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A deathly silence met Ming He's challenge. Nobody dared to move or make a sound. It was one thing for a Spirit Lord like Chen Wentian to talk back to a Spirit King. At least he wouldn't be smashed into dust in an instant. It was almost unheard of for a mere mortal to make such brazen statements in the face of certain death.

Who cared if Ming He was at the lesser realm of Spiritual Awakening? If Abbotess Liang so much as breathed too hard in his direction, his body would have been ripped to shreds.

Yet despite the risks, Ming He stood tall, his face stoic and without fear. He didn't back down; he did not waver. Many in the crowd silently praised him. Many more ridiculed his stupidity, his willingness to throw away everything for Long Yifei. What everyone had to admit was that it was an incredible display of dedication.

It was a moment that was bound to go down in the annals of the Eastern Sanmu Metropolis as the day a single Spirit Initiate Realm mortal defied the will of a Spirit King for the sake of a woman. Even Abbotess Liang couldn't help but give the handsome man some consideration.

What they all didn't know was that Ming He was no longer Ming He. Otherwise, there was absolutely no chance of him jumping out to seek death. He was still the son of a Spirit Lord and the descendant of a Spirit King, a younger master of the Eastern Light Clan. Ming He was Ming He. But at the same time, he was also Chen Wentian. His soul was now Chen Wentian's soul and when he spoke, it was Chen Wentian speaking.

Ming He turned towards Long Yifei and flashed her a quick smile. She recognized that look, slightly apologetic but also teasing. She recognized the intimate familiarity in his eyes that roved over her body; touching, searing, and piercing into her core.

She let out a tiny gasp in realization and heat rose in her cheeks. She clutched Chen Wentian's arm and gave him another discreet pinch to voice her displeasure and embarrassment.

“Heh, Fei'er is too smart.” Chen Wentian said into her ear, “Don't worry. The useless guy is part of the plan we came up with to deal with Abbotess Liang. It's not just him but a few others. But keep alert, that crazy woman won't be dissuaded with just this.”

Long Yifei pinched him again to ask what was going on.

“Your fellow sisters and I... We've known about the plot to kidnap you for a few weeks and barely managed to come up with a workable and relatively safe plan. They all pitched in to help, even if they aren't here right now. Which is good because things are about to get a little dangerous.”

She didn't say anything or show any reaction but she rubbed his arm gently as a way of thanks. He gave a reassuring squeeze in return.

They then turned back to the tense scene before them just in time to catch a second man step out from the crowd.

“Greetings everyone, brave heroes from across the land! I am Tian Yunhao, young house master of the House of Armament. I think Brother Ming has the right intentions but sadly, lacks courage and resolve. As a man, mere words are not enough. Mere words cannot force a Spirit King to listen. Mere words cannot sway the Snow Fairy's heart! As a true man, I shall show you the way!”

Hushed whispers swept over the gathering of suitors. They didn't know what was going on or why these two had both lost their minds.

Ming He and Tian Yunhao faced each other, ignoring everyone else around them. Neither backed down, neither was willing to see the other one marry Long Yifei.

Ming He's brow furrowed slightly as he observed his opponent. His chiseled jawline became even sharper, enough to slice through the morning light. His piercing eyes were bright like beacons. His outfit exuded consummate class, his features more perfect than a painting. He was an existence that made women swoon, to make them scream in desperation and cry out in desire. With a single pose, he declared to everyone that he was the best man here and only he was suited to obtain Long Yifei's heart.

Tian Yunhao brushed off the silent challenge. He squared his broad shoulders and took up a powerful stance. The polished gray armor that covered his muscular build gleamed, expressing a martial aura that was unmatched among his peers. His face was not pretty or handsome but he had the rugged look fitting of a warrior prince. He inspired women's instincts that sought protection, safety, and reliability. He was a bastion, an indomitable castle where Long Yifei could reside in peace.

It was a battle of two different ideals, two different but equally great examples of what it meant to be a man.

“Snow Fairy Long!” Tian Yunhao's voice boomed out, “Do not fear. I will protect you no matter what. If you do not wish to go with this strange woman, then I will stop her. She cannot hurt you as long as I draw breath. And even if I die, the House of Armament will protect you. I swear to this!”

A ball of spiritual energy gathered in his palm before he slammed it into his chest. It was a crude but effective spiritual oath. He meant his words and he showed everyone exactly how much. In one instant, he committed not just himself but his sect.

“Hahaha! Ming He!” Tian Yunhao said, “Your words are cheap by my words are like iron. What are you going to do now?”

Before Ming He could respond, another man stepped in between them.

“Crude and loud, just as usual. Brother Tian, you really need to work on that or you'll never get any beauties to like you.” The newcomer laughed but nobody else did.

Everyone's eyes fell on him and his unique attire. He wore a simple loose white robe that was tied casually around his waist. His upper chest was exposed, revealing smooth skin and sculpted muscles like jade. His sleek black hair was tied up a messy knot, allowing most of it to flow behind him. He carried a golden fan in one hand and a gourd bottle filled with wine in the other.

Dashingly attractive, he was someone who enjoyed good wine, good food, and good times with countless women. He was a playboy, a rogue, a devilish man capable of seducing any woman with charm and guile. He was, in other words, the enemy of all men!

“Surnamed Duan! You little bastard!” Tian Yunhao shouted, “This is no place for scum like you. Go back to the whorehouses where you belong! I will die before letting someone like you get close to Snow Fairy Long!”

“So noisy! Snow Fairy is a gentle creature, she can't stand your brutish shouting and neither can I!”

The one surnamed Duan flicked his hair, flipped open his fan, and took a long drink from his gourd, ignoring both Ming He and the enraged Tian Yunhao.

“Interesting, interesting!” Another voice called out.

A tall man wearing furs joined the fray. His handsomeness was on par with Ming He while his ferocity was equal to Tian Yunhao. He had a wild mane of red hair and looked like a beast or a bird of prey. He was Qu Jing, a direct descendant of the Eagle Lord Qu Shen, and had placed fourth in the monster-fighting competition. He was confident in his ability and he was unwilling to let his rivals hog the stage. He was a proud disciple of the Beast God Sanctum and he was going to let his voice be heard.

“Protecting the weak and standing up to the strong, this is what I stand for. Beast God Sanctum is behind me, who dares make trouble here? Snow Fairy Long isn't going anywhere!” He declared.

“That's right!” Shouted Yang Cang, the closed-door disciple of Qiu Chuyi and member of the Lion faction. “Beast God Sanctum won't stand for idle threats from an outsider. This is the Eastern Sanmu Subcontinent. This is our turf!”

Emboldened by the stirring scene, more brave men joined the fray. Nobody seemed to care that Abbotess Liang was still standing there. It was as if she had suddenly become insignificant.

One after another, they promised their lives, their sects, their family, and everything in between in the name of the Snow Fairy. One became two. Two became four. Four became a deluge. Everyone was caught up in the moment and what had been a tense situation turned into chaos.

The plaza in front of the Lotus Tower was in shambles. There was no longer any semblance of order. More and more people joined the fray. Even ordinary cats and dogs were emboldened to step forward and denounce the abbottess like their lives and honor depended on it. People were shouting over each other and it was difficult to make out any coherent words from the din. They even started pushing and shoving, trying to force their way to the front and make themselves heard.

Abbottess Liang stood still, not doing anything. She maintained a steady perimeter around with her spiritual aura but the space between her and Long Yifei was now filled with scores of ugly men. Their faces were ones of desperation and rapture, as if under a spell that deprived them of common sense and self-respect. She didn't know what to do or how to disperse this crowd without using force. She also wanted to see what other tricks Chen Wentian had in store.

Chen Wentian didn't move either but he knew what he wanted to do. Everything was within his scheme. He had simply been waiting for the right moment, which happened to be now.

“Fei'er.” He whispered into her ear, “Listen closely. I will cause a pretty big distraction for the next part of my plan. At the same time, I will give you a set of robes and a mask. Quickly wear the outfit and it will hide your aura. The mask has a disguising effect and it will hide your face. Then, Chen Mo will take you into the crowd where you can blend in and maybe make an escape later. Understand?”

Long Yifei obediently pinched his waist.

“Good... begin!”

Chen Wentian's spiritual energy burst out. A circular wall of blue flame erupted around him and his disciple and shot high into the sky. Everyone gasped and looked on in awe. While they focused on the flames, nobody had any idea what was happening.

