

## U. Warlord 361

### Chapter 361: An Upgraded Bounty

As the presiding representative of the meeting, he had one opportunity to turn the tables and veto the results of the vote. However, the moment he used this privilege, any of the other nine members of the judiciary committee could challenge his decision.

If he were to win this challenge, all would go according to plan; on the other hand, if he were to lose, his position would be usurped by the victor instead. If Hong Tianqi hadn't revealed the extent of his strength, Amurong would surely have used that veto now, but since he was now uncertain that he would be able to take Hong Tianqi down, using that veto would be pointless.

As a result, he had to grit his teeth and accept the tie.

The moment the meeting ended, Hong Tianqi messaged Zhang Lie. "Next time, let me know before you make such a big fuss! Don't you know I was almost ousted from my position?" Hong Tianqi grumbled.

Zhang Lie laughed sheepishly as he apologized, "Ah, sorry, I'll let you know next time, I promise."

"Next time?! You're on your own in the future, brat! I'll warn you of one thing: one of the highest authorities of the world federation, Amurong, seems to have turned against you. Be careful, and keep a low profile."

"What? Haven't I been keeping a low profile all this time?"

"You think destroying an interplanetary conglomerate with one bounty is considered keeping a low profile? Scram!" Hong Tianqi laughed as he hung up. He had to admit, Zhang Lie was a very interesting hunter. He was skilled, knowledgeable, talented, and was excellent at getting the upper hand. In other words, Zhang Lie would be a perfect successor for him.

On the other side of the call, Zhang Lie was likewise smiling. He had never imagined that he would be able to have such a casual, friendly conversation with a hunter like Hong Tianqi. He whistled as he strolled back to the dojo's training chambers, where Hong Xiao and Hong Xi were seated face to face in training.

"How's it going?"

Hong Xiao respectfully lowered his head. "Master, I've already undergone the foundational breakthrough."

Zhang Lie praised, "Good, very good! I think you'll be well-suited to [Eclipse], just like your sister."

Hong Xiao smiled proudly upon hearing Zhang Lie's praise.

Suddenly, someone barged in from the outside—Zhang Hong.

"What's going on?" Zhang Lie asked.

"Something's terribly wrong. Look!" She handed him a transceiver.

Zhang Lie scrolled through the contents and smirked. "Interesting."

"Interesting?! They've placed a bounty on every hunter in our dojo!"

Zhang Lie tapped on a certain cell. "Oh? I'm only worth ten billion points. That's far too cheap—and Sun Mengmeng and the others are only worth ten million points!"

Hong Xi peeked over his shoulder. "Let me have a look, Master!"

Zhang Lie handed her the transceiver, and she scowled. "Look at how ugly they've made my picture, and how fat I look! And they've even made your handsome appearance ferocious and evil. I'm going to sue them!"

Zhang Hong glanced at their cavalier antics with worry. "How can the two of you be focused on such matters now? What will we do with our disciples?!"

"The bounty's issued by the Musi clan, I assume?"

Hong Xiao had also walked over. "Che, my sister and I are only worth a million dollars! I'm surprised they still have the time to be issuing bounties on us instead of worrying about their own survival."

"Given that the entire dojo's been placed under a bounty, shall we have the disciples gather here and shelter for a few days?" Zhang Hong suggested.

"Hide? Why would our disciples need to hide? The situation's not nearly as bad as you might imagine. The entire galaxy's hunting down the last remnants of the Musi, and no one will care about us," Zhang Lie retorted.

"But at this rate, the Musi will surely be slaughtered to the last sooner or later!"

"Don't worry, I have a plan. Zhang Hong, can you gather all the disciples over here?"

Zhang Hong's eyes brimmed with hope. "Yes, I'll head out immediately!"

"Ah, wait a moment—there's something I need your help with. Raise the bounty we're issuing on the Musi clan!"

Zhang Hong's eyes widened. The effect of the last bounty was enormous, and now Zhang Lie intended on upgrading it further?

On the other hand, Hong Xi and Hong Xiao glanced at each other in shock and awe. Zhang Lie's bounty had destroyed their clan's longtime rival, and they had cried for an entire night as they watched the news of the Musi clan's destruction.

These days, all they did was cultivate and read the news about how any errant survivors from the Musi clan were being chased down. No matter how tiring their training was, they would always be filled with strength when they read the news.

Zhang Lie smiled evilly. "Of course we have to repay them in kind for this bounty they've issued."

"How, Master?" Hong Xi asked. "Haven't most of the members of the Musi clan been chased down already?"

"Well, their clan head is still alive. This time, we'll issue a bounty on him. The reward will be five mutated-grade limit-breaking potions."

Hong Xi's eyes widened. "Will that be effective, Master? Musi Yu's a warlord of the third realm!"

"Well, I'm not sure myself, but it's the first time we're releasing Potion #2 to the public. I'm sure someone will give it a go." Zhang Lie was so daring that he was even setting his sights on the head of the Musi clan himself.

Zhang Hong had all the disciples assemble in one of the largest courtyards of the dojo. The Zenith Dojo had grown tremendously after the Void Cup, and seeing all the disciples gathered at the behest of the dojo leader was an amazing sight.

"I'm sure all of you have heard about the bounty issued on the disciples of the Zenith Dojo," Zhang Lie began, glancing at the gathered disciples. "I'm very glad that none of you were so cowardly as to leave the dojo as a result. Don't worry. I, Zhang Lie, will protect all of you.

"A specialized settlement solely for the dojo has been constructed in the first realm of the dimensional world. From tomorrow onwards, all the low-ranked disciples of the dojo will enter the first realm, where you'll help construct the Zenith settlement."

The disciples gaped, and hushed conversations immediately broke out.

There were quite a number of settlements in the dimensional world, but most were constructed by the world federation or left behind by pioneers. No one had ever heard of a settlement being constructed by one faction or another.

Doing so would require humongous manpower and wealth, and no ordinary faction would be able to afford such a cost. A settlement in the first realm, widely understood as a tutorial world for hunters, didn't seem meaningful.

Nevertheless, their dojo leader seemed intent on constructing such a settlement. When the young disciples learned that they would be able to build their own settlement from the ground up, they were evidently very excited.

"Don't be worried about your families, either. I'll ensure that they're adequately protected, and none of your relatives will come to any harm. In the meantime, I hope you'll all work hard within the dimensional world."

After the sudden announcement, Zhang Lie dismissed the disciples, then convened a meeting with the instructors and staff of the dojo to discuss the protection of the disciples' relatives.

This turned out to be quite an easy problem to resolve. Lin Xiu would remain behind to guard Ning, in conjunction with the members of Team Zenith, the generals of the Chinese military, and the special forces troops.

The entirety of Ning would become closed off from the outside world, and no assassins or bounty hunters would be able to find their way in. As for the citizens of Ning, none of them would dare lay a hand on the Zenith Dojo.

With all these affairs settled, Zhang Lie finally returned to his private chambers to review the manual of [Black Sun] that he had obtained from the Musi clan.

It was obvious from name alone that [Black Sun] was at least tangentially related to [Eclipse]. Considering how avidly the members of the Musi clan were chasing after the manual, he was certain that there had to be some deeper connection between the two techniques.

As he scrutinized the manuals more carefully, Zhang Lie found that there were surprising similarities behind the foundation and formation of the two techniques, as though they were mirrored reflections of one another.

[Eclipse] was born of shadow, and [Black Sun] of light. Could the origin of the two techniques have been the same? Or perhaps the two techniques had both derived from a higher-ranked technique? In that case, would he be able to recombine them into one cohesive whole?

The more he thought about it, the more plausible that idea seemed to become. However, the results of his experiments were disappointing. His copy of [Black Sun] was incomplete, so there was no way he would be able to combine the two techniques so simply.

