

## Nobel Ruler 511

### Chapter 511: Defense

*She's determined to mess with me?* Chu Liuyue knitted her brows undetectably as she glanced at Yang Qin'er. *Her young and pretty face is filled with sincerity and slight fear as if she's genuinely worried about me. However, we don't know each other, so where did her worry and sincerity come from?*

Chu Liuyue's lips curved up, and she smiled in an even more sincere and polite manner. "Thank you for your goodwill, but I really can't go with you. I appreciate your intentions."

Disappointment rapidly flashed across Yang Qin'er's face.

But since Chu Liuyue was so persistent, Yang Qin'er knew that she couldn't convince her. Thus, she could only force a smile and say, "Alright then. I wish you all the best, Ms. Chu."

The skinny man coldly glanced at Chu Liuyue, and his face was filled with intense displeasure. "You don't know what's good for you!"

He didn't lower his voice, and everyone present heard him clearly.

Chu Liuyue smiled slightly and didn't think much of it as she turned around to leave.

"Hey, you—" The skinny man immediately felt that he was being ignored as he raised his hand toward Chu Liuyue and was about to continue scolding her. However, Yang Qin'er stopped him.

“Senior Brother, since it’s inconvenient for her, let’s not force her,” said Yang Qin’er gently as she pressed the skinny man’s hand down.

Seeing that Chu Liuyue had already walked far away without feeling burdened, the man with a mustache finally couldn’t help but grunt. “She really thinks that she’s incredible after winning a competition. Now, she doesn’t care about anyone else.”

*We are from the Purple Xiao Sword Sect, and it’s always other people wanting to suck up to us. When have we ever been rejected, not to mention twice?! It even happened in front of Yang Qin’er. How humiliating.*

Yang Qin’er smiled and hid her disappointment. “Senior Brother, let’s go. Didn’t you say that that sword is most likely the legendary Long Yuan Sword?”

Upon hearing this, the two men’s attention was indeed averted as their faces were filled with unconcealable excitement.

“That’s right! To be able to stay in the Tianling God Realm and have such powers... There’s only the legendary Long Yuan Sword!” said the skinny man.

“Senior Uncle has long said that there would be all sorts of fateful treasures here, but I didn’t expect... This is the sword the ancestor used back then!” The mustached man looked up at the gigantic black sword between heaven and earth, and his eyes were filled with envy and admiration. “Our Purple Xiao Sword Sect specializes in sword techniques, and we have all sorts of good swords, especially Master... He has the Qing Zhong Sword—which is formidable—but compared to this Long Yuan Sword, it’s still lacking in many ways...”

Actually, it wasn't just lacking in many ways. They couldn't even be compared!

A legendary item like the Long Yuan Sword was a unique treasure in the world. Being able to see it personally made their trip worthwhile.

Yang Qin'er's eyes glowed. "I heard some rumors about this Long Yuan Sword, but there's something I don't understand... The ancestor has already passed on, and this Long Yuan Sword no longer has an owner. But even after so many years, why did nobody... Why did nobody from Tianling's royal family retrieve it? Isn't it a waste to leave it here like this?"

When she finished her sentence, the two men laughed out loud.

"Qin'er, you only know one thing and not the other. This Long Yuan Sword is a legendary weapon, and it already has a sword soul. Even if the ancestor isn't around, it can't randomly recognize someone as its master!"

Yang Qin'er paused. "I see..."

"This Long Yuan Sword is very heavy, and rumors have it that 1,000 soldiers couldn't lift it when they acted together after the ancestor purposely threw it to them. One has to know that the soldiers who could follow the ancestor weren't ordinary people! This just shows how incredible the Long Yuan Sword is!" said the skinny man as he smiled and shook his head with a sigh.

Yang Qin'er looked at the Long Yuan Sword and muttered, "...I wonder who can keep this Long Yuan Sword..."

"Haha! The people from Tianling's royal family have the ancestor's bloodline, but they couldn't succeed in the past thousand years, let alone others. Qin'er, we shouldn't think about it anymore. The treasure-

gathering compass states that there are treasures surrounding the Long Yuan Sword. Let's hurry up and get there!"

Yang Qin'er smiled slightly and nodded. "Sure."

...

Chu Liuyue walked forward alone.

Even though she was quite far away from Yang Qin'er and the rest, it was obvious that they were heading toward the Long Yuan Sword. However, she didn't know if they were going for the legendary fiend's skeleton.

"Can you detect what legendary fiend that skeleton belongs to now?" asked Chu Liuyue in her heart.

"Not yet. The Long Yuan Sword has completely suppressed it, and it didn't leave any gap at all." The legendary three-eyed eagle's voice became much more solemn. "However... I detect a Heavenly Dao aura."

Chu Liuyue was shocked. "Heavenly Dao?! Could it be the Heavenly Dao the ancestor summoned back then?"

"Not completely. This Heavenly Dao's aura is very weak; there should be a portion of it dispersed elsewhere."

Chu Liuyue nodded. *This is the same as what the secret scroll said. This is kind of strange. The Heavenly Dao is untouchable to ordinary people, but I already have two in my body. One came from the Ultimate Jingshen, while the other came from the agreement with the legendary three-eyed eagle.*

However, these powers didn't cause much commotion in her body. They didn't even seem to exist.

On the other side, Yang Qin'er and the rest had just reached a place.

*Choo!*

A sword aura suddenly erupted.

"I'll do it!" yelled the skinny man, and the longsword in his hand flew out. He was planning to take on the black sword aura head-on!

*Ding!*

The two sword auras directly clashed with each other and produced a crisp sword sound.

The black sword's aura suddenly stopped.

A delighted smile was seen on the skinny man's face, but the smile stiffened the next moment. This was because the strength within the black sword aura had far exceeded his expectations.

*Buzz... buzz!*

When the black sword aura hit the tip of his sword, his sword started shaking uncontrollably in his hands.

Very quickly, even his arm started shaking.

*Poof!*

The part between his thumb and index finger suddenly broke open, and blood flowed out.

It was just the Long Yuan Sword's sword aura, but it had such frightening and harsh sword intent!

The overwhelmingly sharp aura was like an invisible net that completely wrapped around the skinny man.

*Kacha!*

His sword actually cracked.

"Quickly, evacuate!" He was stunned as he hollered and immediately went backward.

Yang Qin'er hurriedly left.

The mustached man held his sword and rushed forward.

A wide sword directly slashed the sword aura, but the next moment, his wide sword was directly repelled.

He even staggered a few steps back and spat out blood.

Not even in the blink of an eye, the two men were injured.

The sword in the skinny man's hands directly broke.

*Hong!*

The few people barely managed to avoid the black sword aura as it eventually nailed itself to the ground.

The dry ground erupted, and a big pit was formed by the horrifying force.

The three of them were scarred, and their faces were filled with horror. *One sword aura... is actually so frightening!*

“Quickly, look! Chu Liuyue actually stopped that sword aura!” Yang Qin’er looked up and suddenly gasped.

The two men looked over, and they indeed saw the black sword aura suddenly disappear not far in front of Chu Liuyue.

Silver light slowly flowed before her body.

“T-that’s a crystal barrier?! How is that possible!”

### **Chapter 512: Serious?**

*That circular transparent barrier is indeed a crystal barrier, but why can it stop this terrifying sword aura?*

It wasn’t that they had never seen a crystal barrier before, but it was impossible for that thing to have such good defense. After all, the two of them had to join hands in order to resist that sword aura forcefully.

The three of them exchanged glances. Other than Yang Qin’er—who looked slightly better—the other two were disheveled.

The mustached man was injured, and the corner of his mouth had bloodstains. The skinny man was even worse as his entire sword was destroyed.

As Purple Xiao Sword Sect disciples, they were best at using swords. Now that his sword was gone, it undoubtedly had a great impact on him.



“W-what should we do...” The skinny man retracted his gaze and looked at his right hand dazedly.

This was a very good sword, but it was only left with a sword handle now, looking very miserable.

