

The Gods 541

Chapter 541 - A Gaze That Could Kill

"Oh..." Yun Che stretched his neck, even he did not expect the Little Demon Empress to suddenly make such an ill-timed action.

The great hall descended into a dead silence for a few breaths, after which, a man slowly stood up from among the seats in the east wing; it was Duke Huai himself. He bowed in salute and said, "Reporting to the Little Demon Empress, it was this humble duke who arranged the seats."

"Hmph!" The Little Demon Empress raised her eyebrows and coldly said, "It has already been ten thousand years from the time the Twelve Families followed the First Demon Emperor to conquer the realm till today, and in these ten thousand years, the seating arrangement during a Demon Emperor's grand ceremony has never changed. So why did you change the seats of the Twelve Families? You'd better give this empress a satisfactory explanation!"

This time, he had arranged the seats to give the Little Demon Empress a show of his strength, to let her know that the power that should have belonged solely to the line of the Demon Emperor has now largely shifted towards him. But little did he expect that she would suddenly spring this difficult question on him during the grand ceremony. He replied in an unperturbed manner, "Reporting to the Little Demon Empress, this humble duke participated in the arrangement of this grand ceremony, so I did not dare be careless. I had first asked the various Patriarchs and Dukes on where they would prefer to be seated, but I did not think that the majority of them wanted to sit in the east wing, so this humble duke independently decided to change the seating arrangements of the Twelve Families and the various Duke Palaces. I hope that the Little Demon Empress will forgive me."

The words that had just been uttered by Duke Huai did not mean much to the people who came from outside the Demon Imperial City. At most, they would only find it strange that Duke Huai would ask the various families where they wanted to sit when he was organizing this grand ceremony. But the powers within the Demon Imperial City naturally understood exactly what he was saying... That the so-called 'majority that wanted to sit in the east wing was clearly "the majority who were willing to swear their allegiance to Duke Huai"!

"Independently decided?" The Little Demon Empress narrowed her eyes slightly and even this slight change in expression caused the atmosphere within the entire great hall to abruptly turn cold, "And who gave you this power to make such a decision? The Twelve Families and the Duke Palaces are supposed to be placed on equal footing, and the only one who has the power to change the seats of the Twelve Families and the Duke Palaces, is only this empress! When was it up to you to arrange the positions of the Twelve Families?! In the next grand ceremony, do you also want to change the seat of this empress as well?!"

"This humble duke does not dare!" Duke Huai hurriedly bowed and lowered his head, his face was filled with anxiety and panic as he secretly ground his teeth together... With all the heroes of the realm as witness, he naturally could not retort even if he received such a harsh rebuke from the Little Demon Empress; he could only earnestly endure it.

The Little Demon Empress' gaze swiveled and she looked in the direction of the various Guardian Families and Duke Palaces seated in the east wing. Her tender lips curled up and she slowly punctuated each and every word in an extremely bland voice, "All of you... like... to sit in the east wing?"

The east wing held seven of the great Guardian Families and sixty Duke Palaces, but under the concentrated gaze of the Little Demon Empress, every single one of them felt their hearts tighten up in anxiety as their hands turned cold and clammy. It felt as if an icy-cold blade had been placed at their throats. This feeling was exacerbated by the fact they all had harbored ulterior motives in their heart. Forget about talking, none of them even dared to raise their heads. Every single one of them held their breaths and did not even dare to gasp for air.

And even Yun Che, who was seated in the west wing, could feel an incomparably heavy aura of oppression. He couldn't help but be silently amazed... This Little Demon Empress' aura was simply too terrifying, but then again, it was not surprising... One hundred years ago, she first lost her father and then lost the husband she had married not too long ago... who was also her younger brother. As the last person who bore the bloodline of the Demon Emperor, she had no choice but to bear this heavy burden... and despite that, all these years, certain people had been trying to snatch away the ten thousand year legacy of her ancestors...

"To be filled with hatred against both heaven and earth" was not even enough to describe the feelings she held in her heart and soul.

Moreover, she was simply too tiny and delicate, while her features were the crown of the mortal world. So if she did not have a sufficiently imposing aura, how could she then rule over all the heroes of the realm?

