. Confidence was renewed with the rise of Cloudsweep Fairy.

None of them could take a good look beyond the light, unable to grasp the shape and form of the immortal artifact. Nonetheless, it represented an eternal hope.

Sunset Glow Goddess and Qin Baifeng stood by the entrance of the valley. Everyone else watched with bated breath, thinking that the next leader would be one of them.

An old woman appeared before the duo, receiving a bow of respect from all members.

“Matron.” They said with reverence.

Li Qiye had met her back the the temple - the old woman responsible for lighting the lamps.

She turned out to be the oldest ancient ancestor of the valley - the highest authority in the valley. Qin Baifeng and the goddess always asked her for guidance in times of need.

She was one of the few lucky survivors during the sect’s darkest age. She was there when Cloudsweep Fairy first showed up and during her passing.

Her cultivation was once shallow but under the guidance of the fairy, she finished cultivating the Sunset Glow Scripture and became the second strongest.

Chapter 5519: Unfathomable

“The appointing ceremony for the next valley lord commences. Whoever is approved by the immortal artifact shall become our leader.” Sunset Glow Matron said before gently touching the two candidates’ head to express good wishes.

“Begin.” She said after finishing the blessing.

Qin Baifeng and the goddess bowed deeply before entering the valley. The entrance served as a portal to a different dimension.

Li Qiye was nearby and gazed into the portal, capable of seeing the immortal artifact itself.

“Buzz.” The immortal light seemed to be reacting to their presence and became brighter like a lit lamp. It flowed out of the narrow valley in a continuous fashion.

“The artifact is activated.” This was the first time many members saw the immortal light.

They spread to the sides in order to make room but the light stopped at the entrance. What they saw within the radiance varied.

Some saw their own grand dao evolving to the next level - a teaching process. Others saw a version of Sunset Glow Scripture. One page flipped after another, imprinting its mysteries into their mind.

Another saw an immortal preaching the dao. The speech was accompanied by heavenly flowers and hymns.

Everyone became immersed in this exceedingly beneficial phenomenon. Just observing attentively would result in cultivational improvement.

“Seal the six senses, protect your mind.” Sunset Glow Matron shouted and woke them up from this trance.

They woke up and regained their sanity, glancing at each other while breaking out in sweat. They didn't understand that this power was beyond their reach. Some started moving toward the light and that would result in mental imprisonment, unable to wake up again.

Qin Baifeng and the goddess have protected their mind from this temptation. They took a deep breath and actually walked into the narrow valley.

"Boom!" They didn't hold back and activated their power. Their auras erupted and amazed other members of Sunset Glow who felt as if they were being hit by a tsunami.

Fortunately, the matron also roared and stopped the waves of energy from sending cultivators and mortals flying.

As they walked into the valley, they exuded different a visual phenomenon.

The goddess was engulfed in auspicious energy, painting an ancient and majestic scene of the setting sun. Every step of hers was resplendent.

Qin Baifeng, on the other hand, revealed a sword dao akin to a peacock spreading its tail. Colorful sharp rays temporarily blinded the audience as they gathered toward the same focal point - Baifeng. This made it seem as if she was a phoenix being revered by all other birds.

Both displayed their cultivation and dao - only second to the matron in Sunset Glow Valley.

They utilized their power in order to enter the stream of light safely, wanting to prove themselves to the immortal artifact deeper into the valley.

Spectators watched with bated breath. If these two couldn't do it, none of them could.

"They can do it, definitely. At least one will make it." Many clenched their fists and supported the duo.

"Boom!" It didn't take long before a majestic force propelled one of them out of the light.

"Bam!" The person fell to the ground afterward.

"Senior Sister Qin!" The crowd shouted.

"Boom!" The goddess was repelled as well and also landed on the ground, only making it one step farther than Qin Baifeng.

They stood up and smiled wryly while gazing at the narrow valley. They tried their best but couldn't reach the end of the valley, let alone be recognized by the immortal artifact.

"We have failed." The goddess didn't seem disheartened by the outcome and acknowledged their failure.

Chapter 5520: I Do Not Agree

"Senior Sister, you were one step ahead of me so you are more qualified to lead Sunset Glow Valley, and it's time for me to go outside as well." Qin Baifeng said.