*A sword aura has pushed us to this state. If we continue walking...*

“No wonder there are so many human bones...” Yang Qin’er looked worried. “It seems like they were all hurt by the sword aura.”

The few of them fell silent, and their previous ambitions fell into nothingness.

Reality was forever the cruelest thing.

“There definitely won’t be only one sword aura. This is the Long Yuan Sword’s territory. This sword aura... is its warning!” The mustached man looked at the Long Yuan Sword, and his previous excitement and hope had completely disappeared, leaving behind a face filled with anxiety, uneasiness, and deeply entrenched horror.

“The further we go, the more dangerous it’ll be. We might even—” *Die!*

Everyone knew this without saying it.

*Hong!*

An explosion sound was heard, but it was the sword aura in front of Chu Liuyue dispersing.

“Why is Chu Liuyue so safe?” asked Yang Qin’er as if she were muttering to herself. “I’ve used crystal barriers before, but... they seem different from hers.”

The two men exchanged glances. Actually, they could see it too.

*How can an average crystal barrier be so powerful? Her crystal barrier definitely has something amiss.*

Yang Qin’er took out bandages and carefully helped the skinny man wrap his hand as her eyes turned red. “Senior Brothers, all of you got injured because of me... If only I’m as good as Chu Liuyue, that would be great.”

Her words reminded the two men.

“How is she good? Only her crystal barrier is good!” The mustached man felt frustrated and even a little angry. “It’s no wonder she refused to follow us no matter what. It’s because of this.”

“Didn’t they say that Chu Liuyue had an ordinary background? Why does she have such a powerful Yuan instrument?” The skinny man stared closely at Chu Liuyue. Upon seeing her retract her crystal barrier, his expression changed. “Does she have some powerful background?”

Yang Qin’er thought for a while. “I think... I think someone said that she’s related to Dragon Teeth Mountain’s Young Master Jian.”

“Jian Fengchi?” When the two men said this name, they did it with a tinge of contempt and jealousy.

“Jian Fengchi is nothing much; he just has a good background! However, our Purple Xiao Sword Sect isn’t afraid of his Dragon Teeth Mountain!” said the skinny man as he glanced at the mustached man. “Since we’re here, how can we just go back like this?”

The mustached man nodded undetectably. “We must think of a way—”

...

Chu Liuyue put away her item, and the moment she walked two steps, she noticed some movements from the side.

She instantly turned around and saw the trio walking toward her.

Compared to before, they looked much more disheveled. It was obvious that they had suffered.

“Ms. Chu, we have something to discuss with you,” said Yang Qin’er softly. She looked apprehensive as if talking loudly would scare her.

Chu Liuyue didn’t say anything and just raised her chin.

Yang Qin’er clasped her hands together and nervously asked, “W-we saw you stopping the sword aura earlier, s-so... We want to ask if you can help us?”

Chu Liuyue had already guessed their intentions, but she still asked, "Help you with what?"

Yang Qin'er paused. "Um... Can you bring us along? Don't worry; we won't let you help us for free. If you can bring us to avoid all of the sword aura, we'll definitely repay you properly! When we find any treasures, you can pick first! After we go out, we'll thank you greatly. W-what do you think of this?"

The skinny man at the side added, "We, from the Purple Xiao Sword Sect, always make good on our words!"

Chu Liuyue almost burst out laughing. *What a thick face! I intentionally asked that to see how thick-skinned these people were, but I didn't actually expect them to say this. They are clearly begging me, but their attitude is so arrogant that it seems as though they are giving me something.*

She smiled as usual, but her smiling intent didn't reach her eyes. "I believe I've made myself very clear earlier. It's inconvenient for me to go with you, so... Forget it."

The few of them were dazed. They never expected that Chu Liuyue would still refuse to help them after they willingly set such conditions. Besides, they even mentioned the Purple Xiao Sword Sect.

She did not even care about them.

The mustached man's expression turned ugly. "Ms. Chu, are you sure? We previously took the initiative to help you, so isn't it inappropriate for you to do this now?"

Chu Liuyue retorted, "But I didn't beg you to help me just now, right? Besides, I didn't accept your 'help,' so... It's not like I owe you, right?"

That mustached man suddenly sneered. "The people that Jian Fengchi brings are indeed as selfish as him! If you want to do this the hard way, don't blame us for being merciless!"

The smile on Chu Liuyue's gradually fell. Like ice that just froze, her eyes had faint cold intent that was chilling to the bone. "Are you serious?"

### **Chapter 513: Heavenly Pit**

*It's fine that they are speaking ill of Jian Fengchi, but it's not okay if they bring me into it!*

The mustached man was startled by Chu Liuyue, and he grew increasingly uneasy.

But they then thought about how any of the three of them could easily defeat Chu Liuyue, not to mention if they joined forces.

*Against the three of us, Chu Liuyue is asking for death! Besides, Jian Fengchi isn't present here. There's nothing that we have to be afraid of!*

Yang Qin'er refused to give up. "Ms. Chu, we bear no ill will. We just wanted to ask you for a favor... Both of my senior brothers are injured..."

"What do their injuries have to do with me?" Chu Liuyue cut her off impatiently. "If memory serves me right, you took the backseat when the two of them were fighting off the sword aura."

Yang Qin'er's expression changed. She didn't expect Chu Liuyue to see that!

"You're their junior sister, but even you aren't helping them. Therefore, why should I? Do I look that... stupid?" Chu Liuyue said.

She spoke slowly and evenly, but her words were cutting to the trio.

Yang Qin'er's face turned red as her eyes filled with tears. "I... I..."

This brought up the two men's protective instincts.

The skinny, tall man yelled at Chu Liuyue. "What do you know?! It was an urgent situation. She only backed away because we told her to; otherwise, the three of us would be hurt now! Chu Liuyue, don't try to sow discord!"

Yang Qin'er held him back. "Senior Brothers, it's all my fault... Don't get angry..."

*Since they are stupid and tired of living, I can't be bothered with them.* Chu Liuyue shrugged. "Say whatever you want. I have things to get done, so I'll take my leave first."

With that, Chu Liuyue tried to walk around them.

The mustached man blocked her way with a dark face. "Who said you could leave?"

Chu Liuyue looked up at the man and smiled.

Her nonchalant smile infuriated the mustached man. He raised his sword and stabbed it toward Chu Liuyue!

“I’ll teach you today that there are some people that you cannot trifle with!” With that, he turned his wrist, and the tip stabbed toward Chu Liuyue’s left hand!

It was targeting the crystal barrier!

Chu Liuyue’s eyes turned colder as she threw her dagger out with her right hand!

*Clink!*

The broadsword was easily knocked aside by the dagger!

The mustached man’s hand shook violently as he felt his palm go numb!

“Outrageous!” The skinny man saw this and struck!

He had lost his sword and had been severely weakened, but even so, his ability as a beginner stage-six warrior was more than enough to deal with a stage-three warrior.

“Eight Impact Punch!” he cried out, clenching his fists as he aimed for Chu Liuyue’s lower back!

The punch’s force was evident from the breeze that could be felt!

Chu Liuyue leaped up and onto the mustached man’s chest! Before he could react, she grabbed his arms and forcefully turned him!

The mustached man was now Chu Liuyue’s shield!

The skinny man wanted to retract his attack, but doing so would result in severe backlash!

The mustached man had no choice but to take the hit!

His right hand was completely numb, so he could only use his left hand against Chu Liuyue as he reached for her neck!

At this moment, Chu Liuyue elbowed him! It landed heavily on the mustached man’s ribs!

He bent over in pain, frustrated as murderous thoughts flashed across his mind!

However, Chu Liuyue was faster! She struck with her arm, and it almost severed his right wrist!



The broadsword in the mustached man's hand immediately dropped to the ground!

Yang Qin'er knew that the odds weren't in their favor, so she was about to come forward!

Chu Liuyue took the chance to break free of the mustached man's control as she turned and kicked him!

The mustached man landed on the skinny man! The two collided with each other!