The great hall was filled with a deathly stillness as the seven Guardian Families and sixty Duke Palaces didn't dare to reply. They had only thrown in with Duke Huai because they witnessed his strength growing stronger as the days passed, and if they didn't make such a choice, when the Little Demon Empress was forced to abdicate, even if they were not destroyed, they would definitely not be well off. So even if they were now inclined towards Duke Huai, it definitely did not mean that they did not fear the Little Demon Empress.

"Patriarch Helian, why don't you answer this empress' question? Why did you choose to sit in the east wing?"

As the Patriarch of the Helian Family, Helian Kuang had enough power and status to lord over the entire Illusory Demon Realm and his name fit his disposition as he was famous for being fearlessly domineering and arrogant. But once his name was abruptly spoken by the Little Demon Empress, the entire Helian Family felt their bodies fiercely quiver. He stood up and clasped his hands. But as he was about to speak, his gaze suddenly met with the gloomy and chilly gaze of the Little Demon Empress and his heart immediately froze in his chest as he felt a chill run through his entire body. His mouth flapped open quite a few times, yet he could not utter even a single word.

No one had expected the atmosphere to suddenly become frozen right as the grand ceremony began.

At this time, Yun Qinghong stood up and he spoke in a reverential tone, "I beseech the Little Demon Empress to calm her anger, this Yun has something to say."

The Little Demon Empress was unfazed and she blandly said, "Speak."

Yun Qinghong continued, "Yes... Today is the anniversary of the Little Demon Empress' hundred year reign. This ceremony is witnessed by all under heaven and all the heroes of the realm have come from the length and breadth of the realm to celebrate this day with you. Even though the change in the seating arrangement is a little unseemly, but in the end, seats are merely seats. In the eyes of this Yun, it is not such a big deal. If the Little Demon Empress is not happy that Duke Huai has independently rearranged the seats, you can order him to change it back once the grand ceremony is over. There is simply no need to dampen the atmosphere over such a trivial matter."

Yun Qinghong's intention was partly to advise the Little Demon Empress to remain calm, and partly as hidden mockery. The Little Demon Empress faintly arched her brows, and after that, she slowly nodded her head, "Patriarch Yun is indeed correct, this sort of trivial matter is simply not worthy of this empress' attention. Patriarch Yun, please be seated. Helian Kuang, you may also withdraw!"

One was asked to "please be seated", the other was ordered to "withdraw"; one was addressed as "Patriarch Yun" while the other was directly addressed as "Helian Kuang". It was so blindingly obvious who the Little Demon Empress favored more; even a fool could tell with a glance. The Helian Family had been suppressed by the Yun Family for ten thousand years but for the first time in history, they were the chief representatives. So not only were they unusually pleased with themselves, they also kept shooting taunting gazes over at the Yun Family to provoke them and show their dominance. But now, they had been slapped on the mouth by no less than the Little Demon Empress herself... and this was even done in front of all the heroes of the realm, as all their prestige went down the drain.

As for the Duke Huai who still stood there bowing, it was as if the Little Demon Empress had forgotten about his existence. She did not continue to bother with him and Duke Huai could only give a resentful laugh as he retook his seat.

Yun Che silently pondered to himself: The temperament of this Little Demon Empress was simply too unyielding and overbearing. Duke Huai tried to use the seating arrangements to give the Little Demon Empress a show of his strength but she borrowed this little display to slap him across the face... This woman, I definitely cannot afford to provoke her!

As Yun Che was lost in thought, he suddenly saw the Little Demon Empress' gaze swivel in his direction. His heart was filled with shock and he hurriedly ducked his head as he prattled on inwardly like a broken record... Please do not see me... Please do not see me... Please do not see me...

The Little Demon Empress tacitly nodded at Yun Qinghong, but all of the sudden, her eyes flashed fiercely and they bored in on the person who stood by Yun Qinghong's side.

The sudden change in the Little Demon Empress' eyes startled Yun Qinghong, but he immediately realized that the person the Little Demon Empress was scrutinizing was not him, but it was Yun Che instead. Just as he was about to rise and take the initiative to ask, the Little Demon Empress opened her lips and asked, "Patriarch Yun, this Empress has heard that you have just taken in a godson, is it that person who is beside you?"

Yun Che: #\$... As expected, I was still discovered!

Yun Qinghong stood up and replied, "Reporting to the Little Demon Empress, yes, it is as you say. My godson's surname is also Yun, with the name Che, and he has a great affinity with this Yun's family. Three month's ago, he saved my unworthy son's life and he even become sworn brothers with my unworthy son. So this Yun simply went with the flow and I took him in as a godson... Che'er, what are you waiting for? Rise and greet the Little Demon Empress."