The fact that an additional bounty had been posted quickly caught the eye of the bounty hunters and assassins of the world federation.

"Did you see? Musi Yu's head can be exchanged for five vials of the newest limit-breaking potion, Potion #2!"

"What? Really?! I can't believe the Zenith Dojo's daring enough to issue a bounty on a warlord of the third realm!"

"Che! So what if Musi Yu's a famous figure? I bet Zhang Lie's already come up with a plan for dealing with him!"

#### Chapter 362: Betrayal

The effect of the original limit-breaking potion, Potion #1, was significant enough. How much greater would be the effect of Potion #2, which applied to mutated gene fragments? Considering that mutated gene fragments were widely understood to be ten times as important as basic gene fragments, Potion #2 was about ten times stronger than Potion #1!

The hunters in the bar began to stand up, their eyes gleaming with killing intent and greed. They had to acquire Potion #2 at any cost!

There were a rare few hunters who were still able to remain calm. "Come now, sit back down. He's a warlord of the third realm, and none of us will be able to bring him down."

"Perhaps I won't be able to hunt him down, but my uncle's in the third realm. If he can find a few like-minded colleagues, they might just be able to defeat him together—wait, why are you running off so quickly?"

From a distance, his friend called back, "I'm going to tell my father!"

The updated bounty sent ripples throughout the entire galaxy.

"Look at what China's hiding! They've made such great leaps ahead in the theory of limit fragments without informing any of us."

The other countries of Earth also began amassing their own hunting teams to capture and kill Musi Yu, intending to acquire these few vials of Potion #2 before any other country could. Given the effects of Potion #1, everyone knew how vital it would be to acquire vials of Potion #2—especially before their competitors.

The assassins of various organizations, who thought that their killing spree was about to come to an end with the death of the majority of the hunters of the Musi clan, found themselves tasked with a new responsibility. "Assassins of the third realm, gather. There's a new mission for you all."

Upon seeing the updated bounty, the third-realm assassins' eyes widened.

Among the starbeasts, Xing Yan announced, "Third-realm hunters, we'll kill Musi Yu at any cost!"

Underwater, Lianhua told her subordinates, "It looks like Zhang Lie really wants this warlord to die. Let's have the third-realm aquatic hunters do their best so we can get a vial of this potion as well."

The nightdemons and the winged behaved in much the same manner, and Musi Yu's life quickly became a hot commodity.

In a certain restaurant of the third realm, Musi Yu slammed his fist into a wall, creating a huge crater. "Champion of the Void Cup, Zhang Lie—you will pay!"

Upon coming out of seclusion, Musi Yu immediately learned of his clan's demise. How hard he had worked to acquire such wealth and prosperity for his family—and then to have it all destroyed in a few days!

Musi Yu had actually been paying attention to Zhang Lie even before this event—not because of a beginner's tournament like the Void Cup, but because of the limit-breaking potions he had devised.

He had always been plotting against the Hong clan in order to acquire [Eclipse]. [Black Sun] and [Eclipse] shared the same source, and he believed that combining the two techniques would allow him to create a new technique superior to both of its constituents—or, rather, to restore the two techniques to before they had been separated.

"A limit-breaking potion..." Musi Yu couldn't help but sigh. The goal he had been reaching for all these years, to surpass his limits, had been accomplished by a first-realm hunter with some ridiculous potions.

Just like the other factions of the world federation, the Musi clan was very interested in acquiring a vial of Potion #1. However, Zhang Lie had had a strong backer in the Chinese military, as well as a personal connection with Martial Sage Hong Tianqi himself. Even the Musi clan didn't dare make a move; no matter how strong Musi Yu was, he was certain he wouldn't be stronger than Hong Tianqi. All he could do was give up on overwhelming Zhang Lie with martial might and trying a different tactic instead.

Now, however, Zhang Lie had provoked him directly. In that case, he would surely have to retaliate. Why not acquire both Zhang Lie's limit-breaking potions and the Eclipse Sage's [Eclipse] in one fell swoop?

He was just about to set off when an acquaintance, Lie Feng, suddenly approached him. "Musi Yu, you're in perilous straits. You can't leave this settlement!"

Musi Yu frowned. "What's wrong?"

Lie Feng immediately showed him the newest bounty that Zhang Lie had issued, but Musi Yu merely frowned and handed the tablet back. "Damned brat."

Lie Feng continued, "Musi Yu, you should take this seriously. Zhang Lie's not a trivial opponent to deal with—those who have crossed him in the past can attest to that. I think you already know that you're one of the only survivors of the slaughter of the Musi clan—but despite the fact that he's the instigator behind this entire affair, no one dares touch him. The highest authorities of the world federation convened a meeting, but the outcome was merely that they would be paying careful attention to what would happen!"

Musi Yu snorted again. "Isn't that good news for me? As long as I can catch him, I'll get both Potions #1 and #2."

Lie Feng couldn't help smiling. "Is it that easy to catch him? Now that he's offering a few vials of Potion #2, several of the top hundred hunters in the third realm are already plotting to make a move. You won't be able to step out of this settlement, let alone kill anyone. Go into hiding!"

"I don't believe that this limit-breaking potion can achieve as much as he claims it will. Furthermore, only the weak need to group up. The strong always work alone!"

"Just bear with it a bit, won't you? Let the excitement disperse first."

Musi Yu's eyes gleamed coldly. "Would you be able to wait to take revenge against a hunter who killed your entire clan?"

"What are you going to do about China? The military's going to protect Zhang Lie, and you know it."

"As long as Hong Tianqi doesn't show up, I have nothing to fear."

Lie Feng sighed and patted him on the shoulder. "Very well. In that case, be careful—I don't want to lose my drinking buddy."

"Ha! I'll treat you to a drink or two when I'm back." Musi Yu strolled out of the restaurant, not realizing that there was now a tiny chip by his shoulder.

He found it quite curious that Lie Feng would treat him so well—they were acquaintances, perhaps friends at most, but not brothers. They had hunted a few peak-grade lifeforms together a few times, but they weren't so close that he would feel obligated to look out for him.

Musi Yu shook his head, ignoring Lie Feng's strange behavior. What was most important now was to deal with Zhang Lie.

The moment Musi Yu left, Lie Feng returned to Earth and messaged the Zenith Dojo. "Hello, is this the Zenith Dojo? Musi Yu's just left a restaurant in the third realm, and he's on his way to cause trouble for you. I have a tracker for his current location, and I'll give it to you for two vials of Potion #2. I'm confident that he'll be on his way, and since he has a particularly nasty soulshard to deal with, you'll need this tracker to counter it.

"Alright, deal! Thank you!" Lie Feng's eyes shone. He could hardly believe that his relationship with Musi Yu could have been traded in for two vials of Potion #2. Musi Yu, don't blame me for taking advantage of this opportunity!

By then, Musi Yu had transformed into a different person entirely. He had an extremely unusual soulshard from the third realm, a peak-grade chameleon dragon soulshard. It would allow him to

transform his appearance into that of a stranger, or even of an arbitrary biotic lifeform altogether. Such a transformation was all but undetectable.

Musi Yu found quite a few people hovering outside the restaurant, all of whom seemed to be searching for him, but he was able to walk past them without any recognition whatsoever. He stepped into the nearby teleportation array and headed straight toward China.

As he walked out of the teleportation array on the other end, however, the skies suddenly changed color, and a frightening gust of genetic energy pressed down on Musi Yu's body, making even breathing difficult.

He raised his head to see a gigantic palm pressing down on him, one so large it covered up the sun and skies. He knew this technique—he'd seen it a few times before, it was Hong Tianqi's signature [Veiling the Skies]!

The world seemed to freeze over. Musi Yu found himself unable to move a finger, or even to breathe.