Chu Liuyue curled her toes, and the broadsword landed in her hands!

Yang Qin'er wanted to stop, but Chu Liuyue's wry smile made her feel guilty. Thus, she drew the sword at her waist and rushed toward Chu Liuyue with gritted teeth.

But Chu Liuyue refused to waste any time on her and struck first!

The broadsword was extremely heavy, but Chu Liuyue made it seem like it barely weighed anything.

After several training sessions with the water droplet, her strength had greatly exceeded her expectations.

In the next instant, she stepped up and moved Yang Qin'er's sword away from her before the latter could circulate her force!

Yang Qin'er cried out in pain, and a cut appeared on her hands!

Chu Liuyue immediately backed away, not engaging any further! The force in her body quickly welled up.

To her surprise, Chu Liuyue found that she had gotten even faster.

The surrounding Heaven and Earth Force swept into her body and made ripples!

In one breath, she ran in the direction of the Long Yuan Sword!

Yang Qin'er wanted to run after her, but she felt threatened by the heavy and authoritative aura of the Long Yuan Sword that she saw.

She looked around before she rushed over to the pair. "Senior Brothers, Qin'er was useless and was unable to catch up with her..."

She subtly displayed the cut on her arm for the pair to see.

Without any surprise, their hatred for Chu Liuyue grew stronger.

"This Chu Liuyue is really sly! If we weren't injured by the sword aura, we never would've let her get away!" said the mustached man with hatred as he spat out a mouthful of blood.

The skinny man felt guilty for injuring his peer and pinned all the blame on Chu Liuyue. "...The next time we see her, we'll show her!"

Yang Qin'er lowered her eyes as disdain flashed across them. She didn't exert her full force since she had concerns, but she didn't expect the two of them to be this useful given their cultivation level.

Even though the disciples of such formal clans were outstanding, they weren't necessarily good in battle. They were good enough for competitions and sparring, but they would be at a disadvantage when compared to people like Chu Liuyue, who fought for their lives.

She coughed and gently reminded them, "Senior Brothers, now that she's gone... Shall we chase after her?"

The pair remained silent. If it were before, they would agree to it. But now... they felt the danger posed by the Long Yuan Sword.

After a while, the mustached man spoke up. "We're all injured, so why don't we all rest here and continue after we're back to our peak form."

The skinny man agreed immediately.

Yang Qin'er felt indignant, but she couldn't refuse and had no choice but to comply.

On the other side, Chu Liuyue smoothly proceeded onward with the crystal barrier's help as she closed in on the Long Yuan Sword!

When she got nearer, she finally discovered that the Long Yuan Sword was surrounded by a large heavenly pit!

*Woo woo!*

Strong winds blew by, and a strong sense of tragic authority enveloped the area!

#### **Chapter 514: Rumors Abound**

There were ravines scattered within the pit. Countless rays of the black sword aura collided in the area, leaving marks on the cold soil and rocks.

It was startling to look at from above.

Chu Liuyue sucked in her breath. *The Long Yuan Sword has been here for thousands of years. Perhaps the heavenly pit is a result of the sword aura accumulating for centuries! Even from the side, I can feel the towering sword aura!*

More importantly, it was only until she got here that Chu Liuyue discovered that the Long Yuan Sword she saw from afar was only a small portion of the sword body!

Even the exposed portion in the heavenly pit seemed to be less than half of the entire sword! It was majestic and incomparable!

Thousands of years of rain and shine hadn't left any marks on the sword's black body.

Upon closer inspection, it was razor-sharp like a brand-new sword!

The pressure came from the top!

Chu Liuyue scrutinized this legendary sword. The sword that created the Tianling Dynasty... The founder's sword!

Complicated emotions welled up in her—admiration, respect, marvel...

Even though she was standing here as an outsider, she knew... This was her ancestor! At this thought, blood seemed to course through her body faster as her heart beat wildly.

"The legendary fiend's skeleton is beneath the Long Yuan Sword!" The legendary three-eyed eagle's voice suddenly sounded.

Chu Liuyue instantly came to her senses and looked down.

There was nothing else in the heavenly pit other than the remaining half of the Long Yuan Sword that was embedded in the ground.

Chu Liuyue asked with a frown, "You said 'beneath the Long Yuan Sword...' It can't be underground, right?"

The legendary three-eyed eagle asked. "You only know now?"

"...How am I supposed to get down?! I can't create a tunnel on the ground, not to mention the sword aura that I can't get past!" Chu Liuyue said.

She was serious. With all the rays of sword aura, she would be filled with holes the instant she tried to go down!

Even with the crystal barrier, she couldn't guarantee that she would be able to hold up against the attacks of thousands of sword aura rays!

The legendary three-eyed eagle said, "I'll protect you."

Chu Liuyue paused. "...So you mean that you were just watching this whole time? Even though you could deal with the sword aura?"

"Since contracting with me, weren't you afraid that your foundation wouldn't be firm given your rapid advancement and wanted a chance to test it out?" The legendary three-eyed eagle said matter-of-factly, "This is quite the rare opportunity, no?"

Chu Liuyue was speechless, and she felt her head throb. *Why didn't anyone tell me that legendary fiends can be psychos too?*

"What, you don't like it?" asked the legendary three-eyed eagle.

Chu Liuyue clenched her teeth. "I love it! I love it beyond words!"

The legendary three-eyed eagle nodded contentedly before it continued speaking somberly. "Prepare yourself."

Chu Liuyue immediately focused and raised her alertness! *Since I've promised the legendary three-eyed eagle that I would reconstruct its body, I have to make this trip!*

The next instant, a black illusory figure appeared before Chu Liuyue! Its wings were wrapped around one another, and the illusory figure had its eyes closed with an imposing aura!

It was the legendary three-eyed eagle!

*Huala!*

It spread its massive wings, and Chu Liuyue felt the sky before her dim!

She stared closely at the illusory figure. *It's clearly more substantial than it previously was! I can even see the feathers on it!*

She felt a familiar aura from the illusory figure, and she muttered, "This is... The energy of the Heavenly Dao?"

The legendary three-eyed eagle suddenly opened its eyes! Its eyes were blood red, but the bloodthirsty aura had subsided almost entirely.

There was a noble aura coming from it now!

Chu Liuyue felt that this was the aura that truly belonged to a legendary three-eyed eagle!

“That’s right.” The two of them had a telepathic connection, so they could understand one another without speaking. “After contracting with you, my soul has been nourished by the Heavenly Dao. I’ve recovered greatly.”

Chu Liuyue marveled. “If that’s the case, it’s not entirely a bad thing for legendary fiends to contract with humans!”

The legendary three-eyed eagle looked at her with uncertainty.

At this point, Chu Liuyue didn’t know that not everyone could contract with a legendary fiend. Many would die from the sheer pressure of the legendary fiend’s Heavenly Dao. Even if they managed to contract with one successfully, only an insignificant amount of energy would be left after the Heavenly Dao and contract had been completed...

Being able to contract with a legendary fiend and summon the Heavenly Dao and absorb its energy... Chu Liuyue was the only one!

At least in the legendary three-eyed eagle’s mind, this had never happened before. However, it didn’t intend to let Chu Liuyue know at this moment.



“Come on up.” The legendary three-eyed eagle lowered its wings.

Chu Liuyue hopped on!

“My illusory figure is primarily made up of a combination of my soul and the Heaven and Earth Force. Thus, there’s a time limit to it. Hang on tight.”

Chu Liuyue nodded somberly.

The legendary three-eyed eagle flapped its wings and swooped down!

...

Just as Chu Liuyue dashed into the heavenly pit, Yang Qin’er and the others were well-rested and ready to continue their journey.

The skinny man said somberly, “If we run into Chu Liuyue again, we’ll never give her the chance to run away again!”

But after they had traveled a distance, a girl’s voice sounded. “Can I ask if all of you are the disciples of the Purple Xiao Sword Sect?”

They turned and saw a young lady. “You are...”