Yun Che put on a brave face and rose while plastering an extremely "honest" smile on his face, "Yun Family's Yun Che... greets the Little Demon Empress."

Even though Yun Che's head was bent, he could still clearly feel a killing gaze piercing into his body, as if it wanted to directly pierce all his internal organs... Yun Che had never believed that a gaze could kill, but right now, the gaze of this Little Demon Empress could definitely cause a timid person's courage to rupture, causing him to die on the spot.

Fortunately, this killing gaze only endured for an instant. Following that, the Little Demon Empress' cold and lifeless voice rang through the air, and she only said three words, "You may sit."

Yun Che's bottom hit the chair and he silently breathed a sigh of relief.

Mu Yurou gently pulled on Yun Qinghong's sleeve and whispered, "Our son, has he met the Little Demon Empress before?"

"I'm afraid that it's a lot more than 'met' this time." Yun Qinghong said with a bitter laugh.

"But, in this period of time, Che'er has hardly left the house. Moreover, the Little Demon Empress is also not a figure that normal people can meet, so how is that possible?" Mu Yurou said in a mystified voice.

Yun Qinghong lapsed into a momentary silence but after that, he slowly said, "Three days ago, in the dead of the night, I detected Che'er concealing his own presence. After he had circled around the Yun Family household, he left and headed north... And his presence concealment could be said to be perfect, if not for the fact that I occasionally saw a black shadow flitting about, even I would not be able to detect it. Not long after that, the aura of the Golden Crow's flames exploded from somewhere north of the city and from the pureness of that aura, it could only be the Little Demon Empress. And it was only a short period after that incident that Che'er returned home... I didn't think too much of it back then, but now that I think about it, something 'big' seems to have happened that night, and those Golden Crow flames might very well have been directly targeted at Che'er."

"This..." Mu Yurou had a face full of astonishment.

The Little Demon Empress returned to her throne and her towering imperial majesty enveloped the entire Demon Imperial Hall, causing the air to be so stifled that it stopped moving, while each and every one of her words struck directly at everyone's heart and soul.

After the Little Demon Empress had found out that he was not dead, and it had to be in this particular great hall, even though Yun Che had been through extraordinary experiences, he was still scared witless. Among all the people he had seen in his two lives, whether it was tyrannical power, an astonishing manner, or a cutting gaze, no one could compare with this person... Of course, this excluded the abnormal existence that was Jasmine. But if the Emperor of the Divine Phoenix Nation, Feng Hengkong,

was compared with her, one could simply say that he would not even have a single speck of an emperor's prestige or might in comparison.

The Little Demon Empress' words reverberated in every corner of this great hall, but Yun Che did not continue to listen to what she said. Instead, he faintly shut his eyes and began to sincerely organize all of the findings regarding the history of the Twelve Families that he had gathered over this one month; and he began to ponder on how he should go about dealing with the coming scenario... Even though this Little Demon Empress had very nearly sent him on his way to the afterlife, he still had to repay this evil with kindness because he was a member of the Yun Family...

To think that there would actually come a day that I, Yun Che, would have to repay evil with kindness. Aghh!!!

"...Since this is so, let us start with the Northern Ocean Domain." The Little Demon Empress' gaze fell on someone who was seated in the back of the hall, "Is the ruler of the Northern Ocean Domain here?"

A tall and imposing man who was dressed fully in blue stood up, and he replied in an incomparably reverential and sincere voice, "Reporting to the Little Demon Empress, the Northern Ocean Domain is under this humble Kong Jingcang's governance. The Northern Ocean Domain currently has a population of seventy three million people, and this population consists of ninety-one different races; humans comprise forty percent, while demons comprise sixty percent... Seventy four years ago, the Wild Wolf Clan rebelled and this rebellion was quelled in four years... Fifty three years ago, a natural disaster suddenly occurred as the Northern Sky Mountain erupted, and this calamity was only averted because the Little Demon Empress had sent enough people to help... Currently, the Northern Ocean Domain is at peace, with no disasters or rebellions..."