"The one step doesn't matter since neither of us was approved by the immortal artifact. We are not qualified." Sunset Glow Goddess shook her head.

"It's a failure this time." The matron announced: "Keep working hard and perhaps success will come next time."

"It'll be difficult." Qin Baifeng smiled wryly. As a six-fruit dragon lord, she didn't even come close to reaching the end of the valley, let alone being approved.

In fact, she thought that having twelve fruits might still not be enough to trek through the radiance. Anima and reaching the true self might be the requirement.

"Next time." The matron consoled everyone. In reality, they had a long path before them.

"Matron, no need for next time." The goddess pulled Li Qiye out of the crowd.

He smiled and obliged.

"I am sure the young noble can reach the immortal artifact." She held his hand, looking rather intimate.

"First Sister is so bold while being in a relationship." One disciple said with admiration.

"Is it time for picking the Emperor Consort? Will he be the first outsider chosen?" Another became surprised.

"From an outsider to Emperor Consort, that would be a beautiful tale." One more said.

"Outsider? Didn't you see his control over the true scripture? No outsider can do that." A different disciple disagreed.

"Yes, he is one of us, born to become our Emperor Consort." Many nodded in agreement.

"You're right, that's why First Sister kept on bringing fate up, he was born to become our Emperor Consort." A female disciple said with a smile.

Their impression of Li Qiye had only improved after witnessing his mastery of the scripture.

"Young Noble, do you wish to try?" The matron stared at Li Qiye.

"Coincidentally enough, I am here for the artifact." Li Qiye smiled.

"Then we've come to an agreement." The goddess happily said.

Qin Baifeng had no problem with this suggestion, the same for the matron. Since the trio was the strongest in the valley, who would challenge their decision?

"I do not agree!" Mu Shaoyun stepped forward and shouted.

"Senior Brother, what do you have to say?" The goddess frowned.

"He is an outsider, unqualified to take the test." He asserted.

"Senior Sister can pick him as her Emperor Consort." Qin Baifeng interjected.

“According to our ancient tradition, Junior Sister would need to be the valley lord first before picking an Emperor Consort, that is not the case right now.” He responded: “Since he is neither a disciple nor our Emperor Consort, he is not eligible to participate. We can’t just change the rules as we please.”

The matron’s expression soured after hearing this but she didn’t get involved. Other disciples exchanged glances and somewhat agreed with his logic despite supporting the blooming romance.

“I believe I am more qualified than anyone in the sect regarding this matter. I trained hard for a century as a member of Sunset Glow and became a dragon lord, the strongest among the outer disciples. Is it fair that I’m being brushed aside?” He continued.

Others contemplated the matter. Shaoyun was the fourth strongest in the sect and most importantly, he was an official member of Sunset Glow.

Moreover, they knew about his crush on the goddess. Most thought that they were going to be together. Alas, Li Qiye came out of nowhere and it was clear that she had feelings for him.

Nonetheless, they couldn’t quite tell Shaoyun to stop because in a sense, he was the victim here.

“Senior Brother Mu, an outer disciple does not have decision-making authority.” Sunset Glow Goddess said: “The matron, Senior Sister Qin, and I will decide this matter. Please stand aside.”

Though she was not the valley lord, her words carried immense authority. Although Qin Baifeng was stern and dignified, most considered the goddess to be the pillar of the sect.

She was also right in that regardless of Shaoyun’s strength, he was still an outer disciple. Although the sect didn’t hold back on its resources in grooming him, he still didn’t have actual authority.

“Junior Sister, I speak for the prosperity and legacy of our sect.” Shaoyun didn’t relent.

“This is the reason why you couldn’t become an inner disciple. You are a seed of discord.” The matron suddenly spoke and silence ensued.

Disciples thought about it and some had sensed his ambition before. Moreover, they also trusted the matron’s judgment.

Her words alone decided Shaoyun’s fate - forever to be an outer disciple.

“Ancestor, I must voice my grievance with that statement. My Sunset Glow dao is at grand completion. Although I have no authority, I should be more qualified than an outsider.” Shaoyun protested.

“What do you want then?” Qin Baifeng’s expression darkened, clearly having a more aggressive style than her senior sister.

“Nothing, I just want to find out more about this outsider, his background and such. Thus, I want to challenge him, to see if he’s qualified.” Shaoyun said.