She smiled. "I'm Ning Jiaojiao from Xuan Feng Hall."

The others looked at one another. *Xuan Feng Hall and the Purple Xiao Sword Sect have always stayed in each others' land. Ning Jiaojiao seems to be Xuan Feng Hall's Big Missy?*

"It's Ms. Ning."

Ning Jiaojiao was not bothered by their wary expressions, and she asked testingly, "I seem to have heard the three of you mention... Chu Liuyue?"

Yang Qin'er looked away briefly. "Ms. Ning must've misheard."

Ning Jiaojiao scanned them as she smiled. "I must've been mistaken. I thought that Chu Liuyue left the wounds on you all. But if it were her... You all should've been evicted from the Tianling God Realm..."

The trio eyed one another. "Ms. Ning, what do you mean?"

Ning Jiaojiao paused. She covered her mouth as if realizing that she had misspoken. "Nothing, nothing..."

But after hesitating for a moment, she seemed to have made up her mind. "Sigh, it's nothing much. It's just... Chu Liuyue... For some reason, she has been killing off the other contestants. She has already forced a number of people out of the Tianling God Realm. It's rather scary."

**Chapter 515: Great Phoenix Dragon**

“I saw it unintentionally, but luckily, she didn’t discover me. However, I might not be this lucky when I see her again,” said Ning Jiaojiao softly.

The two men’s expressions changed, but Yang Qin’er said, “Ms. Ning, your capabilities aren’t weak. Why are you afraid of Chu Liuyue for no reason?”

Ning Jiaojiao paused and said with deep meaning, “Chu Liuyue’s abilities are much stronger than what they seem on the surface. Wasn’t it very clear during the preliminaries? How can someone like Jian Fengchi—who thinks so highly of himself—choose someone that can’t do anything to join the Wan Zheng Competition?”

The Yang Qin’er trio exchanged glances, and they fell into an eerie silence the next moment. *We have experienced this personally. Just now...*

“Truth be told, Ms. Ning, we actually did meet Chu Liuyue just now. We’ve exchanged blows with her, but she’s very scheming and has already escaped to the Long Yuan Sword’s side,” said the mustached man, but his choice of words was incredible.

Yang Qin’er laughed in her heart but didn’t show it on the surface.

“Really?! She... Alone?” Ning Jiaojiao looked shocked. *I had heard Chu Liuyue’s name earlier, so I purposely tried to find out more. But from their behavior, it seems like Chu Liuyue fought the three of them and managed to escape successfully.*

The two men were awkward.

The skinny man immediately said, "She managed to take advantage of us after we were injured by the Long Yuan Sword's sword aura. Besides, her body is indeed weird. This Long Yuan Sword's sword aura is horrifying, but she easily managed to resolve it for some reason."

Nobody mentioned the unusual crystal barrier that Chu Liuyue had.

At this point, Ning Jiaojiao started to doubt Chu Liuyue.

She voiced the motive for her approach. "Since this is so, why don't we join hands?"

...

On the other side, the legendary three-eyed eagle was leading Chu Liuyue to the bottom of the heavenly pit.

The moment they entered, the surrounding sword aura crazily came for her.

The legendary three-eyed eagle's wings vibrated, and Chu Liuyue could immediately feel that the surrounding space froze rapidly.

When the rays of black sword aura reached this space, they slowed down in unison and even stopped completely.

This was the legendary three-eyed eagle's God Realm!

Chu Liuyue suddenly realized something. *So this is its trump card! Within this space, it has absolute control of everything! The Long Yuan Sword is a legendary object, but the legendary three-eyed eagle is also a legendary fiend! The sword aura is still lacking if it wants to use its strength to break the legendary three-eyed eagle's God Realm.*

The human and fiend then made it through the intense sword aura and went toward the bottom.

The lower they went, the more rays of sword aura there were. They also became more ferocious, but the legendary three-eyed eagle's speed didn't decrease.

Chu Liuyue rode on it, and her eyes were glued to the front.

When she was nearing it, she suddenly realized that the place where the Long Yuan Sword was buried had golden fire flash across.

Chu Liuyue's heart tingled. When she wanted to take a closer look, she realized that the fire had already disappeared.

She slightly knitted her brows. *Did I see wrongly just now?*

But the legendary three-eyed eagle suddenly said in shock, "How could this be possible?"

It was always cold and nonchalant and rarely used such a tone to speak, so one could tell how stunned it was.

“What’s wrong?” asked Chu Liuyue hurriedly.

The legendary three-eyed eagle waved its wings and said, “Did you see golden fire suddenly appearing near the Long Yuan Sword just now?”

She nodded. “Did you see it as well? I thought I was just imagining things.”

“It’s not an illusion.” The legendary three-eyed eagle said determinedly, “It’s the fire from the legendary fiend’s skeleton.”

Chu Liuyue widened her eyes. “Fire from the legendary fiend’s skeleton? What does that mean? This fire... Did it originally belong to that legendary fiend?”

She didn’t know much about legendary fiends, let alone fire-related information. However... the golden fire didn’t look simple.

“...Is the legendary fiend below the Long Yuan Sword powerful?” asked Chu Liuyue.

The legendary three-eyed eagle kept quiet for some time before saying clearly, “The only clan in the world that has this golden fire is—the ancient legendary great phoenix dragon!”

A huge uproar burst in Chu Liuyue’s heart. “What?! You’re saying that the legendary fiend’s skeleton that the Long Yuan Sword has is actually—How is that possible? That’s an ancient legendary fiend!”

Chu Liuyue was in disbelief. One had to know that an ancient legendary fiend was much stronger and older than an ordinary legendary fiend.

*This is the highest existence only known in rumors! How did it appear here? But as a legendary fiend, the legendary three-eyed eagle should know this better than me.* She held her breath and actually became nervous when she thought of the golden fire she saw previously. "Are you sure? That's really the great phoenix dragon's skeleton?"

The legendary three-eyed eagle was clearly stunned as it boomed, "The only clue now is that golden fire, but we can't be completely sure. However... it's pretty close to the mark."

This meant that it had actually confirmed this but was just lacking the last bit of evidence.

Chu Liuyue didn't speak for some time as she felt even more conflicted.

She focused her gaze on the Long Yuan Sword. When she looked at it again, it was indeed different from previous times.

"...When the ancestor failed to break through and become a stage-nine warrior, he had never entered the legendary higher cultivation world. With his abilities back then, they weren't enough to kill an ancient legendary fiend like the great phoenix dragon..." She couldn't help but mutter.

The Tianling Dynasty's totem was indeed that of a sword slashing a dragon head.

Chu Liuyue had never imagined that the dragon head could be the great phoenix dragon's!

The legendary three-eyed eagle said calmly, "We'll have to see it to know what happened!"

Chu Liuyue took a deep breath. "Sure!"

At this point, retreating was not an option. The only choice was to find out once and for all!

*Clang!*

The legendary three-eyed eagle flapped its wings, and the God Realm's power moved, instantly crushing the surrounding sword aura.

Its figure flashed, and it rapidly rushed toward where the golden fire appeared previously.

Gradually, Chu Liuyue felt a scorching wave that kept coming from the bottom of the heavenly pit.

Chu Liuyue clenched her fists tightly, and a bold guess surfaced in her mind. *This thing is probably related to the strange weather patterns in this place!*

The wave contained rich Heaven and Earth Force. Even within the legendary three-eyed eagle's God Realm, Chu Liuyue could still clearly feel the suppression intensifying gradually.



*Huala!*

A soft, crisp sound was made.

Chu Liuyue looked over and saw that a hole had formed in the God Realm due to the crazy squeezing of the surrounding force.

The legendary three-eyed eagle's body wavered before it flew downward at greater speeds.

Chu Liuyue's heart hung high as she stared at the opening with a deadly gaze.

*Hong!*

An explosion sound was heard, and the God Realm broke.

Chu Liuyue and the legendary three-eyed eagle were instantly exposed outside the God Realm.