"...This humble one is the lord of the Profound Demon City, Feng Daosong. Profound Demon City and its surrounding regions have a total population of fifty-three million. The population consists of two hundred and twenty seven races. The core of our economy is still the professions of crafting profound formations and blacksmithing. Currently, my Profound Demon City has three of the ten greatest profound formation masters in the Illusory Demon Realm..."

"This humble one is the lord of the Five Way Domain, Lan Tengwu... For the past one hundred years, we have defended the border, not even letting down our guards for a single day, and we will definitely not allow the villains of the Profound Sky Continent to even take a step into our realm..."

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The various lords began to declare the prominent events that had happened to their territories one after the other. In the center of the east wing, Duke Huai had a leisurely expression on his face, but his eyes betrayed his true unease. He kept looking in the direction of the Yun Family, and finally he crossed gazes with Yun Qinghong. Both of their eyes narrowed at the same time and Duke Huai gave a dull laugh... Yun Qinghong responded with a faint smile, but his smile carried an unmistakable clear disdain.

Duke Huai's eyebrows furrowed fiercely.

Even though the two of them only had their eyes and expressions cross for that short span of time, they had issued what could be said to be an “ultimatum” to each other. Duke Huai was asking: Have you thought things through yet, and decided to stand with this duke? This is your, and the Yun Family’s, final chance.

But Yun Qinghong’s reply was only a short two words:

Haha.

Chapter 542 - Conflict Begins

Duke Zhong, who was beside Duke Huai, saw his facial expression change, smiled lightly and said, “I can see that you are truly being cautious about Yun Qinghong, and frankly, I can’t really understand it.”

"This duke will not deny it." Duke Huai said with a stony expression, "This duke was most at ease during the years he was crippled. But when he healed without any warning, it was like a needle pierced through this duke’s heart... This duke felt that Yun Qinghong sees through what this duke has prepared to do at this Grand Ceremony, and when that moment comes, he would certainly take action."

"If you fear Yun Qinghong that much, you must know his temper very well. Then, according to your understanding of him, do you think it’s possible for him to fall on our side?" Duke Zhong asked gradually.

Duke Huai’s breathing stuttered, then, he shook his head. "Impossible."

"If we already know that it’s impossible, then why waste our emotions and hold on to this non-existent chance to try and rope him in?"

Duke Huai didn’t say a word.

"If Duke Huai is really afraid of Yun Qinghong ruining the plan, there is a simple way to take care of the problem." Duke Zhong said with a sneer, “We could make it so he wouldn’t even be qualified to speak later, wouldn’t that solve the problem?”

The moment Duke Zhong said this, Duke Huai instantly knew what he wanted to do. After a brief silence, he gradually nodded his head.

Duke Zhong smiled, glanced sideways, slightly moved his lips, and sent a profound energy sound conversion to a person sitting on the edge of the seats, and signaled the person.

Yun Che wasn’t interested in the things the lords had to report. After thinking for a long time, he suddenly asked Yun Qinghong, “Father, the people who joined together to provoke the public’s opinion and pressured the Little Demon Empress to punish our Yun Family, were the seven Guardian Families across us, right?”

Yun Qinghong didn’t say a word, and nodded slowly.

Yun Che locked his eyebrows and said, “At the Hundred Year Reign Ceremony, the Guardian Families and each major Duke Palace would perform on stage, there’s even a tradition of a sparring competition, and there would be no exception this time. If I’m not wrong, the dukes across us would definitely find an opportunity to bring this up, and the method of the sparring competition would very likely be the East Wing against the West Wing.”

"That's what Duke Huai would do," Yun Qinghong said calmly. "With the Little Demon Empress who could take a great setback, and us who refuse to join his faction, how could he not? Or else, he wouldn't have deliberately arranged the seats like this."

"It all comes down to what reason he uses."

Two hours had passed calmly at the Grand Ceremony. This Grand Ceremony, according to the original plan, would continue for at least three days and three nights. This was just the beginning.

At this moment, King Zhennan, who was stationed in the southern border, had just finished reporting what had happened over the hundred years. As soon as he got down, in the corner of the seats on the East, a young duke whose position was basically on the bottom rung suddenly stood up.

The Little Demon Empress glanced at him, and said faintly, "Duke Chu, is there something you would like to report?"

"Yes!" The person who was called 'Duke Chu' quickly moved to the front of the seats. When he spoke, his voice was obviously trembling. "There is an issue that has been bothering this humble duke for a long time. But this is an important issue, and it could possibly upset some of the superior figures here, so I don't know whether or not I should bring it to light."