Inside the flames, Chen Wentian took out a set of baggy clothes that would fit a normal man. They were plain and would not attract any attention. Long Yifei put them on with lightning speed and then covered her head with the silky mask that was also provided.

The camouflaging mask was made of the same material as camouflaging spatial bags. It was extremely expensive but something he could barely afford with the newfound income from the Camouflaging

Sasquatch hairs. The mask wasn't something that could fool a Spiritual King by itself. However, within a crowd of thousands, it was enough to confuse them for just long enough to get the job done.

Long Yifei then felt a jerk at her feet as a black shadow pulled her behind Chen Wentian, through the flames, and into the crowd. The tightly packed mass of men was forced apart by Chen Mo and closed back up just as quickly. They were slippery as shadows and nobody noticed.

All of this happened in less than two seconds. When the flames subsided, only Chen Wentian was left standing. Long Yifei was nowhere to be seen.

An incoherent screech came from Abbotess Liang, "You mongrel! Where did you take her! Where did she go!"

Chen Wentian smiled which simply enraged her more.

"Who? I don't know what you're talking about." He said, "Are you getting senile? Do you need to lie down for a bit?"

Abbotess Liang scanned the sea of faces with her eyes as well as her spiritual sense but found nothing. Long Yifei was no longer here. A surge of panic filled her mind. She felt her prized disciple slipping through her fingers and she could not comprehend it. She couldn't accept it.

"Insolent! Impossible!" She shouted. "Where is she!"

Her composure was gone. She was more like a crazed witch than a noble immortal queen. She was about to lose it.

"Abbotess Liang!" Ming He called out sharply, "Is this how a Spirit King should behave? Trying to kidnap another immortal's disciple and throwing a tantrum out of nowhere. Is this how all women of the Sororal Order behave..."

Boom!

A purple explosion consumed a section of the plaza, blowing away Ming He's last few words of insolence. Abbotess Liang was finally tired of being talking to a bunch of ants. She was tired of holding back. She was tired of this subcontinent and this sorry excuse for a city.

A gust of wind blew away the dust, revealing a gruesome sight. A circular field of red appeared on the ground where previously stood hundreds of men. The weakest ones had been directly smashed into meat paste. Stronger ones managed to keep an intact body but they still could not keep their worthless lives.

Abbotess Liang floated over to the front of the massacre where a bloodied body stirred. It was Ming He; he was still alive though barely. He was covered from head to toe in blood. Blue light from some sort of protective treasure glowed weakly for a few moments before blinking out of existence.

“Anything else you want to say?” She asked, her voice low and dangerous.

Ming He did not make a sound, even from pain. His insides were shattered and his throat was filled with blood. He gritted his teeth and stared up defiantly, seemingly without regard for his life. He made his intentions clear even though he could not speak.

She scoffed at the useless display of bravery. She reached down to end his life as painfully as possible when a brash voice stopped her.

It was Tian Yunhao. “Evil woman! You dare to kill so wantonly here? This is the Eastern Sanmu Metropolis, not somewhere you can do as you please! Stop now or suffer the consequences!”

Abbotess Liang whirled around to face him. She made a sweeping gesture with her hand and a horizontal arc of purple energy swept through where he stood.

“Ahhh!” Tian Yunhao screamed like a slaughtered pig as he was blown off his feet.

A grey light emerged around his body, forming the shape of a shield, blocking most of the damage.

While he survived, those unlucky enough to be around him did not. The purple arc swept through the crowd like a scythe reaping rows of wheat. People were cut down where they stood, unable to react, unable to do anything. When they finally understood what was happening, their upper bodies were no longer connected to their legs. There was a gaping gap where their stomach once was which they could see clearly as they tumbled to the ground. They were only given a few last moments to consider their misfortune and question why they had antagonized a Spirit King before the last bit of life left them.

Abbottess Liang laughed shrilly and made a motion with one finger. Tian Yunhao was pulled out of the sea of carnage by her spiritual force. His body zipped to her and his neck landed neatly in her hand.

“Bark! Bark! Keep yapping, I'm waiting!”

Tian Yunhao only gave a weak whimper which did not satisfy her. She slapped him across the face, leaving three bloody trails from her nails.

He responded with a pitiful wail.

“I am so sick and tired this dirty, poor place.” She muttered and turned to Chen Wentian, “I came here out of the goodness of my heart to find a disciple and this is how you people treat me...”

“And you!” She snarled at him, “Where is she! Tell me now or I kill this useless person!”

She lifted Tian Yunhao higher into the air, causing his arms and legs to flail around in a panic.

Chen Wentian simply laughed, “You said yourself he's a useless person. Why do I care if he dies? Now, if you broke your own legs, I might consider it.”

“Fine!”

She squeezed her hand but before she could finish the task...

Woosh!

A powerful surge of steel-gray spiritual energy engulfed Tian Yunhao, protecting him from further harm.

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Abbottess Liang retreated and pulled her hand back. Tian Yunhao was flung into the air limply until he was caught by the new arrival's spiritual energy. This was followed by an intense blast of force that cleared away the surrounding dead bodies and blood to leave a clean, pristine stone-paved ground.

The immortal Spirit King descended from the sky and landed. He was large and powerfully built like a great warrior. He wore steel-gray fish-scale armor across most of his oversized body. His exposed hands were wider than dinner plates. His neck was thicker than a tree trunk. Aside from the wild white beard that covered most of his face, his features were sharp and imposing like spear tips.

“Immortal Grand Spear Tian Yong, seventh house master of the House of Armament, greets Immortal Fluttering Gown Liang Chuxian!”

His words were courteous but his demeanor was not. His gray spiritual energy billowed out continuously, almost at full strength. The air was buzzing with an intense sharpness; not the supreme piercing sharpness of a sword but an immeasurable weight as if a thousand invisible spears were ready to strike.

This was the product of the most powerful secret art of the House of Armament, Thousand Transformations of Armaments. There was only one man but it felt like there were thousands. The secret art allowed him to wield a thousand weapons and fight prolonged battles against many opponents. It was truly a Dao suited for war.

“That useless boy is yours?” Abbottess Liang asked flatly, not bothering to show any respect.

Tian Yong gave a sarcastic laugh, “Little lass, your conduct is quite bloody. You killed so many without even bothering to think about where you are.”

He glared at her but she merely looked bored. It was not unreasonable for him to call her a little lass since he was much older. A Spirit King's total lifespan was long, over seven hundred years if one was lucky. At Tian Yong's age, someone like Abbotsess Liang was a junior by many generations.

"I asked, is that little crotch spawn yours? A rotten fruit from your loins?"

"Haha! Yunhao may be lacking in many areas but he is still a young house master of the House of Armament. He is one of the most talented young cultivators of the subcontinent. He is not someone you can kill."

The abbotsess scoffed. "He seemed quite eager to die for a woman."

"Nonsense!" Tian Yong shot back, "What kind of woman is Long Yifei? If I was five hundred years younger, I would have also done the same. She is the perfect wife for Yunhao. I commend him for showing bravery and righteousness. With me around, he did exactly what he needed to do. He was insolent towards you but who cares. You are an outsider, someone who shouldn't be here. What are you going to do?"

Abbotsess Liang's expression darkened. Purple spiritual energy swirled around her crimson robes, making them flutter in a deadly dance. She even started to push back against the wall of spears that surrounded her.

"You dare?" She hissed. "Did you forget who I am? You dare offend the Sororal Order... can you piss-poor sect afford the consequences?"

Tian Yong didn't back down. His own temper rose and he pushed back with greater intensity. The ground between them cracked and split. The entire plaza shook, knocking people off their feet. Spiritual energy ground against spiritual energy with a painful screeching sound. Everyone looked on in shock as two Spirit Kings faced off.

Right when it was about to get ugly, another third source of spiritual energy interrupted the two. Another Spirit King descended over the plaza, emitting a mesmerizing array of blue light. The light beams flashed around, illuminating every single person briefly before aiming at a particular spot within the crowd that had yet to be touched by Abbotsess Liang's rage.

The blue light narrowed and spotlighted a single person wearing nondescript robes and an utterly unforgettable face. There was a surge of energy and that person started getting pulled into the air.

Woosh!

A cloud of snow erupted around that person, obscuring the blue light completely. The ensuing frigid storm blew away those nearby. People were sent tumbling away and left covered in thick layers of fresh snow.