She could clearly see that the legendary three-eyed eagle's body had become much fainter than before.

The ferocious wave with the boundless black sword aura kept coming toward them.

**Chapter 516: Awakening**

But at this moment, the black pyramid in Chu Liuyue's body suddenly caused a huge ripple to explode.

Those rays of sword aura actually stopped in front of Chu Liuyue instantly, and the ferocious scorching wave quickly retreated as if it had met something scary.

In the blink of an eye, everything disappeared into thin air.

Chu Liuyue was also stunned when she saw this happen to the countless black sword aura rays that had been closing in on her body and would pierce through her the next second. *I didn't even have the time to throw out the crystal barrier in my hands, but it now seems like... I don't need to?*

At this moment, a silver lightning bolt struck above the Long Yuan Sword!

The high and mighty Long Yuan Sword seemed to have met with some enhancement as it became much sharper and brighter than before.

Previously, there were also lightning bolts that flowed within the Long Yuan Sword, but Chu Liuyue's instincts told her that things were different this time.

As expected, when the first silver lightning bolt followed the sword body and entered the heavenly pit, the second bolt followed.

This bolt was much thicker than the previous one.

Thunder roared the next moment, and it struck.

Chu Liuyue stared at the Long Yuan Sword closely. Gradually, she felt a strange familiarity. *This feeling... is coming from the Long Yuan Sword and the black pyramid within my body.*

...

*Hong long!*

A loud noise was heard from afar.

Ning Jiaojiao and the rest looked up in unison and saw a bright silver light flash across the Long Yuan Sword.

“Is... the Long Yuan Sword about to wake up?” The skinny man suddenly yelled in shock.

When he finished his sentence, the others all widened their eyes and were stunned.

Ning Jiaojiao couldn't help but ask, “W-what do you mean?”

She didn't specialize in the path of the sword, so she didn't quite understand what it meant.

As he was too agitated, the skinny man's face flushed red. His voice trembled as he explained, “The Long Yuan Sword is a legendary weapon, and it has its own sword soul. When the owner reaches his demise,

it will follow him and hibernate. Most of the time, many legendary weapons will fall into a deep sleep and be sealed forever. But if it chose to wake up... it means..."

Ning Jiaojiao hurriedly asked, "What does it mean?"

"It means that... It's going to choose a new owner soon!" The skinny man said this emotionally, and all his blood seemed to be coursing through his body rapidly.

The mustached man at the side seemed to have the same reaction.

In comparison, Yang Qin'er looked pretty calm. However, her gaze toward the Long Yuan Sword was filled with deep desire.

The Purple Xiao Sword Sect had always specialized in sword techniques. Not only did they see the Long Yuan Sword in person today, but they could even see it wake up. How could this not stir up their emotions?

The most important thing was that when the Long Yuan Sword chose its new owner, this miracle might belong to them.

Ning Jiaojiao then completely understood. She thought for a while and suddenly said, "Oh right, isn't Chu Liuyue by the Long Yuan Sword?!"

Her words immediately reminded the rest and woke them up from their maniacal excitement as their faces all changed.

“This... She’s enjoying the benefits of a favorable position...” said Ning Jiaojiao hesitantly as her eyes flashed.

“It depends on one’s fate to see who can get a legendary weapon like the Long Yuan Sword, not who is nearer to it.” Even though the mustached man said that, he started to panic. *Who knows why the Long Yuan Sword suddenly woke up? No matter what, Chu Liuyue is near it, and it will be more convenient for her.*

Currently, they didn’t even know what the situation was like on the other side.

Ning Jiaojiao scanned their faces and chuckled to herself, but she looked sincere on the surface. “In my opinion, the Long Yuan Sword has hibernated for thousands of years. Now that it has woken up, it will definitely choose a unique talent to become its new owner. Not to mention others, but one should at least have a decent cultivation level in terms of the way of the sword. In regards to this, my Xuan Feng Hall isn’t good enough. But you guys are Purple Xiao Sword Sect disciples, so you should be familiar with swords, right?”

Her words tempted the two men.

“Not to mention just a Chu Liuyue, but even out of all the competitors in the Wan Zheng Competition, there won’t be more suitable people than you to become the Long Yuan Sword’s new owner. But if this miracle is stolen away by someone... If it were me, I’d definitely die with many regrets! So... about my previous suggestion...”

“We agree!” The skinny man was determined.

The remaining Yang Qin’er and the other man also nodded their heads in agreement.

Ning Jiaojiao's lips curved up. *Even if I didn't say these things to agitate them, the few of them would also make the same choice. This is because they were originally thinking about it already. My words only nailed the idea even more harshly in their hearts.*

Ning Jiaojiao suggested, "Let's join hands and deal with Chu Liuyue first. When we find any treasures, we'll split them evenly. As for the Long Yuan Sword... the fateful person will get it. How does that sound?"

"That's a deal."

Yang Qin'er turned around to take a look and suddenly gasped. "Quickly, look! Those black sword aura rays seemed to have returned to the Long Yuan Sword!"

The few of them looked up respectively. As expected, they saw the countless rays of black sword aura come from somewhere and rush to the Long Yuan Sword.

At the same time, bolts of silver lightning kept slashing down repeatedly.

"Let's go!" Ning Jiaojiao was the first to react as she immediately rushed forward.

The other people didn't want to be left behind as they hurriedly followed her.

...

The ninth silver lightning bolt struck the sword's body.

The next moment, the sword's roar could be heard. It was like a hibernating beast that suddenly woke up.

It then seemed like an opening had been torn through in the endless night, shining light in. From the middle, one could vaguely peek at the insurmountable existence.

Chu Liuyue opened her eyes and looked at the Long Yuan Sword in front of her without blinking. *The Long Yuan Sword... actually woke up on its own!*

The surrounding black sword aura started returning to the Long Yuan Sword's body continuously.

*Choo choo!*

A sound pierced through the skies.

The legendary three-eyed eagle suddenly gasped.

Chu Liuyue followed its line of sight, and her eyes shrunk. She saw a golden fire suddenly coming out from below.

It still appeared where the Long Yuan Sword was stuck to the ground, but it was more intense than the first one.

Also... Not only did it not disappear, but it even started spreading in all directions.

In a short amount of time, the bottom of the gigantic pit was completely filled by the golden fire.

From above, it looked like the Long Yuan Sword was stuck into the golden fire.

“The legendary fiend’s skeleton should be below! We must hurry! The Heavenly Dao’s strength can’t sustain me for long!” bellowed the legendary three-eyed eagle.

Chu Liuyue knitted her brows tightly. “You mean... You’re going to barge into the golden fire?”

The legendary three-eyed eagle gave an affirmative reply. “The Long Yuan Sword has already awakened, and this is the only gap. Once it recognizes someone as its master, the legendary fiend’s skeleton will belong to that person, or it will be completely destroyed!”

Chu Liuyue nodded as a red fire instantly spread out from her body and covered her entirely. “Let’s go!”

The legendary three-eyed eagle suddenly swooped down and rushed downward.

The human and the fiend’s figures instantly disappeared within that fire.

*Hong!*



The light of the fire shot to the sky.

## **Chapter 517: Old Nest**

“What’s that?!”

Ning Jiaojiao and the others were shocked to see the golden flames suddenly gushing out. They hurriedly rushed forward, only to spot the enormous heavenly pit and the flames that had covered a large part of the pit.

They wanted to go nearer and take a closer look at it but were forced to retreat due to the searing heat and vast aura. As such, they could only watch everything happen from the side.

“Where’s Chu Liuyue?” Yang Qin’er scanned her surroundings but couldn’t find Chu Liuyue anywhere in sight. *She was here just now. Don’t tell me...*

“She went down there?!”

The group of people exchanged looks with one another. It seemed that there was no better explanation than this.

“One will surely die if they fall into this fire! She probably has been transported out of the Tianling God Realm,” surmised the thin man. “Let’s just wait for the sword to wake up completely!”