As the pressure from the gigantic hand increased, Musi Yu found himself forced to his knees. He was just a single step away from the teleportation array that would send him to salvation, but that one step felt like a gulf he couldn't cross.

"No, no, please spare me, Martial Sage! I've made a mistake in coming here, but please, it's my first offense! Please spare my life!" Musi Yu had to expend his own life force to regain enough control over his body to beg for mercy.

"Scram!"

Bolts of thunder shook the sky. The gigantic hand dissipated into thin air; the haggard Musi Yu scrambled back into the array and vanished from sight.

### Chapter 363: A Divine Gift

Upon returning to the third realm, Musi Yu spat out a mouthful of fresh blood as he panted. He had been moments away from dying at Hong Tianqi's hand. Hong Tianqi's technique hadn't even landed—the pressure from the fluctuations in his genetic energy alone had been sufficient to cause severe damage to his body.

Peak of the third realm though he was, it seemed as though he were realms away from Hong Tianqi's level. Musi Yu regretted his actions almost instantly. Had he hesitated a little, he would have died to that technique, he was sure.

In truth, however, he was mistaken. No matter what, Hong Tianqi wouldn't have killed him, because he didn't want to bully a far weaker hunter, and he believed that Zhang Lie would be able to deal with him in his own right.

There was just one point that confused Musi Yu: given how many teleportation arrays there were situated all over China, how did Hong Tianqi know just where he would emerge? Could he have reached such esteemed heights that his senses now covered all of China? If that were the case, as long as Zhang Lie remained in China, he would be unable to touch him at all.

Musi Yu walked out of the teleportation array mulling over his plans when someone suddenly called out to him, "Musi Yu, you've finally returned! We've been waiting for you for quite some time."

Musi Yu raised his head to see a whole crowd of people staring at him.

"Musi Yu?" He glanced left and right, showing off his acting skills. "Where is he?"

"Musi Yu, you don't have to act anymore—your good brother sold you out! Your identity's been exposed!" Lie Feng stepped forward, clutching a hoard of soulshards, pills, herbs, and potions. "I have to thank you—you'll be my good brother for the rest of your life!"

Musi Yu's eyes bulged. "You bastard!" No wonder he had been so friendly!

"I told you to hide, didn't I? You should have listened to me."

Killing intent flared in Musi Yu's eyes. "I'll kill you!"

Lie Feng laughed. "Don't blame me, Musi Yu—blame that champion of the Void Cup whom you've made your enemy. Which of us here wouldn't be tempted by these limit-breaking potions?"

Large explosions rang out as a whole horde of peak third-realm hunters charged at Musi Yu, the dazzling colors of soulshards and techniques filling the air. None of the hunters, by themselves, would be a match for Musi Yu, but dozens of them combined could easily overwhelm one lone hunter.

"If we kill Musi Yu, we'll be able to claim Potion #2 for ourselves!"

Wave after wave of techniques wreaked destruction on their surroundings. They had to admit that Musi Yu really was a talented hunter, able to survive even the onslaught of dozens of hunters working in tandem.

He retorted, "I only have one head. How are all of you going to divide it among yourselves?!"

Indeed, the reward for the bounty would be five vials of Potion #2. How would they split it among themselves? As a result, the allied combatants divided into groups of five, but Musi Yu made use of the gaps between the five-member teams' formations to break out of their encirclement.

Although he had successfully escaped, Musi Yu was grievously wounded after the combined attacks of Hong Tianqi and the third-realm hunters, and he had lost quite a few of his soulshards by forcibly overusing them.

"Zhang Lie!" Musi Yu roared in anger and frustration. It was all his fault! Without Zhang Lie around, he wouldn't have been exiled from his settlement, and neither would his friends have betrayed him. Now, there was no one he would be able to trust, no one but himself.

He had to kill Zhang Lie and acquire Potions #1 and #2! Only then could he rise up again. With the recipe to the two potions under his control, he would be able to manipulate other hunters to his will.

"Zhang Lie, Lie Feng—just you wait! I, Musi Yu, swear that you'll regret having provoked me!"

With Potions #1, #2, [Eclipse], and [Black Sun], he would be able to discover the secrets behind the two techniques—and then, with a bit more time, even Hong Tianqi would have to kneel at his feet! Musi Yu roared in laughter, so loudly that he hurt his already-battered body and began to cough violently.

He knew of a secret dimensional tunnel that would allow him access to the second realm at certain specific points in time. If he remembered correctly, that tunnel was open now, and he would be able

to descend to the second realm. Doing so was a means of last resort; traveling through such exposed dimensional tunnels was extremely dangerous. If he weren't careful, his body could be disintegrated by spatial folds—and he wouldn't be able to control where in the second realm he would end up.

However, Musi Yu had no other resort. There was no place for him remaining in the third realm, and few things could threaten him in the second. If he didn't leave now, he might not have a chance to do so later.

While he was contemplating his decision, a shout came from behind, "Look! I think Musi Yu's over here!"

Musi Yu didn't dare dally any longer. He darted off toward the mouth of the secret tunnel. He spent the entire day running for his life before reaching his destination. He peered into the tunnel, only to see black, mysterious swirls of space, as though it led into a deep abyss from which he would never return.

"Stop, Musi Yu! You're surrounded—hand over your head!" His pursuers didn't seem inclined to give up. "Musi Yu, don't force us to make a move! Surrender now!"

There were over two dozen hunters chasing after him. If he were at his prime, Musi Yu wouldn't have been afraid, but he was still suffering from wounds from Hong Tianqi's technique, followed by the free-for-all brawl in the settlement. His body was on its last legs, and he had no energy to fight.

"Just you wait. I'll return before you know it!" Musi Yu leapt into the portal.

A crack suddenly materialized in the second realm, ejecting a human covered in blood.

"I'm alive—Zhang Lie, Hong Tianqi, Lie Feng, and those bastards of the second realm will pay for what they've done a hundred times over, I swear it!"

If not for his astounding willpower, he would long since have died from his body's naked exposure to the wild, primal energies of space and time. He had paid a heavy price, defraying his body's corrosion by sacrificing all the soulshards he owned.

Having suffered blow after blow, Musi Yu was in a critically weakened state, but he had yet to give up. After all, he knew that as long as he was alive, there was still a possibility for him to turn the tide.

Now that he was in the second realm, he had to figure out just where he was. Wiping away the blood that pooled around his left eye, he saw a magnificent city, though one whose architecture was clearly not of human construction. He looked all around him: the humanoid figures were tall and large, with demonic clawlike appendages on their right arm.

"Th-this is..." Musi Yu's face turned pale. He knew that he could be teleported to any random location in the second realm, but he had hardly expected to be so unlucky.

He was in the land of the sura, the dominant race of the second realm! He was found in the heart of their city, and he had been surrounded by quite a number of curious onlookers.

Musi Yu cursed, but he didn't even have the strength to stand up.

A sura rider came toward him. Musi Yu struggled to move, but the moment he did so, a spear pierced his leg and pinned it to the ground, causing him to yelp in pain. He could easily have

defeated all the sura in front of him if he was still at peak strength, but unfortunately for him, he had grown so weak that he couldn't even lift a fist.

Another sura walked forward. "This looks like a human."

"How could a human have suddenly appeared out of nowhere in our capital?"

"I asked those onlookers that were nearby—it seems like he was suddenly ejected from a crack in space."

One of the riders called out, "Human, how did you end up here?"

Musi Yu trembled. "I don't know, I don't know anything!" Pretending to be innocent and clueless was his only chance at surviving. "When I came to my senses, I found myself here somehow. I really don't know anything!"

The sura frowned. "Human trash. Kill him."

"Heh, we'll have human meat tonight!"

Musi Yu was dismayed. Was he, a warlord of the third realm, going to die just like that?