Hooong!

The ethereal hum from the blue light intensified and quickly blew away the interfering gray cloud. But below it was Chen Wentian, his arm wrapped possessively around the stranger.

Another beam of light shot down.

Chen Wentian waved his spare hand and a massive wall of blue flames shot into the air.

Fire fought against light. There was a momentary stalemate before the flames eventually lost out. But by that time, he had already put ample space between him and his opponent.

“Hahaha! Interesting kid, you're quite capable!” The Spirit King said, “I am Immortal Light of Daybreak Ming Mu, tenth clan head of the Eastern Light Clan! You did well to take back your disciple.”

Whispers from the crowd became shocked gasps as the person in Chen Wentian's arms turned back into Long Yifei. Since she had been found out, there was no point in wearing the disguises anymore.

Chen Wentian brushed her hair back with his fingers and whispered into her ear. "Don't worry. I expected this much to happen. Sneaking away in front of so many Spirit Kings was never really possible. But your master has prepared another trick. Just wait and see!"

He turned and looked up towards Ming Mu, ignoring the death glares from the men around him. They were shocked by his intimate actions with his disciple, which he was supposed to be marrying off. Such closeness and tenderness seemed completely unnatural and disturbing!

"Clan Head Ming, well met." He called out, "If you want to kidnap my disciple as well, you should get in line."

The Spirit King snorted dismissively and ignored Chen Wentian. He flew past and landed beside the prone body of his descendant, Ming He. A pillar of green light fell on the wounded young man, injecting him with a surge of profound energy.

A few moments later, Ming He stirred and groaned in pain. He was still a mess but seemed a lot better than before.

"Get up!" The clan head said sharply, "Stop disgracing yourself and embarrassing the clan!"

"Y... yes..."

Ming He struggled mightily but he still could not move. He tried again and again but too many bones were broken, too many tendons severed.

Ming Mu sighed and knocked the useless descent out. He waved his hand and a beam of blue light connected Ming He to the Tower of Light far off in the distance. With a surge of energy, the unconscious body was sent away for medical treatment.

Ming Mu then turned, whipped his deep blue robes into order, and stroked his long and well-maintained goatee. He looked at Abbess Liang, then at House Master Tian Yong, then back at the abbess, and finally gave a small sigh.

"Well then, this is a huge mess. How should we clean this up?"

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Abbotess Liang seemed surprised for a moment but considered the Eastern Light Clan's leader. She then smiled in a sickeningly sweet way, putting her charming face back on in place of her ugly one.

"Now here's a real man who knows his priorities." She almost purred. "Well met, Immortal Light of Daybreak Ming Mu."

She gave an elegant bow while showcasing her figure and her cleavage.

It was fascinating how quickly she changed from a screeching demoness back into a well-behaved, beautiful woman, full of feminine wiles. Those that could be affected by her aura once again fell under her spell.

Clan Head Ming Mu wasn't a fool but he chose to put on an act. His real target was House Master Tian Yong, who he hated. It was a conflict that started from the very beginning.

The Eastern Light Clan was not a part of the Immortal Association but merely affiliated with them. It was the first endemic sect, started in the subcontinent, to develop into a powerhouse Spirit King sect. It took them over two thousand years to do so and when they thought they would have the subcontinent to themselves, it took only a few hundred years for the House of Armament to appear.

The Eastern Light Clan wanted to prevent their rise and wipe out the competition. However, they were prevented from doing so by the Immortal Association. Instead of hating the association, which was a futile endeavor, they continued to hate the House of Armament and sought to defeat them through countless other means over the years to no avail.

"Brother Tian," Ming Mu spoke, "You've never been one to pay attention to the larger situation so I will inform you, as it is only right. Do you know what kind of status the Sororal Order of Endless Love holds with the Immortal Association?"

Tian Yong scowled but did not reply. It wasn't clear if he didn't know or if he simply refused to argue with his rival.

Ming Mu laughed mockingly, "This King shall inform everyone clearly. Although the Sororal Order cannot be counted as one of the founding powers, it holds great influence. It has a seat in the Association Steering Council, the body of one hundred and eight members who guide the future of the human race in this world which has countless dangers and races seeking to destroy us!"

His voice rose to a peak and nobody dared to utter a sound. Few understood what the Association Steering Council was but it certainly sounded impressive. Even Chen Wentian had only recently learned about this council. He was still a lowly Spirit Lord and the Eastern Sanmu Subcontinent was a frontier territory of little importance.

Tian Yong expression got even more ugly but he didn't seem like he wanted to back down. Nobody wanted to be insulted for being ignorant, nobody wanted to lose face like this, especially a Spirit King.

Ming Mu ignored the obstinate man and turned to Chen Wentian, "Young Chen, you have only recently ascended to the immortal world so your lack of knowledge can be forgiven. However, further impudence will be met with an adequate response..."

The threat fell on deaf ears as Chen Wentian merely leaned down to whisper sweet nothings to Long Yifei.

Ming Mu's spiritual energy spiked a little but he remained calm, "I implore you, listen to this elder's advice. It is not your place to fight against the Sororal Order. Having such a power be interested in your disciple is simply a privilege beyond privileges. If you don't fight any longer and give your disciple up, I can assure you that you'll be a friend of the Eastern Light Clan. I can also say that it would be wise to be on the Sororal Order's good side. There's still time for that."

Chen Wentian looked up and stared hard at Ming Mu, "Clan Head Ming, in your words, you are saying that I should be thankful that this disciple kidnapper doesn't kill me and that I should grovel at her feet like a dog?"

“Hahaha! You certainly have a way with words!” Ming Mu replied, “I am not telling you anything, merely stating some facts. If you accept, you will be greatly rewarded with prestige and respect from all in the subcontinent. If you refuse, you will still lose her and you may lose your worthless little life.”

“Oh, so it's a threat now?” Chen Wentian retorted.

“It was always a threat; you were just too stubborn or stupid to accept the fact so I had to tell you clearly. Also, do not think the House of Armaments can help you. They cannot stand up to the Sororal Order. How can they? They can't even solve a simple serial killer case in the Old District. Because of their bumbling, it's recently even claimed one of their Spirit Lords!”

There was a reaction now. The gathered crowd gasped in astonishment while Tian Yong finally blew up.

“Surnamed Ming! Fuck your mother! How did you find out? I am going to find the spies you've put in my sect and chop them into pieces!” He bellowed, deafening those nearby.

His spiritual surged out once again, a solid wall of phantasmal spears like a vast army formation. This time, Ming Mu didn't hold back and a blinding array of blue light erupted against it.

Boom!

An explosion of blue and gray spiritual energy ripped apart the ground, creating a deep chasm between them. A few mortals that were unfortunate to be standing too close were vaporized. Many in the crowd finally gave up and started pushing and shoving amounts themselves to get away. The carnage, the danger, was too much. Even if they wanted to stay for Long Yifei, they knew that they no longer had a chance.

All the immortals present ignored the fleeing ants and remained focused on each other.

“Enough of this!” Tian Yong roared, “Your mere words are not the law in the Eastern Sanmu Subcontinent! There are four kings, four kings that rule this land at the behest of the Immortal Association. In case you haven't gone senile, I am one of the four kings and I refuse to let this daylight robbery happen!”

He pointed to Chen Wentian without looking, "Young Chen, don't give up yet. I will uphold righteousness. Long Yifei can't be taken by anyone without your approval!"

Chen Wentian made a very elaborate bow, "Thank you, House Master Tian, you are a true titan amongst lesser men."

At the same time, he whispered to Long Yifei, "Don't get your hopes up for this guy. He doesn't really care about you or me. Those two hate each other and Tian Yong is merely using this as an opportunity to fight. Immortals are people too and some like a good tussle now and then."

Indeed, even Abbess Liang had taken several steps back. It was only Ming Mu and Tian Yong who stood facing each other in a wide, now almost empty, plaza. Spiritual energy sizzled and ground together as they both readied another devastating attack.

"Stop!" A stern, aged voice came from the sky.

A golden aura surrounded both men, pushing them back.

"You two... you two rascals always cause me problems!"

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Immortal Solemn Duke Huang Wuji descended from the clouds.