The others had no objections to his suggestion. After all, no matter what condition Chu Liuyue was in, their priority was the Long Yuan Sword!

Thus, they began waiting in silence.

More people gathered around the pit subsequently. Everyone, however, had come to a tacit understanding and didn't fight among themselves. Instead, they scattered out and waited for the sword to completely wake up in different spots.

Including Yang Qin'er and her entourage, there were nine people in total. This number might seem insignificant, but it was actually very hard for them to last until now. The other competitors had already been eliminated long ago because they couldn't withstand the force that constantly flowed into their bodies.

Those who could arrive at the pit either possessed outstanding Dijing Yuan meridians or had some means and treasures with them. In short, they weren't simple characters.

Qiang Wenzhou was the tenth person to arrive here. Even though he was hurt, his injuries were nothing major. He walked toward the pit and slightly frowned when he peered inside and realized that Chu Liuyue's aura had disappeared amidst the golden flames. After giving it some deep thought, he started waiting here as well.

...

The legendary three-eyed eagle charged through the golden flames and carried Chu Liuyue straight down with it.

The overwhelming flames obscured her vision, and all she could feel was that the fire around her was madly gushing out like lava.

All of a sudden, she vaguely saw a door that appeared in the middle of the flames. She hastily asked, "What's that?"

The legendary three-eyed eagle didn't respond to her question but flew at even greater speeds.

It was only when they got nearer that Chu Liuyue finally got a clear look.

It was a black door made of an unknown material. It was dark and deep, and it also emanated a compelling chillness. On it was a carved relief of a sword.

Just one glance at it, and she immediately recognized that it was the Long Yuan Sword.

"That's the sword's seal on the legendary beast's skeleton!" stated the legendary three-eyed eagle.

Chu Liuyue understood what it meant at once. "So the skeleton is behind this door?"

"That's right! As long as we open the door, we'll be able to enter!"

She fell into deep contemplation as she stared at the door before her. "It'll be hard... to open this door though..."

Just as she said that, the black pyramid in her body suddenly flew out of her body as if it had been summoned.

Shocked, Chu Liuyue instantly moved to grab it. But when her fingers came into contact with it, she noticed a cold flash coming from the door.

The sword relief was moving.

Her actions ceased as the black pyramid slowly turned in front of the door, and a subtle aura gushed out of it.

*Creak—*

The door opened. With great determination, she seized the black pyramid back and charged through the door at once.

*Bam!*

The door slammed shut behind her thereafter.

As Chu Liuyue exhaled in relief, she looked up and realized that she was in a glorious and magnificent hall that was made of precious jade stones. It had countless jewels and treasures scattered all over the floor and priceless raw orchid-colored stones in piles. Longan-sized illusionary spectral beads—which could fetch up to 10,000 white crystals for just a pea-sized bead on the market—could be found in all nooks and crannies as well.

Even Chu Liuyue—who had seen her fair share of treasures—couldn't help but draw a sharp intake of air at this sight. *What a fortune! Unlike pills or martial skills, all these things are real money! This place must've been deserted for a long time, which is why everything is covered with a thick layer of dust.*

She mumbled to herself, "Could it be a treasure trove left behind by my ancestor...?"

"It's the great phoenix dragon's nest!"

The legendary three-eyed eagle's words sent a jolt running through Chu Liuyue's body. "What?!"

"The great phoenix dragons are ancient and supreme legendary beasts who love collecting... treasures," said the eagle with much difficulty after a brief silence.

They had a very high status and were so powerful that almost all the legendary fiends had to bow to them. However, they had a particular obsession with sparkling stones and jades. Thus, they loved collecting them and piling them up in their nests.

Even though this particular hobby of theirs wasn't anything bad, the thought that the supreme and majestic great phoenix dragons would sleep atop piles of jade stones every day was quite fantasy-shattering.

The legendary three-eyed eagle initially thought that it was just a myth, but reality turned out to be different from expectations...

Chu Liuyue nodded in understanding before looking around. "Since this is their old nest, why can't we find its skele—"

Her voice trailed off right then.

## Chapter 518: Confrontation

Lying in the middle of the hall was half of an enormous skeleton. Every inch of its bones was glistening and clear like jade and could be easily confused with the other treasures when placed together. This was why Chu Liuyue failed to recognize it immediately. Nevertheless, it was still distinguishable upon closer look because it emitted a faint aura.

Her heart thumped hard at the sight.

All of a sudden, the legendary three-eyed eagle let out a shriek before folding its wings and bowing its head slightly.

One look at it, and Chu Liuyue could clearly feel its deep-seated awe and submission. It was clear then that the corpse belonged to the great phoenix dragon.

“How are you feeling?” asked Chu Liuyue somewhat worriedly.

The eagle shook its head. “The great phoenix dragon is an ancient legendary fiend with absolute bloodline suppression. If it had been alive, I’d definitely have to submit to it. We’re fortunate that only half of its remains are left. I can still bear with it.”

She couldn’t help but secretly marvel in her heart. *The legendary three-eyed eagle is already quite an impressive legendary fiend, yet it still seems so small in front of the great phoenix dragon. Only half of its body remains, yet its lingering aura is so terrifying. I can only imagine what sort of existence a real great phoenix dragon is.*

“Given your current strength, you’ll surely be destroyed with just one look from the great phoenix dragon,” stated the legendary three-eyed eagle calmly.

At that, Chu Liuyue thought to herself, *I don’t even know if I’ll ever meet one. Besides, even if I truly have the chance to meet a real great phoenix dragon in the future, I’ll surely be at a higher cultivation level than I am now.*

“Why is there only half a skeleton though?” she asked with a frown.

The legendary three-eyed eagle shook its head to express its confusion as well. “The great phoenix dragon clan values their skeletons a lot. Even if one were to die outside, the rest of the clan would travel far just to recover it. They won’t leave it outside just like that. Perhaps they didn’t discover it because it’s an incomplete skeleton.”

Deep in rumination, Chu Liuyue thought that the eagle made some sense. “But if this is an incomplete skeleton, how are you... going to regain your body?”

The eagle pondered for a moment before answering, “As an ancient legendary fiend, the great phoenix dragon’s bloodline is naturally more powerful than the rest of the legendary fiends. If I can borrow its power, I can still reconstruct my body even with an incomplete skeleton.”

Chu Liuyue sighed in relief. “That’s good! In that case, let’s take it with us then. Once we find everything else we need, I’ll help you—What’s wrong?”

She let out a cough when she saw that the eagle was looking at her strangely.

“You want to take it away with you?” asked the eagle.

She nodded hesitantly. "...Is that... inappropriate?"

The way the legendary three-eyed eagle looked at her became even weirder. "Do you think that a Cosmic Ring is enough to withstand the corpse's power?"

*How did I forget this?! When she finally understood what it meant, she slapped herself on the forehead. "What do you think we should do then? Leave it here? It wasn't easy for us to get in here..."*

*It's because of the legendary three-eyed eagle that I rushed in here in spite of the dangers. If it's going to tell me that I can't take it with me...*

"The Heavenly Square Cauldron," said the legendary three-eyed eagle. "Put the body in there. On the one hand, you'll be able to take it with you. On the other hand, you'll be able to cultivate the power of the great phoenix dragon's bloodline."

She nodded.

With a thought, the Heavenly Square Cauldron appeared in her palm. Transparent karmic fire quietly burned within it.

When she moved her wrist slightly, the Heavenly Square Cauldron flew into midair and expanded rapidly.



A transparent flame then shot out toward the body on the ground. Just when it touched the skeleton, a bright light appeared all of a sudden, which made Chu Liuyue cover her eyes instinctively. But she realized something at that moment, so she opened them and looked over.

She saw a huge Xuan formation flickering above the skeleton and blocking the transparent fire. Her eyes twitched when she got a clear look at the Xuan formation. *It's a stage-nine Xuan formation. After I became a stage-eight Xuan master in my previous life, I had never been able to break through from that stage. If this were a lower-stage Xuan formation, I could still attempt to crack it. But this one... It's as good as a dead-end to me.*

"There's a seal on the skeleton. It looks like we have to break it first."