An elderly sura slowly walked forward and raised an arm. "Hold it!"

"What's the matter?"

"This man looks somewhat unkempt, but if you clean him up, he wouldn't look too bad, would he?"  
The riders examined him carefully.

In truth, Musi Yu looked like a fierce, grizzled hunter who would hardly be considered handsome, but the sura seemed particularly enraptured by his appearance.

The sura elder continued, "The king has been very upset that the human concubines that have been procured for him have all been broken."

The riders frowned. "Weren't those concubines all captured just a few days ago from the human cities? Human bodies really are quite frail!"

"That's why the king was so upset. It's time for him to take a new consort—this human's sudden appearance must be a sign from the deity of the sura!"

One of the riders asked cautiously, "Elder, is it really alright to send an unknown man into the king's quarters?"

The sura elder glared at him. "What's wrong with that? Do you want to be sent in his place, then?"

The rider's eyes widened as he clutched his buttocks. "No, Elder! I agree wholeheartedly with you—he must be a gift for the king from the divine, I'm sure of it!"

The sura elder nodded seriously. "Very well. Have him wash up and change his clothes, then send him to the king's palace."

Although Musi Yu didn't know what was going on, it seemed as though he wouldn't have to die, after all. He knew a little of the sura tongue; it seemed as though the riders and the elder were discussing him. Musi Yu had seen one of the sura lords before, but never their king.

After all, before he discovered a ruin in the third realm, Musi Yu hadn't been a particularly special hunter. He had ventured into the third realm the moment he had capped his superior gene fragments. As far as he could make out, they seemed to be wanting to present him to the sura king. Could their king be female? Was he bound for some good fortune at long last?

#### Chapter 364: The Concubine's Departure

Although Musi Yu had never met the sura king, he was quite certain of what he had heard—which meant that the sura king had to be female. The sura were ugly compared to human standards, but in order to survive, he would bear with even the ugliest woman.

In fact, if he were able to please the sura king and obtain pills and potions to treat his injuries, he would be able to leave this place and exact revenge from Zhang Lie, obtain Potions #1 and #2 from him, and combine [Eclipse] and [Black Sun].

He was trussed up and carried away by the sura riders, deposited at the sura king's palace, then allowed to bathe and change clothes into something grossly revealing, with only his groin covered by a few patches of cloth.

After that, he was escorted to the door of a rather grand chamber, where he was serenaded by a series of haunting, chilling screams. To be honest, he had never heard their like before. He admitted to being a cruel hunter who had tortured his enemies in similar fashion, but he had never heard such helplessness and despair.

The door was pushed open by a crack. A fearful man reached an arm out, half his body naked, his eyes crazed. When he saw Musi Yu, he cried out, "Please, save me!"

A gigantic pitch-black arm dragged the man back from the door. There was another series of cries that reached a crescendo and then suddenly diminished greatly in volume. Not a while later, the door was unchained, and two guards swiftly walked inside.

They carted the man from before outside, his body contorted and dripping with blood from his nether regions. His eyes were vacant and glassy; he had died.

Musi Yu swallowed a gulp of saliva. Just what was the sura king like? Surely she wouldn't torture him like that, would she? While he was lost in his thoughts, the guards pushed him inside, finally giving him a glimpse of the sura king for himself—a swollen body, an ugly face and mouth, two horns protruding out of a bulbous forehead, black skin, sharp teeth. The sura king looked like a malicious demon.

Suddenly, Musi Yu frowned. Was the sura king not female? Why was she flat-chested?

Slowly, the sura king began, "Are there new concubines waiting for me?"

Given the massive bed in front of him, Musi Yu was certain that he was in the sura king's bedroom.

The sura elder knelt on the floor and replied respectfully, "Honored king, this is a concubine granted to you by the divine."

"By the divine?"

The sura elder nodded. "He appeared out of thin air in the center of the city."

"Interesting. Send him in," the sura king commanded.

Musi Yu sucked in a deep breath. The sura king might have been even uglier than expected, but to seek revenge, to live, and to kill Zhang Lie, he would be willing to do just about anything.

Musi Yu raised his head and tried to appear charming. "Please, do as you will with me!"

The sura king seemed surprised. "Oh? You're the first human who hasn't been shocked by my appearance. Indeed, you're surely a human sent to me by the deity of the sura himself!"

The sura king removed the blanket covering his groin, causing Musi Yu's mouth to widen in shock. His member was gigantic, far larger than Musi Yu's own and almost as girthy as his thigh.

"Y-you, I-I..."

"You're ready, aren't you? I won't wait!" The sura king reached out and grabbed both of Musi Yu's legs.

[Omitted.]

Musi Yu endured three whole days of torture—from pain, to pain, to even more pain and suffering, and finally numbness. After three days, Musi Yu was carted out of the sura king's bed—though unlike the other concubines, he was still alive. Even injured, he still had the body and constitution of a third-realm warlord, and even this amount of trauma wouldn't have been enough to kill him.

As the sura king dressed himself, he praised, "It's been a very long time since I've had such a satisfying concubine. Confer him a position and keep him here!"

The sura elder knelt on the floor and bowed. "Yes, your highness."

The sura king dismissed him. "Give him the best treatment for his injuries. I won't allow such a valuable treasure to die."

Musi Yu had finally obtained the healing potions he had hoped to get, but the price seemed to be a little high. "Everything is Zhang Lie's fault, everything! None of this would have happened without him!"

Musi Yu's hatred of Zhang Lie grew more and more severe. If not for this hatred, Musi Yu was certain that he couldn't have lived through those three days of torture. He had to recover, he had to—and then he would pay Zhang Lie back tenfold for the suffering and shame that he had caused!

The days passed in an endless cycle of sex and potions. As his injuries healed, it became far less challenging to survive the sura king's onslaught. Although the will of the world suppressed his third-realm strength, he was certainly strong enough to sneak away from the palace.

For some reason, after spending months with the sura king, he had grown a little attached to him, but his enmity against Zhang Lie far overwhelmed this fledgling affection.

Musi Yu fled the palace.

Chapter 365: Secrets of [Eclipse]

Zhang Lie raised his hands to the skies, sending two tablets from his fourth form's dragon turtle crashing down. His prey, the peak-grade whitegold tiger dashing away from him, crumpled to the ground.

"[The Boundless Blade: Dragon's Wrath]!"

Zhang Lie thrust Venombane straight into the tiger's head.

[You successfully killed a peak-grade whitegold tiger. By consuming the flesh of the peak-grade whitegold tiger, you may receive one to ten peak gene fragments.]

With his current strength, he was easily able to kill a peak-grade lifeform by himself. Suddenly, he felt a foreign aura some distance away, and he immediately turned around. "Who is it?!"

The sun suddenly turned dark, and black flames rapidly circled him.

"Zhang Lie, I've been looking for you for quite some time!" A man walked through the flames, a black sun at his back.

"Who are you?!" Zhang Lie raised his sword. The black flames frolicked as though they grew more intense with his anger. Zhang Lie couldn't help but take a few steps back. These flames were strikingly familiar. Could the man be...

"You don't recognize me?!" the man hollered in rage. "You slaughtered my entire clan! Hand over the recipes for Potions #1 and #2, as well as the manual for [Eclipse]."

"What makes you think I'll agree?"

"Ha! Zhang Lie, don't think you can ignore me just because you've amassed some power for yourself in the second realm. I'm a third-realm warlord, and killing you would be as easy as squashing an ant to death!"

"A former warlord, you mean. Now that you're in the second realm, I don't expect you'll be able to use your full strength," Zhang Lie corrected.

Musi Yu snorted. "As if it won't be enough to deal with you!" He absorbed the black sun hanging in the sky into his body, and the fluctuations of genetic energy radiating from him rapidly grew much stronger.