He wore a golden armored robe that seemed oversized for his small, frail body. His head had no hair, only thin white eyebrows and a few strands on his chin that formed a narrow goatee. His skin was like a dried plum. His eyes were open but cloudy like he could barely see.

Huang Wuji was old and he looked old. The lifespan of an immortal at the Spirit King Realm was long but still finite. The limit for most was around seven hundred or eight hundred while rare cases might live slightly longer. Some kings made desperate, last-ditch attempts at prolonging their lives, delving deep into the wilderness in search of various treasures. Others secluded themselves in meditation and

cultivation, hoping against hope that they could achieve some sort of enlightenment and breakthrough at the last moment.

Huang Wuji was none of these. He was close to death but he continued to perform his duty as one of the four kings in charge of the Eastern Sanmu Subcontinent.

When he spoke, his voice was soft and decrepit but everyone listened. “King Ming, King Tian, think clearly about what where you are fighting. This is the Sky District of the Eastern Sanmu Metropolis. This is a city of human cultivators that we have built. If you want to exchange pointers, take it to some barren place.”

Immortal Grand Spear Tian Yong managed to look sheepish and gave a respectful bow, “I dare not, Venerable King Huang.”

Immortal Light of Daybreak Ming Mu also bowed, “Venerable King Huang, I apologize for disturbing your rest.”

Although Abbotsess Liang didn't bow or show respect, she also did not try to antagonize the newcomer. She was not dumb and could sense when to hold back.

Huang Wuji was someone who naturally garnered respect from those around him. It took a rare type of immortal to be able to do so. He was one that managed to live hundreds of years with a clean reputation. There was nothing others could fault him for. He was boring and by-the-book. He was almost the perfect representative of the ideals that the Immortal Association stood for. And for this, he was admired and respected by other immortals as well as millions of mortals under his rule.

“Then, I hope you all will give me face.” He said, “Let's resolve this issue without any more bloodshed. Queen Gong, please come down.”

His spiritual energy carried his voice up the Lotus Tower. Immortal Gentle Lotus Gong Liyun, the last of the four Spirit Kings, had been hiding since the start of the incident. Since she had played such a big role, it was not possible to hide forever.

She soon emerged and flew down level with Huang Wuji. Her red dress was much more conservative than usual. It covered up the bits she usually liked to show to everyone. It was a peculiar shade of crimson and a very similar design to the one worn by Abbotess Liang but with fewer decorations and frills.

Her attire did not go unnoticed by the others.

“What in the demigods are you wearing?” Tian Yong asked the obvious question.

“Smelly boy, how can you ask a beautiful lady something like that?” Gong Liyun retorted.

Huang Wuji shot her a warning look and she gave an embarrassed cough.

“Can you explain simply?” He asked.

“Fine! Since you all have met Abbotess Liang, there's no point keeping it a secret,” She said, “I used to be a member of the Sororal Order of Endless Love but I was kicked out a long time ago. Something about not following the order's mandates. It was all very unfair...”

Tian Yong managed to look astonished while Ming Mu held most of his surprise in. Huang Wuji's wrinkly face changed into a frown and he looked more disappointed than anything. Chen Wentian, on the other hand, already suspected something like this so he barely reacted.

“Fei'er, I bet you a million gold taels she slept with too many men or something.” He whispered in his disciple's ear.

Abbotess Liang chimed in, “Specifically, Sister Gong was expelled for taking in unsanctioned male acolytes as well as forming excessive emotional attachments to them. But that's all in the past. She was able to make a name for herself in the world with her own Dao. The Order respects women like that.”

“Ha! I was right!” Chen Wentian whispered, “How are you going to repay me?”

This earned him an annoyed pinch from Long Yifei.

Meanwhile, the conversation between the Spirit Kings continued as they all ignored Chen Wentian and Long Yifei. In their eyes, the master and disciple pair had no right to speak even though it was Long Yifei's fate they were discussing.

Huang Wuji sighed in annoyance, "Despite whatever relationship you may or may not still have with the Order, you should not have allowed them to come to this subcontinent and you should not have let them impose their will like this."

"I didn't do anything!" Gong Liyun protested, "Abbotess Liang arrived by chance. How could I foresee that Long Yifei would catch her eye? It's a heavy honor to be desired by an abbotess of the order. I don't see why it's not a good thing! Additionally, she's is my respected guest and also a guest of the city. And yet we've treated her to continuous scenes of repugnance including..."

She waved her hand around the blood-soaked plaza, "This nonsensical farce..."

Chen Wentian had enough and cut her off, "Hey! A disciple's future is the responsibility of their master. I was merely seeking the best possible candidate..."

"Silence!"

Ming Mu was the one who spoke but three sets of spiritual energies suppressed Chen Wentian's voice. They came from Ming Mu, Abbotess Liang, as well as Gong Liyun.

Huang Wuji sighed again and shook his head, "Regardless, stealing another immortal's disciple is still wrong, even if he is a brand-new Spirit Lord. This has been established law within the Immortal Association for as long as the history of the association itself. Therefore, I am against Long Yife being forcibly taken away!"

His voice was firm but it did not have the intended effect. All the Spirit Kings present had already decided on their course of action and did not change their minds. Tang Yong was defending Long Yifei to protect the honor of his prized descendant. Ming Mu was against Tang Yong. The two women were in cahoots from the beginning and nothing changed about that.

Huang Wuji's golden spiritual energy expanded as he moved deliberately. Gong Liyun matched his movements, which caused the six people in the plaza to enter into a strange stalemate.

Chen Wentian and Long Yifei stood on the ground facing Abbotess Liang. Between them, Ming Mu and Tang Yong confronted each other at close range. Above them all were Huang Wuji and Gong Liyun, both warily eyeing each other. The four kings of the subcontinent formed a fragile wall that prevented the abbottess from reaching her goal.

A long tense period of silence passed before Abbotess Liang spoke, "Huang Wuji, do you really intend to stop me?"

"I must do what I must to uphold the dignity of the Immortal Association and as well as my own dignity as a Spirit King the Eastern Sanmu Subcontinent." He replied.

She scoffed, "Don't be pretentious. You're old. You might just die if you fight with these uneven odds."

"Hmm, yes. I might." He looked neither disappointed nor afraid.

"Are you willing to let this city be destroyed in the process?" She asked.

"Perhaps, Abbotess Liang will be willing to accompany this old one to the gates of death at another location, one with fewer bystanders?" He asked.

She gave a harsh laugh, "No chance! I am staying right here and not leaving until I have Long Yifei!"

Huang Wuji lost some of his composure and seemed hesitant for the first time. He was a representative of the Immortal Association but he was still an individual with his own motivations. He had the dignity of the association and the subcontinent to consider as well as his own life. He had to decide if it was worth it laying it all on the line for one mortal woman who wasn't even related to him or a part of his sect.

He was still human and the more he thought about it, the more hesitant he became. He wasn't an altruist or a self-sacrificing hero. His stellar reputation was something he carefully cultivated over the years. Everyone feared death and they feared a worthless death even more. An acceptable death for a Spirit King was a glorious battle against the enemies of the human race, not a minor squabble amongst their own kind.

He looked at Chen Wentian and then at Abbotess Liang. He looked at the other Spirit Kings and then back at Abbotess Liang. He remained silent but his spiritual aura was less combative than before. His thoughts spun toward an inevitable decision that was best for himself but not necessarily good for others.

Chen Wentian recognized where the situation was going and silently activated a message talisman. He had placed a tiny bit of hope on Huang Wuji to do the right thing but had been disappointed in the end. It was impossible for a Spirit King to fight to the death for a single mortal.

Since he was left with no other choice, it was finally time to show all of his cards and chase this abbottess out of the subcontinent.

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The five Spirit Kings ignored Chen Wentian and conversed among themselves. He could tell that they were talking silently through spiritual voice but there was no way for him to find out what they were saying.

From their expressions, it wasn't difficult to guess what was happening.

The big weapon master immortal changed from combative to amicable as a dumb smile returned to his face. The light-wielding immortal relaxed his stance and shot weirdly suggestive looks at Abbotess Liang like he was infatuated with her. Gong Liyun once again started throwing winks and kisses in Chen Wentian's direction while Huang Wuji's energy levels dipped and he looked like he had fallen asleep. Only Abbotess Liang stayed the course, staring at Long Yifei with an unwavering desire that bordered on creepiness.