The legendary three-eyed eagle's words sent Chu Liuyue into greater despair. As she looked at the spinning Xuan formation in front with a hand on her hurting head, she asked weakly, "You think I'm capable of doing so?"

*Weren't you the one who said that I'd be killed with a look from a great phoenix dragon?*

The legendary three-eyed eagle shot her a side-glimpse. "Not with your current cultivation, of course. The Heavenly Dao can though!"

Stunned, she asked, "What do you mean?"

The eagle suddenly fell silent.

Just when Chu Liuyue thought it wouldn't answer her, it finally broke the silence. "The only difference between a stage-eight Xuan formation and a stage-nine Xuan formation is that there's a wisp of Heavenly Dao in the latter. As long as you can dissolve it, the formation can be easily solved."

She opened her mouth in shock. “H-how did you know this?”

The legendary three-eyed eagle clenched its teeth. “How can I possibly not know when I was trapped by a stage-nine Xuan formation?!”

Chu Liuyue understood at once. “Does that mean it was a Xuan master who trapped you back then? And... a stage-nine one at that?!”

When she noticed the cold hatred flashing across its eyes, she wisely changed the topic. “Even so, I’m only a stage-three Xuan master now. How can I possibly dissolve the Heavenly Dao?”

*It’s an impossible task!*

The legendary three-eyed eagle stared at her fixedly. “That may be so for other people but not you. That’s because you have the Heavenly Dao in your body!”

Its words sent a jolt through Chu Liuyue, who seemingly understood what it meant. She pursed her lips. “I’ll give it a try then!”

With that, she sat cross-legged and started to meditate.

When the water droplet in her dantian started spinning slowly, she tried summoning the Heavenly Dao’s power in her body. One belonged to the Ultimate Jingshen, while the other came from the contract she had with the legendary three-eyed eagle.

After some time, a faint glow appeared within the water droplet, much to Chu Liuyue's delight. *That must be the Heavenly Dao's aura!*

She then opened her eyes and stared at the complicated and massive stage-nine Xuan formation. With a flick of her fingers, the miniscule drop of water flew forward, the glow within it clearly visible.

A black spatial crack silently appeared when the water droplet passed by. As it gradually got closer, a powerful force suddenly erupted from the Xuan formation, and countless streams of light intertwined in a dazzling display.

Chu Liuyue's heart squeezed.

The aura of the Xuan formation's Heavenly Dao had been hidden in the countless streams of light, making it hard to find.

### **Chapter 519: Except For Her**

The water droplet—which quietly floated in front of the gigantic Xuan formation—seemed really tiny when compared to it. Both, however, were engaged in a confrontation.

Chu Liuyue knew that it was a duel between the Heavenly Dao on both sides. If she wanted to win, she had to make sure that she did it in one go.

Her eyes remained fixed on the countless intertwined streams of light while the legendary three-eyed eagle quietly stood by the side.

It was terrifyingly quiet in the entire space.

...

*Rumble!*

Another bolt of heavenly lightning struck down. The light splashed in all directions, making it almost impossible to look straight at it!

“Retreat further!” The people who were waiting outside the pit were forced to move back once more due to the energy wave. Despite doing this, most of them suffered from varying degrees of injuries.

“This is only the Long Yuan Sword’s 27th lightning bolt, but it’s already so powerful. I’m afraid nobody will be able to last until the 81st lightning bolt! All of us will be kicked out of the Tianling God Realm by then!” said a burly man with a deep voice.

The black sword aura in the pit was still flowing into the Long Yuan Sword. From afar, one could see that the bottom was a sea of golden flames.

“That might not necessarily happen. Its new master won’t be affected by this force,” said the man next to him with clenched teeth after spitting out a mouthful of blood.

The crowd fell silent at once. After all, this was exactly why they were all waiting there.

Yang Qin'er's eyes flickered slightly as she asked softly, "Seniors, both of you have sustained rather serious injuries. Shall we... just leave?"

The two males said in unison, "No, we can't give up until the last moment! The Long Yuan Sword will try to pick a new master after every nine bolts of lightning. We still stand a chance since it hasn't picked anyone in the last three rounds!"

"That's right! We'll be looked down upon if we flee like cowards! Fear not, Qin'er. We'll protect you as long as we're around!"

As Yang Qin'er smiled in gratitude, a mocking look flashed across Ning Jiaojiao's eyes as she watched this from the side.

Thus far, those men would scramble to the front whenever the trio encountered any danger, fearing that something might happen to Yang Qin'er. It got to the point that they had injuries all over themselves while Yang Qin'er remained unharmed. It was obvious that Yang Qin'er had some tricks up her sleeves; otherwise, those two men wouldn't go to such extents to protect her.

*This is ultimately a competition, yet those two have been thoroughly played by Yang Qin'er.*

Upon sensing Ning Jiaojiao's gaze, Yang Qin'er looked up and glanced at her. However, both quickly averted their gazes the moment their eyes met each other.

Right at that moment, another bolt of lightning struck. Silver light flashed across the sky with violent energy scattering in all directions.

Ning Jiaojiao was the first to bear the brunt. With her quick wits, she quickly ran toward the back.

The mustached man behind her wanted to retreat as well but was slowed down when he tripped over himself. With just a step's difference, Ning Jiaojiao overtook him, and he became the person closest to the pit.

The next second, his body instantly vanished from the spot, which indicated his elimination from the competition.

Yang Qin'er glared at Ning Jiaojiao in warning.

*"What a pity..."* The smug smile on Ning Jiaojiao's face faded in an instant. *Being badly injured, the mustached man could hardly fight in his state. Someone who can't provide any substantial help will be just an eyesore if they remain here, so I figured that I might as well send him off first.*

Ning Jiaojiao was touching her face in satisfaction when she suddenly felt a cold gaze on her. She turned her head and saw a blond boy staring piercingly at her. Those eyes seemed to have seen through her earlier actions.

She unconsciously tore her gaze away from him, feeling really uncomfortable as he remained staring at her. In a seemingly nonchalant manner, she asked, "Who's that blond guy? He looks somewhat familiar."

Yang Qin'er said nothing as she chuckled inwardly to herself while looking miserable over her senior's elimination.

The tall and thin man patted her shoulder comfortingly before glancing at the guy Ning Jiaojiao mentioned. "Isn't that the guy who bit someone that day? I think his name is... Qiang Wanzhou?"

Only then did Ning Jiaojiao have somewhat of an impression of him. "I see."

*We don't know each other, so why is he behaving as if he has a grudge against me?* Despite feeling depressed, she had no intention of asking him about it. She didn't want to miss out on the Long Yuan Sword just because of such trivial matters.

Still, it took a while before his gaze shifted away from her. It was only then that she secretly heaved a sigh of relief.

...

The wait was particularly grueling, especially when it came to times like this, where great danger was involved.

Nobody was selected when the 36th bolt of lightning struck. Instead, another two people were eliminated because they couldn't withstand the power. One of them was the thin man from the Purple Xiao Sword Sect.

Yang Qin'er eventually couldn't hold herself back any longer. Walking right up to Ning Jiaojiao, she pressed her voice low and asked, "What exactly do you want?!"

Ning Jiaojiao laughed. "I'm just helping you out! You won't be able to show off your skills with those two around. Now that they've been eliminated, you don't need to hide your skills any longer."

Yang Qin'er snorted in response. "I don't know what you're talking about!"

Ning Jiaojiao wasn't bothered by her reply. *Let's see how long she can keep up with the pretense!*

Meanwhile, the other people were getting more and more impatient. "The fourth round has passed, but why hasn't the Long Yuan Sword chosen its new owner?"

"Just wait a little longer! Once it's awake, it'll surely choose its new owner."

"What's that golden fire below though? There's no mention of it in legends..."

"How can we possibly guess the going-ons in this unpredictable place? Just wait patiently!"

...

At Xuan Ji Square.