Zhang Lie narrowed his eyes. "This is different from the standard copy of [Black Sun] possessed by the Musi clan. As I expected, you didn't impart the full technique to them!"

"That bunch of trash doesn't deserve it," Musi Yu replied, shrugging. "[Eclipse] originally belonged to me as well, but the damned Eclipse Sage stole it. Now, it's time for [Eclipse] to return to my possession."

Zhang Lie cocked an eyebrow. "Is that so? I've compared [Eclipse] and [Black Sun] myself, and they seem like two parts of a whole. My understanding is that they were both cleft from some more superior technique instead."

The killing intent in Musi Yu's eyes grew sharper. "I won't permit anyone who knows that secret to live."

Zhang Lie rubbed at his jaw. "There used to be a Sage of Black Sun, but he vanished shortly after the death of the Eclipse Sage. I suspect this is likely his technique. When the Sage of Black Sun vanished, rumors had it that he perished of a wound inflicted by the Eclipse Sage himself, but it looks like there may be more to that story. Musi Yu, the first recorded sighting of you occurred right after the disappearance of the Sage of Black Sun. Have you been disguising yourself all this time?"

"Haha! Well done, lad—I hadn't expected you would uncover the truth that I had hidden for so long. I'll at least do you the honor of revealing the truth to you before you die. [Eclipse] and [Black Sun] did derive from the same technique, and the Eclipse Sage and I were the best of friends.

"Together, we found a peerless technique that was divided into two portions, each of which could be learned separately and combined into one cohesive whole. However, we would each have to master one portion of the technique before the other. The Eclipse Sage and I decided to each learn one portion, then to trade our portions with the other."

By then, Zhang Lie had guessed the truth. "You plotted against the Eclipse Sage!"

"Indeed. The day we were slated to exchange our portions of the technique, I was blinded by greed and attacked my good friend. Unexpectedly, he was so strong that, even with his wounded body, he managed to deal me a serious injury, and he even destroyed his portion of the technique before I could claim it. After my injury, I hid my identity, knowing that the Eclipse Sage would have a plan to counter me.

"I believed that the Eclipse Sage would have passed [Eclipse] to his family, the Hong clan, so I founded a clan with my new identity and targeted the Hong clan with all my might. However, even after all these years, the useless hunters in my assumed clan still haven't been able to claim [Eclipse] for themselves."

Zhang Lie's eyes gleamed in understanding. This was why the copy of [Eclipse] in the Eclipse Sage's treasury was incomplete! He had predicted that Musi Yu would target the Hong clan; the partial copy of [Eclipse] in his treasury in the second realm was nothing more than bait. Even if the Musi clan were to lay their hands on it, they would never be able to acquire the complete inheritance, and Musi Yu would stop trying to target the Hong clan after realizing that he wouldn't benefit from it.

The true inheritance had been left on Earth, and Zhang Lie had become the Eclipse Sage's successor. It was that successor who would be tasked with the responsibility of taking care of the Hong clan and dealing with the Musi.

However, the Eclipse Sage had failed to account for the stubbornness of his clan. His descendants refused to give up his treasure, even at the cost of their lives.

"Now that you know the truth, I can't let you leave. If you hand over the recipes for Potions #1 and #2, along with [Eclipse], I'll give you a clean death."

"Oh? Attack me if you dare—I'm curious just how strong a warlord of the third realm is!"

Chapter 367: Fighting Musi Yu

Zhang Lie manipulated the first two tablets toward Musi Yu once again. Still subject to the effects of the fourth tablet, Musi Yu was unable to dodge. Genetic energy burst forth from his body along with a spray of blood.

"[Rune: Activate]!" With his opponent trapped, Zhang Lie could now easily launch his strongest techniques. He pressed his palms together. The dragon roared as all four tablets activated simultaneously, their effects resonating with each other and causing Musi Yu to lose control over his mind and body.

"[The Boundless Blade: Dragon's Wrath]!" A blood dragon sprang forth from Zhang Lie's palm, circled around his blade, and shot out toward Musi Yu.

Musi Yu's eyes widened. Trapped within his mind and body, he had no choice but to consume his lifeforce to forcibly activate a technique that would break him out of this mess. The black sun behind him exploded in flames, causing the runic tablets to fly out in all directions. Even the blood dragon was forced back, sending Zhang Lie stumbling back.

Blood seeped out of Musi Yu's mouth. His trump card allowed him to temporarily use ten times his genetic energy, at the cost of half his lifeforce, a kamikaze-style attack that was a technique of last resort. Musi Yu coughed, spitting out another mouthful of fresh blood. Black flames flared around his body, haloing him.

Zhang Lie's eyes widened. "You can combine your body with [Black Sun]?"

He had never imagined that Musi Yu would possess such a trump card. Zhang Lie had tried to combine other techniques with the domain of [Eclipse] before, but never his own body. He could clearly sense that Musi Yu's strength had increased by an entire order of magnitude upon doing so.

"Zhang Lie, you're an interesting figure, but this is the end of the line for you!" Musi Yu's body ballooned with flame, responding to his killing intent and anger. His genetic energy had, by then, exceeded the limit of the second realm. The will of the world sent a palm composed of genetic energy down toward him.

"I said, scram!" Musi Yu howled at the sky, destroying the palm with nothing more than his voice and a pulse of genetic energy. Black flame filled the sky and land as far as the eye could see; the sun dimmed even further. Zhang Lie had seen an occurrence like this before upon acquiring disaster gene fragments.

As expected of a third-realm warlord, Musi Yu was so strong that he was being repelled by the will of the world even without activating a single technique. Of course, he was still weaker than he would otherwise be in the third realm.

Instead of attacking him directly, the will of the world cordoned off the fight between the two hunters so as to prevent him from dealing additional damage to the second realm.

When the spectators saw how much stronger Musi Yu had gotten, they too were shocked.

"Even the will of the world's trying to suppress Musi Yu! How is Zhang Lie supposed to beat a hunter like him?"

"As expected, Zhang Lie was too strong to be ignored. He might be able to combat Musi Yu given another decade or two, but it's far too early for him now."

"What a pity to have a genius fall just like that! If Zhang Lie had some more time, he could well become the second Martial Sage Hong Tianqi."

"Wasn't the Martial Sage ridiculous? Even while he was in the second realm, no one from the third dared to challenge him!"

The screen of light surrounding Musi Yu and Zhang Lie was opaque; none of the spectators could see through it, but they were assured of Musi Yu's victory.

Zhang Lie raised both his arms into the sky, and the image of a dragonturtle appeared behind him. The first two gravity-controlling tablets smashed into the ground even as Musi Yu shot toward Zhang Lie, streaking with black flame.

"You're done for!" Zhang Lie then triggered the third and fourth tablets, suppressing the flow of time and weakening the flames over Musi Yu's body.

"Fool! You're so close to me that you'll suffer from the tablets' effects too." Musi Yu didn't seem at all worried. His fist, wreathed in black flame, punched toward Zhang Lie, who dodged with surprising speed.

"What?!" To Musi Yu's surprise, the tablets didn't affect Zhang Lie at all!

"[The Boundless Blade: Dragon's Ascent]!" Zhang Lie counterattacked. However, despite the combined effects of the third and fourth runic tablets, Musi Yu was able to maintain his original speed. The flames surrounding his body burned Zhang Lie's bloody dragon to a crisp, then extended around Zhang Lie like a pair of black wings.

Musi Yu roared in laughter. "Just because I've been weakened doesn't mean that you'll be able to surpass me. Under this condition, I'm invincible!"

"Is that so?"

Zhang Lie activated [Ninecarp Transformation: Second Form]. Dragon scales appeared all over his body, his eyes became slitted, and genetic energy burst forth from him like a storm. He blew the black flames away with a pulse of genetic energy.