“Alright...” Huang Wuji's voice came out even though his mouth barely moved, “We have decided. The four kings of the Eastern Sanmu Subcontinent, for peace and prosperity of our lands for years to come, have come to an agreement...”

Chen Wentian scowled.

Long Yifei pinched him harder than ever, almost losing her composure. He held her tighter and let blazing blue flames surround them both.

But as he did that, Abbotess Liang's spiritual aura shot out and formed a dome above his head like a prison. Her purple Dao had a strong element of feminine yin and it was oppressive.

The other four did nothing to interfere.

“Immortal Blue Dragon Chen Wentian...” Huang Wuji said, “Do what you will. Life or death... we will not do anything. But as an immortal of the subcontinent, we all implore you to stop resisting against the inevitable and give in. There is still time to give in...”

All the while, purple energy pressed down on Chen Wentian, getting closer and closer, ripping away his protective shield of spiritual energy bit by bit.

His blue dragon flames exploded out with even more intensity, turning the ground around him into a pool of molten lava.

Abbotess Liang sneered at him, “This is your last chance. This is your last breath before death!”

“If you want her, come and get her!” Chen Wentian beckoned with one hand as if taunting a disobedient child.

“You! Fine!”

Her robes expanded in size, billowing out around her like a flower in the wind. It transformed in color and turned from red to light purple. True to her name, her Dao turned her fluttering gown into a weapon.

The other four kings retreated and opened a path.

She leaped into the air with an elegant pirouette, her clothes forming several twirling trails of purple after her. Her clothes morphed rapidly, faster than the eye could follow.

It was easy to see the benefits of such a secret art, turning their own clothes into a weapon. It was flexible, it was adaptable. It seemed perfect for a beautiful woman.

Abbottess Liang descended slowly and two pillars of purple fabric extended outward like oversized hands. The wide smile on her face showed that she wasn't worried at all. She believed that there was no chance of Chen Wentian getting out of this alive.

None of the other four Spirit Kings thought so either. It was unfortunate but they could not help a stubborn mule. Even Gong Liyun chose to ignore the impending conclusion and turned away. She was resigned to the fact that her favorite boy toy would be gone. For the rest, the loss of a Spirit Lord would hurt but not a lot. One Spirit Lord was not enough to change the balance of power or affect matters at a large scale. It was unfortunate but just a part of the cultivation world.

Abbottess Liang's two giant purple hands dismantled Chen Wentian's wall of flames. Her gown seemed resistant to fire and could not be burned. It tore through blue flame like it was something annoying, swatting it away left and right.

Chen Wentian summoned more spiritual energy from within and held firm. Even though it was a losing battle, he had to keep going. Even if he was able to keep a single Spirit King at bay temporarily, the other four would not let him leave. He had to fight on.

His flames diminished steadily, meter by meter.

Abbottess Liang's smile grew wider and wider.

There was only a thin layer of flames left and his defeat seemed inevitable...

Ping! Ping! Ping!

A series of sharp metallic sounds echoed across the plaza.

Abbottess Liang recoiled, her purple arms of cloth shredded and broken. Embedded into the ground were a handful of silver needles, thin as a hair.

“Who dares!” She shouted to the sky.

The four kings also looked up in alarm. Huang Wuji opened both eyes and gaped.

Several people appeared, four women to be exact. They floated down in formation, two in front, two behind. They wore pure white robes, so pure that they seemed to be made out of the clouds themselves. Their features were stunning, each more beautiful than the next. Their combined aura was indescribably stirring. It was a perfect amalgamation of feminine qualities that were capable of defeating the hearts of any man.

Immortal Light of Daybreak Ming Mu and Immortal Grand Spear Tiang Yong were dumbfounded. They were Spirit Kings but they weren't that experienced, having developed in a lowly subcontinent. They had never seen brilliant beauty on display like this. Not even Abbottess Liang or Long Yifei could compare. Even Huang Wuji was visibly shaking, his eyes so wide open that he looked like a fish.

On the contrary, Gong Liyun's serious frown turned her wrinkles into canyons. As for Abbottess Liang, she was trembling, not from excitement but from pure rage.

“You!” She spat.

“Me...” A soft voice answered, like the lyrics of a song.

The four immortals came to a stop above Chen Wentian, hovering over him and Long Yifei protectively. The two in the front were Spirit Kings while the two behind were Spirit Lords.

He didn't need to look up to know that they were his backup. They had taken their sweet time. He almost thought they weren't coming but perhaps they just wanted to make a dramatic entrance. Women were petty like that against their enemies.

“You can relax.” He whispered to Long Yifei, “They are from a female order that is enemies with Abbotess Liang. They are on our side.”

Long Yifei turned to him and spoke up for the first time, hope and uncertainty clear in her face.

“Really...”

“Yeah. Just watch.” He rubbed her back, using Benevolent Hands to calm her.

She let out a shuddering sigh of relief.

The situation had been incredibly tough for her but she had persevered through it with a brave face. He was proud of her and he was glad he went through so much trouble to save her.

“Immortals, may we know your names and why you have come?” Ming Mu was the first to break the silence.

A female Spirit King with an oversized brush in her hand let out a playful giggle.

“Sacred Daughter of the Virtuous Order of Chunzhen, Abbotess of the Order for the Martial Brilliance Continent, Immortal Painter of Rivers Jian Ying... greets the four kings of the Eastern Sanmu Subcontinent and a wayward pig!”

“Bitch! Say that to my face!” Abbotess Liang shouted.

Jian Ying smiled and ignored the outburst. The one beside her shook her head and gave her greetings as well.

“Sacred Daughter of the Virtuous Order of Chunzhen, Abbotess of the Order for the Martial Brilliance Continent, Immortal Dawn Euphony Li Shishi greets all gathered immortals as well as our friends, Immortal Blue Dragon Chen Wentian and his disciple, Snow Fairy Long Yifei.”

Her words sent out a shockwave as everyone realized what was happening.

The Virtuous Order of Chunzhen was here to help Chen Wentian!

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The two remaining Spirit Lords introduced themselves as Immortal Glass Melody Gui Li and Immortal Adoring Poet Zhu Yao'er. They were both prioresses, with Gui Li being the one who was assigned to the Eastern Sanmu Subcontinent and with who Jasmine had made contact.

The four of them, as a group, advanced on the four kings and Abbotess Liang. Four sets of spiritual energies combined to form a solid wall that was heavy with yin attributes. They weren't here to play, not when a member of the enemy order was here.

Their belligerence caught the others off guard.

“Noble ladies of the Virtuous Order... what do you intend?” Huang Wuji asked.

Li Shishi pointed a finger at him, “Solemn Duke Huang, you should have already known that this subcontinent is aligned with the Virtuous Order. Members of the Sororal Order are not allowed here and they are not allowed to recruit here.”

Huang Wuji coughed to hide his embarrassment. “Ah... really?”

“But that's not right. Gong Liyun is here. She used to be a member of the Sororal Order!” Ming Mu said.

“That doesn't matter. Since she was expelled, she doesn't need to have anything to do with her old order. The Sororal Order is not kind to those to break their rules. I'm sure there was plenty of torture and punishment and that they did not part on good terms.” Li Shishi said.

“Lies!” Abbotess Liang shouted, “She is just...”

“Silence, swine!” Jian Ying shouted over her, “Reds aren't allowed here and you know it. This place has been the territory of us whites ever since the beginning.”

She brandished her painter's brush, “Now if you come with us quietly, you might be able to keep your worthless life!”

The two fiery abbesses traded a few more insults back and forth while squaring off against each other. The other abbess of the Virtuous Order spoke quickly with the four kings of the subcontinent and managed to reach a consensus.

Neither the Sororal Order nor the Virtuous Order were existences that they dared to mess with. It wasn't smart to take sides with either one since they wouldn't get anything in return. It was an easy decision for them all to make.

“Abbotess Liang,” Huang Wuji said, “This old one cannot allow you to remain in the city any longer.”

“We had a deal!” Abbotess Liang screeched.

She scanned Ming Mu and Gong Liyun for support but they both avoided her gaze.

With a gust of wind, the four kings backed away from the plaza, giving those remaining ample room to settle their differences.

At the same time, a stirring melody filled with air. It came from Immortal Dawn Euphony Li Shishi and she was singing. The words she sang could not be understood but it was filled with spiritual strength that cut through ordinary spiritual shields. It directly targeted the weak area of one's senses.