A whole day and night had passed, but more and more people were gathering in the square.

Like before, Jiang Yucheng was in disguise as he stood in an inconspicuous corner and watched the competition. Although the majority of the participants had been eliminated, the competition was getting stiffer as it progressed toward the end.



He looked at the black marble board, where few names remained on it. A particular name caught his attention right then as he stared at it and asked, "Is Chu Liuyue still in there?"

The man behind him immediately answered, "Yes, together with 12 other people."

Jiang Yucheng placed a hand behind his back as he slowly clenched it. *Chu Liuyue is only a stage-three warrior. Even if she has some capabilities, she should've been eliminated by now.*

"The lowest cultivation level of the 12 other people is peak fifth-stage?"

"That's right, Eldest Young Master. Also..."

"Spit it out," barked Jiang Yucheng in annoyance.

The man pressed his voice low. "Except for Chu Liuyue, they all have superior Dijing Yuan meridians."

Jiang Yucheng narrowed his eyes at that.

### **Chapter 520: Former Mistress**

*Based on my previous prediction, the only remaining participants should be the ones with superior Dijing Yuan meridians. How did Chu Liuyue manage to last this long? Is there really something weird about her?* Jiang Yucheng asked, "Where's Mu Qinghe?"

“Eldest Young Master, didn’t you send Lieutenant Mu to deal with that matter? He should still be working on it now,” reminded his subordinate.

*I must’ve overworked myself lately to the point that this matter slipped out of my mind.* As he came back to his senses, Jiang Yucheng rubbed his glabella. “Get him to go over to Wanjin Garden.”

Wanjin Garden was a famous restaurant in Xi Ling City, known for its elegance and luxury. But very few people knew that it belonged to Jiang Yucheng.

“...Do you mean... right away?”

“Yes, right away.” Jiang Yucheng nodded lightly and glanced at the black marble board. Before turning around to leave, he added, “Guan Hao, continue to keep an eye on the situation here and inform me immediately if anything unusual happens.”

Guan Hao mulled over the given order for a moment. When he figured out what his master meant by ‘unusual,’ he answered, “Yes!”

...

By the time Jiang Yucheng arrived at Wanjin Garden, Mu Qinghe was already waiting there in a room. The Black Guard’s lieutenant—who had always been cold and aloof—paid his respects to the former as soon as he sensed his presence. “Greetings, Eldest Young Master.”

Jiang Yucheng took his seat before saying, “Sit.”

During his momentary hesitation, Mu Qinghe noticed that the other man had already poured two cups of tea, so he sat down as well.

Guan Hao then took his leave and closed the door behind him as he went out to guard the room.

Mu Qinghe looked down. “May I know why I have been summoned back on such short notice?”

Jiang Yucheng picked up the teacup and lightly blew at it, allowing the tea fragrance to waft into his nose. “It’s nothing important. I just have a few questions for you.”

“Feel free to ask anything you want. I won’t hide anything from you.”

Jiang Yucheng didn’t drink the tea. Instead, he stroked the teacup in his hand and raised his eyes to look at the lieutenant. “Were you the one... who brought Chu Liuyue over?”

Mu Qinghe’s hands—which were placed on his knees—curled up slightly, but his expression remained unchanged as he answered, “Yes.”

“However, word on the street is that she came here with Jian Fengchi. What happened there?”

It took Mu Qinghe a moment before he briefly recounted what happened back then to the other. “...So I came back first and got Jian Fengchi to help me bring her over. It seems that a slight misunderstanding has occurred during the competition’s registration process. That’s why his name was written instead.”

Despite the upward curling of his lips, Jiang Yucheng’s smile didn’t reach his eyes. “Liu Xingyi has always disliked Jian Fengchi, so he probably did it on purpose.”

*That fool is exactly the same as his mistress, Shangguan Wan! Both Shangguan Wan and I will never make Jian Fengchi do such a thing, yet he tried to seize the opportunity to take revenge... Couldn't he stop to think for a second who was capable enough to ask Jian Fengchi for help?*

After pondering for a moment, Mu Qinghe said, "I think this rumor has been widely spread throughout Xi Ling. Do you need me to send someone—"

"No need; it doesn't matter what those people think. What's important now is Chu Liuyue. You didn't tell me upon your return that she has many secrets on her." Jiang Yucheng cut Mu Qinghe off as he placed the teacup back on the table.

The lieutenant knitted his brows slightly. "Please excuse my stupidity, but I don't understand what you mean by that."

Jiang Yucheng laughed. "Don't tell me that you have no idea that she's currently still in the Tianling God Realm? When I came here, only 13 out of the 200 participants who entered that place remained, and she's one of them. She is only a stage-three warrior with an intermediate Dijing Yuan meridian, so how did she manage to survive this long inside?"

Mu Qinghe's eyes narrowed slightly at that. *I knew that Chu Liuyue was somewhat capable, but I didn't expect her to last for so long!*

"As expected of Country Yao Chen..." remarked Jiang Yucheng in a meaningful tone.

Mu Qinghe immediately rose to his feet, cupped his fist, and bowed. "Please exercise wise judgment on this matter, Eldest Young Master. It's true that Chu Liuyue has some capabilities; otherwise, I wouldn't have brought her here to participate in the Wan Zheng Competition. I-I'm also surprised that—"

“No need to be nervous.” With a relaxed smile on his face, Jiang Yucheng waved his hand. “After all, the Third Princess will be elated to hear this.”

There wasn't a ripple in Mu Qinghe's voice as he allowed his eyes to droop slightly. “Understood.”

“By the way, there's another thing that I'm rather curious about.” Leaning forward slightly, Jiang Yucheng stared into Mu Qinghe's eyes and asked, “Don't you think that Chu Liuyue... bears some resemblance to a certain person?”

His calm voice—as well as the hints of amusement on his face—made it seem as though he was speaking about some trivial affair. However, it made Mu Qinghe lift his clothes' hem and go on his knees.

“Please look into the bottom of this matter! This wasn't my intention! It just so happens that she was the only one with the Dijing Yuan meridian in Country Yao Chen... I had no choice but to bring her back; otherwise, there's no reason for me to continue staying there.”

As Jiang Yucheng stared at him with his gaze that was sharp as a knife, a thick blanket of silence fell over the room. It lasted for some time before he burst out chuckling. “It was just a casual remark; there's no need for you to get so uptight over it. Strictly speaking, it's not a striking resemblance. There are lots of people with similar appearances in this world, so there's no big deal about this.”

Truth be told, he had already sent someone to secretly investigate Chu Liuyue's background. From the news he received so far, there weren't any problems with her identity. Most importantly, she was indeed only 14 years old.

Mu Qinghe secretly sighed in relief. "Thank you, Eldest Young Master."

Smiling, Jiang Yucheng leaned back against his seat. "It's just a coincidence anyway. You wouldn't have chosen her if you had other choices. After all... your former mistress treated you pretty well."

"From the past until now, you've been my only master!" Mu Qinghe slammed his head onto the cold and hard ground, the coldness of which seemed to have spread to his heart as well.

After a short but suffocating silence, Jiang Yucheng finally stood up and went to help him up. In a gentle voice, he said, "What are you doing? You've always been my most trusted subordinate."

It was only then that Mu Qinghe climbed to his feet. "Thank you, Eldest Young Master."

There was a large bruise patch on his forehead, which showed how hard he kowtowed earlier.

"You may go back and continue working on the task you were entrusted with. You don't have to be concerned about anything else."

It was a warning for him not to meddle in the competition any longer.

"Understood."

Jiang Yucheng then turned to leave.

It was only after a long while that Mu Qinghe slowly exhaled and turned to look at the two teacups on the table—Jiang Yucheng had left his tea untouched throughout.

He continued standing there for a long time and didn't even know when Hong Yao landed on his shoulder. The fiend—which was usually lively—was silent and subdued at this moment.

Mu Qinghe closed his eyes.

When he opened them again, his eyes had returned to their usual calm state. He then made a move to leave.