Despite his earlier claims, Musi Yu couldn't help but worry.

"[Fists of the Silent Sea: Dragon's Wrath]!" Hundreds of dragons exploded from Zhang Lie's body, striking, swarming, and devouring Musi Yu.

The light barrier erected by the will of the world, subject to such a severe impact, began to crack. The cracks propagated, and the barrier exploded in a flurry of shards.

A figure was knocked out past the barrier, past hundreds of trees, then skidded for a few hundred meters in a long, deep gouge before his momentum was expended. The bag of flesh that remained at the very end no longer seemed to be a human.

"Who's that?"

"Who else? It has to be Zhang Lie. What a pity!"

"Isn't that so? But it serves him right for being so daring as to issue a bounty on a third-realm warlord, after all—"

"Wait, who's that?!"

Everyone turned toward the man who had shouted, then followed his outstretched arm toward a figure at the epicenter of the sudden explosion: Zhang Lie!

If Zhang Lie was standing there, then the defeated figure had to be...

Musi Yu!

Chapter 366: The Dragonturtle's Four Tablets

"If you really want to die so badly, let me grant your wish!" Musi Yu swung down with his polearm. Under the effect of [Black Sun], his strike was magnified by at least an order of magnitude.

"[Eclipse]!" A blood moon appeared beneath Zhang Lie's feet, and it immediately spread out all around him. He was far more experienced with [Eclipse] than was Hong Xi, and Zhang Lie's [Eclipse] even seemed able to encroach on Musi Yu's [Black Sun]. For the moment, however, [Black Sun] held out secure against [Eclipse]'s onslaught.

"[The Boundless Blade: Dragon's Wrath]!" Venombane struck forward, clashing against Musi Yu's polearm. The domains of [Black Sun] and [Eclipse] clashed against each other, again and again.

"Zhang Lie, die!" Musi Yu roared. Black flames burned even more brightly all over his body, converting his anger into strength and completely suppressing Zhang Lie.

Zhang Lie hastily activated his blood ant and forest wolfman soulshards, turning into a gigantic, bloody wolf. The blood-red genetic energy pulsed, forcing Musi Yu to stumble back.

"I have to admit, Zhang Lie, you've got decent strength—but it'll take you a century before you can catch up to me!" A ball of black flame shot up into the skies and blanketed the world in darkness.

"Die!" Musi Yu struck again with the polearm in his hands. The skies split in two with a massive outpouring of genetic energy; he had used so much of his strength that even the will of the world was paying attention to what was going on.

Even from cities far off into the distance, hunters could see a pillar of black flame rising into the skies.

"What's that?"

"Let's go have a look!"

Eager spectators rushed out of the city to observe what was going on from afar.

"Look— isn't that Musi Yu?"

"Musi Yu? We're rich!"

"You idiot! Musi Yu's a third-realm warlord. He might be hiding now because he was forced out of the third realm, but do you think we would be able to handle him?"

"Who's Musi Yu's opponent?"

"Who else? The champion of the Void Cup, Zhang Lie, of course!"

"What? Isn't Zhang Lie going to die, then? Surely even someone like him can't fend off a third-realm warlord?"

"I wonder how he managed to descend to the second realm. Doesn't the will of the world care?"

"He had to have paid a heavy price, of course. Could any higher-realm hunter descend so easily? If nothing else, his strength has certainly been suppressed to a second-realm level. He wouldn't have descended unless he really bore a heavy grudge toward Zhang Lie! Furthermore, the moment he triggers a technique stronger than the limits of the second realm, the will of the world itself might act against him."

"What's there to say? It's clear, isn't it? Zhang Lie's going to die! His opponent's a third-realm warlord, one who carved out a path of blood against an encirclement of over two dozen hunters!"

"What a pity for Zhang Lie, for the Zenith Dojo, for Potions #1 and #2..."

The black flames grew stronger and hotter as Musi Yu poured more and more of his genetic energy into them. The onlookers quailed; they could feel the heat on their skin even from a great distance. What second-realm hunter could withstand this blow?

"Die." Musi Yu waved his polearm of black flame.

Zhang Lie summoned two runic tablets from the dragonturtle, one as heavy as a boulder, the other as light as a feather. They wrapped around Musi Yu from the back and the front, causing gravity to distort where he stood. Musi Yu spat out a mouthful of blood.

He was in the middle of casting his strongest technique—the abrupt and unusual change in gravity meant that the blow directed at Zhang Lie whiffed, as though he had thrown his strongest punch into a sack of cotton. Black flame exploded from him, summoning a whirlwind that roared through the skies, devouring everything it touched.

The hunters who were watching the fight from afar yelped as they tried to flee, causing the scene to descend into chaos.

Musi Yu stood charred and blackened in the sky, hovering as he glanced down at Zhang Lie. His eyes were filled with killing intent and hatred; there was no one in the world he loathed more.

"I'll kill you, tear your body to pieces, and hang your head on a parapet! I'll kill you, I'll kill you!"

Zhang Lie rubbed his ears. "I'm happy to see you try. You've been screaming that you'll kill me for quite a while, but I'm still standing here hale and hearty, aren't I? I'm tired of hearing your words—come, strike at me!"

Despite being incensed by Zhang Lie, he knew he would have to maintain his rationality while facing him. Zhang Lie was a very troublesome opponent; he was only a second-realm hunter, but his strength wasn't far below Musi Yu's own.

That curious technique had caused Musi Yu's strongest attack to whiff. If not for his familiarity with [Black Sun], the explosion from the black flame alone could have taken his life. This time around, Musi Yu darted out of that unusual gravitational field that Zhang Lie had created, his polearm trailing a wave of black flame, before swinging it down on Zhang Lie. "[Blackflame Sweep]!"

Zhang Lie defended in the same manner as before, summoning two runic tablets to surround Musi Yu. Musi Yu dodged the moment he saw the tablets, but Zhang Lie then summoned a third right on

top of Musi Yu's head. The flames on his polearm shrank, and even the strength of his genetic energy seemed to drop by one whole level. The skies grew brighter.

While traveling through the second realm with Hong Xi, Zhang Lie had continued his investigation into the dragonturtle's four runic tablets, and he found that the third runic tablet of the dragonturtle had the ability to suppress energy of all kinds.

Zhang Lie raised his arm again, summoning the final of the four runic tablets from the dragonturtle. As Musi Yu recoiled in surprise, the fourth tablet crashed down onto him.

Musi Yu tried to dodge, but he found his body frozen. He could only watch on as the fourth tablet fell onto his head—and then it seemed as though everything around him was moving much more quickly than before.

Leaves dropped like stones to the ground; everyone seemed to be talking at a rapid clip. He suddenly realized that it was he who had slowed down, not others who had sped up.

### Chapter 368: Musi Yu's Death

But how could Musi Yu have lost against Zhang Lie?! That was impossible!

And yet they could all see Zhang Lie standing hale and unharmed, while Musi Yu, warlord of the third realm, had been beaten to a pulp. Was Zhang Lie too strong, or was the warlord of the third realm too weak?

"I can't believe this..."

Those who had proclaimed Zhang Lie's imminent loss felt as though they had just been slapped, but the other spectators didn't really mind. After all, just about no one present had thought well of Zhang Lie's chances.

"Could this be the power of limit fragments?"

That was the only explanation the flummoxed crowd could think of.

After all, Musi Yu was a warlord of the third realm, one who had defeated a near-impossible number of enemies to get to his position. The only wildcard was the theory of limit fragments that Zhang Lie had developed.

The spectators' eyes burned with greed. If that were the case, if they could get these limit fragments, they too could possess strength on par with Zhang Lie's!

Of course, greedy though they were, none of them dared lay a hand on Zhang Lie. If Zhang Lie were able to defeat even a third-realm warlord without suffering any injuries, he could easily do the same to them.