Abbottess Liang should have been prepared for this attack but she wasn't. She gave a shrill screech as the song causing a splitting headache. She wrapped several layers of cloth around her head but it was too late.

Dizzy from pain, she did the only thing anyone could do. She stabbed her fingers into her ears. With two spurts of blood, she punctured both eardrums, freeing herself from the enthralling, deadly music!

“You want to take me down? Better be prepared to die!” She snarled and charged at them, purple gown fluttering in the wind.

“Noisy!” Immortal Painter of Rivers Jian Ying shouted and stabbed her brush forward.

A hail of long needles shot down, intercepting Abbottess Liang's course. She was forced to veer off and fly circles to avoid being turned into a pincushion.

“Run, piggie! Hehehe! Run!” Jian Ying laughed as she continued to attack.

Abbottess Liang was doing well to dodge the continuous volley of missiles but it was still two against one. Li Shishi's slow, ensnaring song changed into a high-pitched tremolo. The effect changed instantly, turning into waves and waves of cutting sharpness, like a thousand blades.

The transparent attack slammed into Abbottess Liang's fluttering clothes, stopping her in midair and slicing cleanly through. The next moment a thousand needles peppered her as well, ripping countless holes until the purple fabric was torn to shreds.

But beneath those clothes, Abbottess Liang had disappeared. There wasn't even a drop of blood left behind.

She reappeared a split second later in front of Jian Ying like a blossoming flower. Two large purple fists shot out, one after the other, covering the sky.

Bang! Bang!

Jian Ying held her brush out and managed to block in time but she wasn't unscathed. She was blasted into the ground, plowing a deep groove straight through the paving stones.

More song blades arrived, colliding with Abbotess Liang and drawing several spurts of blood. She screeched again pain and anger but her speed and strength were barely affected. She charged at the singing Li Shishi but Jian Ying emerged from the ground and made her dodge away again.

The battle continued like this in a state of stalemate. The Dao of the purple gown was a well-rounded one. It had speed, strength, and equal attack power as well as defensive ability. It was not easy to defeat quickly and needed time and patience. Both sides understood this and as the battle dragged on, Abbotess Liang started to look more and more desperate.

Another combination attack of blades and needles slammed into her, exploding her purple clothes into shreds. She disappeared once again but this time, reappeared not in front of either of her two opponents but her primary target.

"No!" Li Shishi shouted.

"Stop!" Jian Ying cried.

Abbotess Liang appeared right in front of Chen Wentian and Long Yifei. They had no time to react before a pair of giant purple hands wrapped around them.

Hooooong!

A dull metallic sound like a massive gong erupted.

A semi-transparent bronze dome appeared around Chen Wentian and Long Yifei, protecting them both. He held a contraption in his hand that looked like an umbrella.

It was the Cloudy Bronze Parasol!

It was a protective Spirit Lord item capable of stopping even a Spirit King, if only for a short while. The item had been given to He Xingping to protect his wife but since his alter-ego had also been in the plaza to partake in the marriage-seeking event, he had been able to sneakily transfer the item back.

Abbotess Liang didn't give up and continued to squeeze, putting everything she had into it. The bronze dome soon started to crack. Ethereal runes that formed the shield crumbled one by one as it was steadily broken through.

Seeing this, the two Spirit Lords of the Virtuous Order launched attacks but they were easily deflected.

“You think this will stop me?” Abbotess Liang laughed and squeezed harder.

The next instant, a cloud of transparent blades and a downpour of silver needles slammed into her body. Blood spurted out like crimson rain. She stumbled and spat out a mouthful of blood but remained standing.

Abbotess Liang was truly crazy. She could have avoided the attack but she chose to take it to have a chance at obtaining Long Yifei.

The bronze umbrella shuddered a split second later and shattered into nothingness. Abbotess Liang's eyes flashed with triumph as her purple hands reached forward to crush Chen Wentian and take Long Yifei.

Chen Wentian's flames stood no chance and were snuffed out. A giant hand made of cloth closed around his head and shoulders and squeezed.

Poof!

Both of them disappeared into a cloud of black smoke.

“Impossible!” Abbotess Liang howled, bewildered.

She whirled around to see Chen Wentian smile at her from behind a boulder. How long they had been there, nobody knew. The one clear thing was that she had been defeated. She could no longer stay here anymore.

Abbotess Liang shot into the air, leaving a trail of blood in her wake. In an instant, she was already high above the city.

“Where are you going!?” Jian Ying shouted.

Both Spirit Kings of the Virtuous Order gave chase, spiraling into the sky after their enemy.

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The three abbesses disappeared into the sky in a blink. Soon after, the sounds of their furious battle faded away. It was unclear if Abbotess Liang would be able to escape but the other two were certainly unwilling to let it happen.

The four kings of the Eastern Sanmu Subcontinent stood around awkwardly for a few seconds before each making some excuse and making a quick exit. This had been a debacle of epic proportions and a stain on their collective reputation. They didn't want to lose face anymore in front of the whole city.

Chen Wentian was finally left alone. No one else dared to come forward and harass Long Yifei, not with the weight of the newcomers hanging over everything. The marriage-seeking event was over before it even began. It wasn't real to begin with but now it was dead for certain. With half the original entrants dead and the other half scared beyond their wits, the last thing they wanted to do was show their faces around here.

The steep sign-up fee was also forgotten. Nobody came to ask for it back. It was simply seeking death at this point. This allowed Chen Wentian to pocket over two hundred million taels of gold, a substantial fortune even for him. It was an amount of wealth that far surpassed ordinary Spirit Lord sects of the provinces and reached the level of those in the capital. With this, Ten Thousand Flower Valley had leaped into the big leagues in one go.

He squinted at the sky and spoke to the two remaining ladies of the Virtuous Order, "Noble prioresses, what will happen to Abbotess Liang?"

Both of them descended and it was Gui Li who replied first, "Immortal Blue Dragon, we meet finally. I have already seen your first elder. She is a talented woman!"

"Uh..." He didn't know what to say to that.

"Hehehe... anyway, as for that slut named Liang, she may live or she may die. It is up to our abbesses and how merciful they are feeling when they finally break her limbs and shatter her meridians."

"I bet she dies." The other one, Zhu Yao'er, said, "A red abbess stepping into the territory of us whites... whether it was on purpose or by accident, it's the perfect chance to get rid of one of them. The order will heavily reward us!"

"Red? White?" Chen Wentian asked.

"Reds are the sororal sluts. They wear red-colored robes. We are the whites since everyone in the order wears white." Zhu Yao'er replied.

"Ah... but still, the death of a Spirit King is not a small matter. What if this angers them, the reds as you call them, and they decided to punish the Eastern Sanmu Subcontinent?" He pressed.

It was a real possibility, one that could spell disaster for him and his sect.

Gui Li waved her hand, "I won't worry too much. This land is designated as white territory. If the reds come here, it is considered an invasion and we are free to fight them without regard. Within the Martial Brilliance Continent and others, there are large areas that are neutral. Both orders can exist in those areas and there are strict rules for how we fight. It is a peace compromise brokered by the Immortal Association."

Zhu Yao'er chimed in, "It's her own fault for coming here. If anything happens, that wrinkly old lotus will suffer more since it is she who fooled Abbotess Liang and didn't reveal the true nature of the subcontinent. As one of the four kings, there is no way she didn't know."

Chen Wentian frowned slightly as he listened to these two Spirit Lords of the Virtuous Order. Although their faces were full of mature beauty with only a slight hint of age, their words and tones were filled with a surprising level of hatred and disregard for their enemy. It was truly like fire and water, dark and light, they were seemingly enemies to the death.

He wasn't too happy about getting himself involved in such a messy situation. But the situation had devolved to such a point that he was forced to. It had been the only way he and his disciples could think of to save Long Yifei.

Despite what would come in the future, for now, she was alright and that was what mattered.

He looked down at Long Yifei and gave her a comforting squeeze around the waist. She smiled ever so slightly and laid her head on his shoulder.

A few moments later, several Spirit Lords appeared. They were various members of the four king sects and here to clean up the aftermath. The bodies were removed and visible damage began to be repaired. One of them flew over and greeted them.

"I am Immortal Ardent Duchess Su Tan. Welcome, guests from the Virtuous Order of Chunzhen. Would you all be needing a place to stay? My master, the Solemn Duke, has instructed me to see to anything you may need." She said respectfully.