The Little Demon Empress' dark eyes narrowed, and she said coldly, "If you don't know whether or not you should speak, then don't speak. Step down!"

"..." It was as if Duke Chu's throat was suddenly stabbed with a knife. He prepared for so long, but he couldn't utter the words that were on the tip of his tongue, and his face was bloated until it was all red... when he said he didn't know whether or not he should bring it to light, it was only something he said to slow down and foreshadow his next words, but he didn't expect the Little Demon Empress to shoot him down with just one sentence before having the chance to continue to say it.

His face twitched as he responded 'yes,' and stepped down awkwardly.

"This idiot!" In the center of the east wing, Duke Huai scoffed.

At this moment, a person who was not far on the right from where Duke Chu was sitting stood up. From his appearance, he was one of the dukes as well. He cupped his hands, and said in a loud voice, "Reporting to Little Demon Empress, this humble duke has something to say! This issue had been on this humble duke's mind for a long time. If it were said out loud, it might also upset some of the superior figures or even induce hatred. But this is an issue related to the Illusory Demon Royal Family's reputation, and even the future of the Illusory Demon Realm. Even if people hold grudges against this humble duke, I have to say it no matter what."

"Oh, is that so?" The eyes of the Little Demon Empress were like stars dotted in the night sky. "Then this empress shall listen to what Duke Xiang has to say, and see exactly how serious this issue is!"

Duke Xiang slightly gnashed his teeth, and said with a serious expression, "This humble duke earnestly requests Little Demon Empress to remove the Yun Family from the Twelve Guardian Families, and replace them with a force that has the ability and the qualification!"

"WAHH—"

The entire hall immediately went into an uproar with what Duke Xiang had said. No one had thought that the 'serious issue' Duke Xiang was going to address would be this shocking!

The Twelve Guardian Families were the twelve families who followed the First Demon Emperor and ruled the Illusory Demon Realm. Their existences were supreme like a sacred ground, and they were on the top of the Illusory Demon Realm. The Yun Family, in the past ten thousand years, had been the head of the twelve families, and had always been most valued by the Demon Emperor's Clan. They had only been rapidly declining in the last century because of the Profound Sky Continent incident... Even though this Duke Xiang was also a duke, his position was low in the Royal Clan. Their Duke Palace's force was not enough to compare with any of the twelve families. Now, in the presence of the Little Demon Empress, the Twelve Families, and all those under heaven, he unexpectedly asked the Yun Family to step down from the Twelve Guardian Families!

This was simply like dropping a clap of thunder from the sky.

The Little Demon Empress suddenly narrowed her eyes, and the top and bottom of the Yun Family were all furious. Yun Qinghong didn't have much of a reaction, but not everyone was as calm as Yun Qinghong. Great Elder Yun Waitian suddenly stood up, not even caring that this was the Grand Ceremony, and cursed out loud, "You bold maniac, who do you think you are, how dare you speak of such nonsense!"

That Duke Xiang was surprisingly calm as he said softly, "Great Elder Yun, please watch your manners. Don't let the world know that the Yun Family's manners are like this."

Yun Waitian sneered, "My manners are only for people who deserve it. An ungrateful dog who abandons its ancestors for profit and obey to someone else's orders doesn't deserve my manners."

Yun Waitian's words were so vicious that they made Duke Xiang's calm face suddenly turn into the color of pig liver, as his lips trembled with rage, "Yun Waitian... you... you... you have gone too far!"

"You were the one who went too far!"

"Enough, the two of you, don't go into a war of words." Duke Huai stood up at this moment. The Yun, Mu, Under Heaven, Yan, and Su Family had already been suspicious of the shocking words this Duke Xiang suddenly stood up and said, thinking that it must be an order from Duke Huai. Now that he had stood up, it made it even more unmistakable.

Duke Huai didn't wait for the Little Demon Empress to speak first, and said while smiling, "Duke Xiang, the Yun Family had been part of the Twelve Guardian Families for all previous generations of Demon Emperors, for ten thousand of years. They could be said to have had many contributions, but you suddenly report to ask the Little Demon Empress to have the Yun Family be removed from the Guardian Families. You should at least give us a reason for it."