Once news of Musi Yu's defeat spread, the price of these limit-breaking potions was bound to at least double.

Zhang Lie walked up to Musi Yu; the third-realm warlord began to beg. "Please, don't kill me. I'll hand over anything you want, I'll be your dog—but please, don't take my life!"

What was honor and reputation in comparison to one's life? Musi Yu would do all that he could to live on. He would spread his legs for the sura king, and he would even beg for mercy in front of an enemy who had slaughtered his clan.

Zhang Lie gave Musi Yu a rough kick, forcing a gasp of pain out of him.

"You need a hound, don't you? I'll be your most loyal, most obedient hound, and I'll bite whoever you need me to. I'm a third-realm warlord, and your enemies will be nothing in front of me." Musi Yu refused to give up. He clutched Zhang Lie's legs and began licking his boots, but Zhang Lie kicked him aside again.

Musi Yu racked his brains and shouted once more, "Please, wait! Don't you want [Black Sun]? As I've told you, [Black Sun] and [Eclipse] form two parts of a whole, cohesive technique. If you let me live, I'll hand you the entirety of [Black Sun]!"

Musi Yu regretted provoking Zhang Lie, not knowing just how frightening his strength was. Zhang Lie seemed to be all but undefeatable in the second realm. Musi Yu suspected that the only being that could challenge him here was the legendary asura.

He had to live, no matter the cost. As long as he was able to survive, he would hand Zhang Lie a half-true, half-fabricated manual of [Black Sun]. While Zhang Lie was stuck trying to learn [Black Sun], he would have an opportunity to strike back.

"There's no need. I have a simpler, more direct method." Zhang Lie pressed a hand on the back of his head, activated a soulshard, and sent Whitey to probe the depths of his mind.

The heavily wounded Musi Yu was unable to resist the intrusion, and Whitey quickly bundled up all the treasures in his mind. Once Whitey returned to Zhang Lie, Zhang Lie squeezed Musi Yu's head tightly, causing it to burst open like an exploded watermelon.

Zhang Lie closed his eyes as he processed Whitey's finds: the entirety of [Black Sun], along with some extensions that Musi Yu had developed, [Netherworld Thrust], [Blackflame Wings], and other miscellaneous techniques.

Many were upgraded versions of the techniques that he had seen the members of the Musi clan use.

"Hasn't Musi Yu been hiding too much from his clan?"

Musi Yu refused to hand down his strongest techniques even to his own son. The techniques which he had imparted to the Musi clan were all watered-down versions of his own, far weaker than those in Musi Yu's possession.

Perhaps it was those who had betrayed others who felt most keenly the fear of being betrayed. And yet, in a twist of karmic retribution, despite all his precautions, Musi Yu had been betrayed by an acquaintance he considered a friend.

Included among the cache of techniques was Musi Yu's trump card, the fusion of Zhang Lie's [Black Sun] with his body. After glancing at it, Zhang Lie frowned. This wasn't a technique he wanted to learn; the side effects were outlandish. However, there were quite a few techniques that both Hong Xi and Hong Xiao could benefit from.

Last were the soulshards. Musi Yu seemed unusually poor; there was nothing that struck Zhang Lie's fancy except for a storage-type soulshard. Before he could be entirely disappointed, however, he found something within Musi Yu's storage that caused his eyes to bulge.

"What's this doing here?!"

Zhang Lie was looking at a fragment of a treasure map, one stitched out of some dark green canvas. Ancient and mysterious, it seemed as though it would lead to some fantastic treasure.

Zhang Lie reacted with such surprise because he had seen a fragment of the map before, and it was because of this fragment that an important person had left him in his past life. Unfortunately for the Zhang Lie of the past, he had been nothing more than a regular hunter. Even to his death, he didn't know who the mastermind who had orchestrated his downfall could be.

Now that he had chanced upon this fragment again, Zhang Lie clenched his fists tightly. He would find the culprit; he wouldn't let the tragedy of the past occur once more!

With his spoils in tow, Zhang Lie returned to the Zenith Dojo, preparing to meld the effects of [Black Sun] and [Eclipse].

#### Chapter 369: Searching For His Concubine

To the esteemed king of the sura:

I apologize for hiding my identity for so long. I'm a warlord of the third realm who descended to the second realm in search of revenge.

An ill stroke of luck deposited me in the heart of the sura lands, and I became your concubine. My intention was to take advantage of you to obtain treatment for my injuries, but as I interacted with you day after day, I gradually developed feelings for you. As a human, as a warlord, I am an enemy of your kind, and you of mine, but my feelings for you are genuine.

However, with my enemy yet dead, with my revenge yet sought, I have no choice but to depart. I don't dare to tell you this in person, and I hope you won't blame me for my decision upon reading this letter. If you are willing to accept me after I succeed in my revenge, I hope to remain your concubine.

Yours truly,

Musi Yu

With trembling fingers, the sura king glanced at the letter that Musi Yu had left him.

"Darling, darling, how could you have been so muddle-headed!" The sura king's cries rumbled through the entire palace. "Darling, what would I do without you? How could you bear to leave me without a word?"

He sighed, desolate, while the sura elder watched on in disbelief and exasperation. The sura king was fascinated by humans, and he insisted on a human consort. Not only that, he had become besotted with a male human! Could his mind have gone haywire after all the sex he had been having?! If not for the sura king's ridiculous strength which no one could overcome, the sura elder would have staged a rebellion long ago.

"Your highness, hasn't your concubine promised to return?" the sura elder hedged.

The sura king suddenly stood up. "No. I can't wait, I have to find him—I have to reclaim my precious concubine!"

His eyes were resolute and determined. "I won't let any of my concubines leave me. Even if he has to die, he'll do so on my bed!"

The sura elder sighed. "I left a tracker on his body that may help you, your highness."

The sura king's eyes widened. "Truly?"

"Yes, your highness." The sura elder wouldn't leave an unidentified male as the emperor's consort without taking some precautions. He wasn't worried about the sura king given how strong he was, but he had left a small tracker in the man's body as a contingency. To his surprise, it had actually come in handy.

The sura king waved an arm. "Have an army head out in search of my beloved concubine!"

Back in the Zenith Dojo, Zhang Lie retrieved the manual of [Black Sun] that he had obtained. [Black Sun] and [Eclipse] were two mirrored techniques, two halves of a whole. Zhang Lie spent two weeks learning [Black Sun] at an introductory level.

Behind him now was a wheel of black sun, just like the one that had appeared behind Musi Yu. When he first activated [Black Sun] in its entirety, [Eclipse] suddenly flared up, activating automatically by his feet. The two techniques resonated with each other, seemingly about to combine even without any input from Zhang Lie himself.

Zhang Lie sat down, circulating the flames of [Black Sun] through the left half of his body, and the moonlight of [Eclipse] through the right. The energies from both techniques coalesced in his genetic core. Instead of clashing with each other, they melded into one united whole.

The flames of the black sun, combined with the pure-white beams of moonlight, swirled around each other like yin and yang. The black flames granted the moonlight strength, and the moonlight served as fuel for the black flames. The two techniques supported and fed into each other in cohesive harmony.

To his surprise, upon combining the two techniques, Zhang Lie found that his physical strength had improved as a result, an augmentation even more impressive than when his framework had evolved into its third form.

The domain of [Eclipse] had grown far larger than before, and its effect had been increased dramatically, as had the augmentation provided by [Black Sun].

"No wonder Musi Yu had been seeking this technique for so long..."

This combination technique would need a new name; the original name hadn't been preserved in either the Eclipse Sage's nor Musi Yu's memories. Given that it was a combination of [Black Sun] and [Eclipse], Zhang Lie named it [Syzygy].