The two prioresses looked at Chen Wentian as if he should answer.

When he didn't, Gui Li spoke, "I think a normal immortal dwelling is fine for us in the meantime. Though, I expect we will be leaving for Ten Thousand Flower Valley shortly."

"Actually..." Chen Wentian interrupted, "We might have to wait a little while. My third disciple is still locked in a dream array and won't awake for another week at least."

"That's okay. We shall wait for our abbesses to return. We are in no hurry, not for a matter as important as this." Gui Li said.

"That's fine, let me speak to Long Yifei first. She's still confused about the situation. I want her to understand the whole situation. I won't allow her to be forced into anything."

His words were firm and left no room for argument. The other two immortal ladies did not find the need to object and agreed. They followed Su Tan away, finally leaving him alone with his disciple.

He took Long Yifei back to the Small Wind Pagoda and their hotel room. It was empty as the others were all back at the sect.

He set her down in one of the plush sofas and activated as many privacy runes and protective spiritual shields as possible. He then sat beside her with a long, tired sigh.

"Where to begin... I guess I should start with when I found about that crazy woman called Abbess Liang..."

Long Yifei remained mostly silent as he explained the whole story bit by bit. He started with discovering Abbess Liang and her intent to steal Long Yifei as her own disciple. He then went over his discussions with his other disciples, the difficulty of fighting against a Spirit King, and how they all wanted to save her.

The plan they came up with was a collaborative effort and ended up being a multi-layered plot. The first phase was the fake marriage-seeking event. The purpose of this was twofold. The first was to create a massive crowd in front of the Lotus Tower on the morning when Long Yifei would awake to distract

Abbottess Liang and her accomplice, Gong Liyun. With both of their attention mostly focused outside on the crowd, there would be less chance of them detecting Chen Mo's presence.

The second effect of the crowd was to gather broad support from the masses. Even though this alone was not enough to deter the abbottess, such ardent support, especially from the big fish such as Ming He and Tian Yunhao, was bound to attract the attention of the Spirit Kings.

This was the second phase. There was a chance of the second phase succeeding but it was low. It hinged on the other three Spirit Kings teaming up to block Abbottess Liang and Gong Liyun. This didn't end up happening. Chen Wentian underestimated just how much the Eastern Light Clan and the House of Armament hated each other. He thought that a foreign Spirit King invading their territory to steal disciples from a local Spirit Lord would be something unacceptable to them. It didn't work in the end as his own influence and power were too little to sway them to his side.

However, the first two phases were all just a ploy to keep the abbottess unbalanced and hide the reality of the third phase, the secret call for help to the Virtuous Order of Chunzhen.

He went on to explain the order, its power and influence across the subcontinent as well as the whole human world. The order was also a member of the Association Steering Council. They were a superpower sect that held tremendous sway across many continents. They were the only power that he could call upon to help fight off Abbottess Liang and they had done the task admirably.

While he was still speaking, Long Yifei's hands moved and clutched onto his. He paused and looked up, letting himself be captured by her glittering blue eyes that were filled with emotion and uncertainty.

"Master..." She said softly, hesitantly, "Master, what did you have to agree to... for them to help us?"

"Oh!" Chen Wentian let out a disarming laugh and pulled her into his arms, "Don't worry. Fei'er. it's not bad as you think. In fact, it's quite good for you and me both!"

Chen Wentian brushed a lock of hair away from Long Yifei's face and couldn't resist but to kiss her cheek. He missed her after so many weeks. He almost lost her to that detestable Abbotess Liang. But now, she was in his arms and she wasn't going anywhere.

He tried to find her lips but she pushed his face away.

“Master!” She said, still feeling awkward with the situation.

Chen Wentian wasn't deterred but he understood her feelings. He calmed himself and slowly explained the situation to her. He described what he knew about the Virtuous Order of Chunzhen and how they focused on womanly arts that required virginity. These included the Four Elegant Daos of music, dance, literature, and art, great classics of womanly virtues. Their enemy, the Sororal Order, also focused on these four but without the requirement for virginity.

He described using a vial of her blood to perform the aptitude test and how she qualified for the rank of Divine Daughter, their highest. He made sure to emphasize how impressive this was and how future popes were chosen only from the rank of Divine Daughter.

“Master... What will the Virtuous Order do with me? Will I have to leave Ten Thousand Flower Valley?”

She looked like she wanted to say something else but she couldn't bring herself to do so. She didn't dare ask that question.

Chen Wentian knew what she wanted to ask. He grabbed her pale hands and kissed them, reassuring her.

“The bond between master and disciple cannot be so easily broken. Heh, if the Virtuous Order wanted to be like Abbotess Liang and steal you away from me, I would have found ways to deny them too. I am rather fond of my beautiful virgin disciple and I wouldn't lose you for anything in the world!”

He rubbed her hands in his, injecting warmth to soothe her, and continued, “You will have to join the Virtuous Order but I will still be your one and only master. To have this work, I will also be joining the order as a male guest, what they call an acolyte, your acolyte to be specific. Ten Thousand Flower Valley will still be its own sect but we will be allied sects. You will simply be a member of both sects. Under this

arrangement, you won't have to formally take any of the immortals of the order as your master but they can still teach you under an informal arrangement. I will also be there at times to make sure you aren't being bullied."

"They are willing to go along with this?"

"They are. You are a Divine Daughter; they'll do anything for you. You are like a baby phoenix to them, a priceless treasure that will only grow in value as time goes on. They will do everything to make sure you are happy and you are able to develop properly. I half expected their pope to show up but I suppose they didn't want to reveal to the world that they found a Divine Daughter."

"So, who does know?"

"You, me, the other girls, and a select few within the Virtuous Order. Everything is all very hush, hush. Abbess Liang only knew that you were talented, not that you are a Divine Daughter. If she knew, the two orders might have actually started a war over you."

"Oh..."

"But it worked out in the end. With your tremendous talent, the Virtuous Order was willing to listen to me and send just enough firepower to chase that woman away. Fei'er, I have to thank you. You're simply too special and it was that specialness that saved the day!"

"No, master... no, you still put yourself at great risk to carry out the rescue plan. I didn't do anything..."

"Hmm? Perhaps..." He thought about it and then smiled slyly, "Alright then... if that is the case, a certain ungrateful disciple hasn't yet thanked her master yet!"

Long Yifei's expression softened and she flashed him an irresistible smile. Her uncertainty was assuaged and her natural self returned. The confident and aspiring woman that drove him crazy reemerged.

She draped herself over his body and leaned in for a soft, yet insistent kiss. It was as if she was making up for her prior reluctance. Her lips were soft like warm clouds and he thoroughly enjoyed the brief moment they joined together.

“Thank you...”

It was music to his ears and he kissed her again. She moaned softly into his mouth and began unhooking the clasps of her dress. Her body undulated across his as she shimmied out of the thin fabric. He helped her along the way, taking time to feel her cold skin with his hot hands. He touched her from her shoulders, down her arm, across her back, and finally came to rest atop her twin peaks of glory.

Her dress pooled at her waist, leaving her top half exposed to his eyes only. He was the only one allowed to see her like this, these two globes of perfection that defied logic and common sense. White as snow, flawless without a single blemish, pale pink areolas that encircled the most enticing reddish-pink nipples that the gods could conceive, he couldn't take his eyes off of them.

Long Yifei noticed his gaze and laughed gently. The action only served to sway her breasts which defied gravity and the laws of nature to bounce and dance yet maintain their perfect roundness.

“I missed you.” He said to her and her breasts.

His hands had enough of being lonely and found their companions. He weighed her assets in his hands, one in each palm.

“Did you get bigger?”

She laughed melodically.

He tweaked her nipples for her insolence and she let out a squeal. He pinched harder and she let out a long, sensual moan.

He couldn't help it and buried his face into her chest. She played along, holding her twins up and rubbing them on his face.

"How is it?"

"Good... definitely bigger!"

Chen Wentian looked up after a while with a silly smile. Long Yifei looked down with heated eyes. She wasn't immune to the feelings between a man and woman either. They had shared so many intimate moments before any abbotess or any order. Those feelings and memories returned and they became not just master and disciple but a couple.

She leaned down, he leaned up, and their lips connected once again.

"Mmmm..."