Pleased with his progress, Zhang Lie then turned to investigating the fragment of a treasure map he had found in Musi Yu's possession. Unfortunately, he wasn't successful—there weren't any obvious landmarks that the treasure map seemed to point to.

He urgently wanted to head to the third realm and resolve the issues from his past life, but he knew waiting was the logical choice. Even if he were to ascend to the third realm immediately, he wouldn't be able to accomplish anything with just the clues he had now, and he would even startle his target.

Suddenly, his transceiver beeped. Sun Mengmeng and the others had returned from their hunt, and they had even found an herb that would be necessary for the peak-grade limit-breaking potion. Zhang Lie rushed out of his study, leaving the treasure map behind.

The sura elder pointed at a furrow on the ground. "This was where your concubine vanished, your highness!"

The sura king scooped up a handful of earth. "How could he have vanished? Didn't you leave a tracker on his body?"

"I'm not sure, your highness." The sura elder didn't dare say that the most likely reason was that Musi Yu had died.

The sura king frowned. "I sense a trace of another lifeform around."

Before the sura elder could speak, the sura king had already vanished from sight. He sighed, "You really can do whatever you want if you're strong..."

Wang Yanyi and the other members of the Tianji Council, who had just left Qi, suddenly found a sura standing in front of them. Their eyes bulged; the sura was so massive that all the others they had seen seemed malnourished in comparison.

"What? The sura are here! Run!"

Wang Yanyi and the others tried to flee back toward Qi, but the sura king forced them all to the ground before they could.

The sura king clucked his tongue. "How pretty you all look. I'm very upset that I can't find my beloved concubine, so I think I'll take it out on you."

"No, no, nooooo!" The cries of Wang Yanyi and the other members of the council echoed through the skies.

### Chapter 370: The Sura King Arrives

Except for Wang Yanyi, who was able to defend himself against the sura king's skilled fighters, the hunters of the Tianji Council were taken down immediately. Wang Yanyi naturally couldn't stand against the onslaught of the sura king and his fighters alone, and he too was quickly subdued.

"Aaargh!" Wang Yanyi struggled as he begged for mercy, his cries echoing in the air. Beside him were the corpses of his companions, each of them twisted into grotesque shapes.

By the other side of the party, a few members of the sura were roasting a human woman. The sura king didn't like women, so the female members of Wang Yanyi's party all became food instead.

The sura elder examined Wang Yanyi. "That human doesn't look like he's doing well. Feed him some medicine; we have a lot of questions, and he can't die just yet."

One of the sura nodded and walked over with an herbal concoction. When he saw the sura, Wang Yanyi twisted his head and clamped his mouth shut. Unfortunately, his companions had all died, and he was the only one left.

The sura frowned and handed the bowl to the sura king, who poured it directly into his anus as he continued to thrust into Wang Yanyi's body. Pain exploded in the lower half of Wang Yanyi's body as it underwent a rapid cycle of healing and bruising, leaving Wang Yanyi's mind battered and unguarded.

His pained cries diminished; his throat was too sore to keep it up. He fled inside his mind to escape the litany of pain. After an interminable amount of time, Wang Yanyi's mind and body reached a breaking point. If this were to continue, he would descend into madness.

Only then did the sura king finally let go of Wang Yanyi's armor with an annoyed expression on his face. He lay paralyzed on the ground, his eyes glassy, as though he were nothing more than a used rag.

The sura king asked, "Where's my beloved concubine?"

Wang Yanyi didn't respond. He was the splitting image of a breathing corpse.

The sura elder suggested, "Your highness, could he have died?"

The sura king waved a hand. "I've had sex with more humans than you've eaten. He's only on the edge of madness; with a little force, we can squeeze everything we want out of him.

The sura elder's mouth spasmed as he bowed and retreated.

The sura king kicked Wang Yanyi's limp body. "If you can answer all my questions, I'll give you a painless death. Now, tell me: where's my concubine?!"

"I don't know, I really don't know, I don't..."

The sura elder shook his head. "Your highness, I think you've broken the human."

The sura king frowned. "Surely not—I had everything under control the whole time!"

This time, the mouths of all the sura present began to spasm. They glanced around at the contorted, grotesque bodies lying around the field, the bodies that their king had allegedly had under control. Except for that human, Musi Yu, there were hardly any hunters who would be able to survive the sura king's advances.

The sura elder suggested again, "Your highness, I believe this human may be unaware of who your concubine is."

The sura king nodded. "Indeed. Human, do you know where Musi Yu is?"

"Musi Yu, the warlord of the third realm? He's dead."

"What?!" Rage exploded from the sura king, tinging the skies with red as a sea of blood seemed to manifest all around him.

Wang Yanyi curled into a small ball.

"Tell me! Who was it who dared to kill my concubine?!"

"The champion of the Void Cup, Zhang Lie!"

"Where is he?"

"The human city of Qi."

The sura king's eyes brightened. "A city of humans!"

As he walked out of a training chamber, Zhang Lie felt a sudden chill pricking his neck as he headed to meet with Sun Mengmeng. "I heard you found one of the herbs that I needed!"

Sun Mengmeng and the other members of Team Zenith all seemed rather bedraggled, with visible wounds all over their bodies. "Yes, Captain!"

Sun Mengmeng handed him an ornate box. As he opened it, a chilly wind blew, and the entire room was covered with a thin layer of frost.

A crystalline fruit that looked like an ice cube lay within, giving off a chilly aura that quickly spread throughout the room.

"Indeed, a crystal rime fruit!" Zhang Lie expected that it would be one of the primary ingredients in Potion #4. "Thank you for your hard work—this surely couldn't have been easy to retrieve."

Zhang Lie asked about what they had encountered during their trip, and the members of Team Zenith regaled him with their experiences. Fortunately, none of them had suffered a debilitating injury, and the success of their expedition washed away any lingering pain from their wounds.

Zhang Lie pocketed the fruit and brought out several soulshards and techniques that he had taken from Musi Yu's body. "Right, I obtained some treasures as well. Have a look at these, and pick out what you like."

After distributing the soulshards and techniques around,

Zhang Lie headed to the training chamber in which the Hong siblings were cultivating. After what had happened between the Hong and Musi clans, the Hong siblings cultivated with their life on the line, understanding that they would need overwhelming strength to protect each other.

Zhang Lie smiled benevolently at them. "You don't need to train so hard. Calm down and take it easy; your bodies need breaks too."

The Hong siblings hurriedly stopped their cultivation and bowed down to him. "Master!"

"How's your progress been so far?"

Hong Xiao replied, "I managed the foundational breakthrough in the dimensional world."

Hong Xi nodded. "I've had significant improvement with regards to [Eclipse] as well."

"Good, very good. I have a big gift for you. Close your eyes." Zhang Lie extended a finger and touched it to the two siblings' foreheads sequentially, transmitting them [Black Sun] and its corresponding techniques.

When they processed the parcels of information that Zhang Lie transmitted their way, their eyes turned round. "This is—"

Hong Xi gasped in surprise. "Isn't [Black Sun] the technique used by members of the Musi clan?!"

Zhang Lie smiled. "Do you like Musi Yu's present to you two?"

Musi Yu, warlord of the third realm?! That fellow would hardly send the two of them a gift, considering he was the mastermind behind the Hong clan's downfall. Hong Xiao and Hong Xi glanced at each other, then simultaneously looked toward Zhang Lie.

It seemed unlikely, but if anyone could do it, it was their master.

"Master, did you kill Musi Yu?"

Zhang Lie grinned. "Do you like this gift?"

Hong Xi and Hong Xiao knelt down on the floor simultaneously, causing Zhang Lie to jump up in surprise. "What's the matter?"

"I, Hong Xiao—"

"—and I, Hong Xi," the two siblings intoned, "kowtow to the savior who has avenged the Hong clan!"