They moaned into each other. Their lips parted and melded together with sweetness and fiery desire. She sought reassurance and sanctuary as if apologizing for a long trip away. He sought devotion and reaffirmation, trying to make sure she would never leave again. They each found what they wanted which only intensified the feelings between them.

"Thank you... honey..." She said, remembering his past words.

"Thank you, Fei'er."

She smiled and it was more brilliant than the morning sun. He hugged her tight, not willing to let her go, not now, not ever.

They cuddled like that a few tender moments before she took the lead. He liked it when she did so and she wanted to please him, to thank him properly. She undid his pants, slid a slender hand down, and finally gave his little dragon a greeting.

"That's good..." He hissed as she rubbed his erection.

She carefully freed it from his pants and examined it closely. All other thoughts disappeared as she focused solely on the magnificent instrument before her. She clasps both hands along his shaft and jerked him off gently. She cupped his heavy balls and massaged them like the most precious things in the world. She even leaned forward to lick the tip of his cock which was leaking pearls of arousal.

Chen Wentian's mind floated off into the clouds. Her every touch was torture. Her every action was a revelation. Her searing tongue was simply divine. He missed this, he missed this so much.

When she finally took his cock into her mouth, he lost it. The orgasm came out of nowhere but it was as powerful as any with the longest buildup. He came over and over, unstopping, releasing not just his pent-up desire but the built frustrations and struggles of the past few weeks. All in one go, an unrelenting torrent, he filled her sweet mouth until she couldn't take it anymore, until it overflowed, staining her cherry red lips and her chin.

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Long Yifei swallowed the mouthful with a smile and scooped up the rest with her fingers. She then proceeded to lick each glistening finger slowly, making sure Chen Wentian was watching. It was the hottest thing he had ever seen and he was ready to go again when she finished.

"Did you like it?" He asked.

She licked her lips. "It was very thick..."

He pulled her up from the floor and onto his lap, "Well, I didn't have time to do it for over a week. I saved it all up for you."

Their lips met again. The rest of Chen Wentian's clothes disappeared soon after and they wrestled together in a tangle of limbs.

Eventually, his attention drifted down the sacred place between her legs. He parted her thighs and leaned down towards his goal. The sweet aroma of virgin arousal filled his senses. Her pussy glistened with forbidden dew, enticing him further.

He licked a droplet off of her pink petals, brushing ever so slightly against her sensitive skin.

“Mmmmm...” Long Yifei let out a responsive moan.

He licked again, pressing harder.

She squirmed and wrapped her legs around his head, inviting him to stay.

He went to work, licking up and down, exploring every fold, every crevice. Every action drew a satisfactory reaction. A long lick along her outer labia elicited a long continuous moan. A needy prodding of her locked gate produced more nectar and a sharp gasp. When he paid attention to her clit and gave it a massage, she cried out in approval.

“Mmmmm...”

“Oh...”

“Yesss!”

It was almost silly but after all he had done to her body, she was still a virgin and her virgin pussy tasted amazing. He could not open up her vagina canal with his tongue like his other disciples. That was still protected by the mysterious white energy. However, he had free reign over everything else, from her trembling clit to the pink petals of her pussy lips.

He buried his face between her legs and continued his task with great enthusiasm. Every passing second, the noises she made were getting louder and more desperate. Her pussy gushed with arousal which he drank up greedily. The more he licked and prodded, the more she produced. Her nectar had a truly unique flavor. It was intoxicating and he couldn't get enough of it.

“Oh... almost...” She moaned.

“Oh... Ohhhh!!”

He clamped down on her clit, putting more pressure than she could handle. The sharp increase in pleasure was too much. She couldn't hold back any longer.

“I'm coming...”

“I'm comingggg!!!” She cried out helplessly.

Her body shook. Her legs trembled. She clutched at the sofa, seeking anything she could hold onto as the raging river of pleasure finally broke through.

She panted and moaned, breathless, helpless. It was a long, unending torture that drove her mad with ecstasy. Every nerve was on fire. Every sense was overwhelmed. She saw stars. She couldn't hear anything except a loud continuous rushing. She could only feel and it was amazing.

Chen Wentian was unprepared for the burst of fresh nectar from within. It was as if her mysterious virgin pussy was rewarding him for his hard work. He gladly accepted and lapped up the sweet bounty.

“Master...”

“Master?” Long Yifei softly called out.

She pouted, “Honey!”

“Ey!”

Chen Wentian popped up from between her legs with a grin. “Naughty Fei'er.”

“Honey!” She called again, opening her arms and indicating what she wanted.

He crawled up and fell into her arms. They shared a brief kiss and then snuggled together; both of their desires sated somewhat for the moment.

They were finally reunited after a month and a half. The threat of separation had abated. There was plenty of time for more reunion activities at a leisurely pace.

Long Yifei was quiet for a long time and Chen Wentian thought that she had fallen asleep. Instead, she seemed to be pondering a difficult question.

“What are you thinking about?” He asked.

“...” She glanced over and pursed her lips, “You mentioned that the Virtuous Order values virginity above all, that it is sacred to them and their secret arts...”

“Yeah?”

“Does that mean we won't be able to properly have sex for a long time?”

“Ah... I suppose so...” He poked her cheek, “What? Are you disappointed?”

“As long as you are fine with it, then I will accept it.” She said simply. “Did you tell them about the white energy that protects my source of yin?”

“Come on, am I a person that reveals secrets casually? Hahaha! Of course not. The only ones that know about this are you and me, nobody else. Those women of the order didn't tell me anything that provides a clue to the white energy. But... I think chances are good that we can learn something about it eventually when you get stronger. We're on the right track with this, I'm sure of it.”

“If sisters of the order are supposed to keep their virginity, why do they allow men as acolytes? Isn't that defeating the purpose?”

Chen Wentian chuckled and hugged her closer, drawing a groan of complaint. His desires were reawakening but he sensed that she wasn't quite ready for another go. To speed her up, he let his hands roam free over her naked body.

“Naughty Fei'er, don't you know? The one thing more important than virginity for the Virtuous Order is finding a husband. Their secret arts focus on improving one's womanly abilities so that they can support their man to the fullest. This is why men across the world love women from the Virtuous Order!”

He explained that almost all sisters of the order got married in the end. They willingly gave up their virginity to their chosen man at the end of their cultivation journey, gifting their partner great benefits and unique powers that only they can provide. This aspect was the secret arts that were separate from the virtuous arts such as music, dance, literature, and art.

The virtuous arts were for themselves while the secret arts were for their lovers. He didn't know of all the possibilities but the few he knew about all sounded fantastic.

One art turned a woman's body into a healing caldron. Having sex with her would heal even the most grievous wounds. It was rumored that the highest level of this healing art could even bring a person back from the dead!

Long Yife shook her head in disbelief, “Resurrection through sex?”

“I don't know but anything is possible! Don't you know, phoenixes are divine beasts known for their resurrection abilities so it's always possible!”

Another whimsical art ignored healing to focus on procreation. The firstborn with a woman who cultivated this art would be incredibly talented. They were almost guaranteed to be more powerful than their parents. They could even possess unique physiques or powers granted by the heavens. It wasn't hard to imagine how valuable these sisters were to major clans seeking to pass down their abilities to the next generation.

There was also a supremely powerful art that could increase their partner's cultivation directly the first time they had sex. It only worked once but they were able to help their husbands break through bottlenecks that were otherwise impossible. The highest level was rumored to allow a person to directly leap across a whole realm!

There were also lesser arts that weren't as fancy but still useful. One allowed the woman to choose the gender of their baby. Another made them so fertile that even quadruplets or quintuplets weren't uncommon. Yet another made their breast milk greatly beneficial in developing a baby's physique and talent.

Long Yifei rolled her eyes at these descriptions, each one sounding more perverted than the next. The most powerful secret arts interested her somewhat but she had little interest in the lower tier ones. She wasn't yet ready to even think about having children, let alone be responsible for popping out a whole school of them by herself. She had less desire to become a nursemaid...

"Master, which one of these arts are you interested in?" She asked.

Chen Wentian answered without much thought, "I don't know. It depends on you and which ones suit you. Though I admit that all of them sound awesome, maybe you can learn everything!"

She snorted, "Scoundrel..."

"Heh... but I'm your scoundrel!"

He pulled her in and found her lips for a heavy kiss just to make sure she understood his point.

She answered affirmatively, letting her tongue wrap around his.