Duke Xiang quickly said, "If this humble duke doesn't have a sufficient reason, how would I dare to say something about an issue so serious. And removing the Yun Family from the Twelve Guardian Families is not something that was thought of only by this humble duke. Of the people this humble duke knows, eight or nine out of ten agree! The reasons are naturally sufficient, and each and every one of them is known by all."

Duke Huai stood up with his hands on his waist. It emboldened this Duke Xiang's confidence, as he said with composure, "As the Demon Emperor's Twelve Guardian Families, a strong ability is the basic requirement! At least, they should have an unbeatable late stage Monarch! Back in the days, the Yun Family had the most late stage Monarchs among the Twelve Guardian Families, and none of the families could compete with them. But, a hundred years ago, Yun Family's eleven late stage Monarchs all died in the Profound Sky Continent! The Yun Family now doesn't even have a late stage Monarch! The strongest of the whole family, Grand Elder Yun Jiang, is only at the sixth level of the Sovereign Profound Realm."

"The whole world knows, having a late stage Monarch was the symbol of the highest force in the Illusory Demon Realm, but the Yun Family doesn't have one anymore! A Yun Family like this doesn't even count as a top force, so how could it be qualified to be one of the Twelve Guardian Families directly under the Little Demon Empress? How could they have the ability to guard the Demon Emperor's bloodline?"

"Poor remark." Duke Huai shook his head. "A hundred years ago, the Yun Family faced incredible difficulties. These were the consequences caused the impulse of Yun Canghai. Even if the Yun Family doesn't have a late stage Monarch now, with Yun Family's background, and given enough time, there might be one in the future."

"No! That's impossible!" Duke Xiang shook his head assuredly, "What decides a family's future is the ability of the young generation! But, in Demon Imperial City, who doesn't know how weak the Yun Family's young generations are! Of those under the age of thirty, less than five are Overlords, and the highest power they have now is at the second level of the Tyrant Profound Realm... Oh, I heard that there was a Yun Xinyue who was passable, but unfortunately, he had already passed away."

"With a Yun Family like this, what kind of future do they still have? What qualifications do they have to hold on to the title of Guardians? If a family like this can guard the Demon Emperor, wouldn't it be a disgrace to the Demon Emperor's bloodline, and be laughed at by the whole world?!"

"Shut up!!" It was as if Yun Waitian's heart was stabbed when the name "Yun Xinyue" was brought up. He trembled in anger, "The reason the young generation of Yun Family are weak, was because we were plotted against, and were forced to endure the heavy liability. Or else, with the background of the Yun Family, and the power of Profound Handle of the Yun Family, we would never be weaker than anyone!"

Duke Xiang sneered, "Great Elder Yun's words has just reminded this duke. That's right, Great Elder Yun's words is the second reason! And that's the Yun Family's misdeed!"

Duke Xiang pointed at where the Yun Family was sitting, and yelled loudly, "The Little Demon Empress has been on the throne for a full hundred years, but still wasn't able to inherit the Golden Crow in Golden Crow Lightning Flame Valley... and why is that so?! Could it be that your Yun Family don't know why?!"

"You!!" Yun Waitian's body shook violently; this was his Yun Family's greatest weakness. Even though he was furious, he couldn't say anything about it. Because a hundred years ago, the Demon Emperor's Seal was lost because of the Yun Family, and the Mirror of Samsara was also lost because of the Yun Family... these were irrefutable facts.

"Your Yun Family lost the Demon Emperor's Seal, preventing the Little Demon Empress from awakening the Golden Crow's bloodline, to achieve the highest of powers... it was all thanks to you Yun Family! The

Mirror of Samsara was a treasure passed down from the First Demon Emperor. The previous Demon Emperor trusted you Yun Family fully, and let the Yun Family guard it, but you lost it... and even lost it in Profound Sky Continent, the land of our sworn enemy! Not only should you be sorry to the previous Demon Emperor, sorry to the Little Demon Empress... you should be even more sorry to all of the ancestors of the Demon Emperor's bloodline!"

"With low ability and such heinous crimes that arouses great indignation, the Little Demon Empress showed a lot of mercy by continuing to let you keep the title of Guardian Family for a full hundred years! But you Yun Family should ask yourselves, what capability, what qualifications, and what dignity do you have to remain on the position of Guardian!"

This Duke Xiang's words were very sharp, and his tone was very furious and agitated; each sentence was straight to the point. The people in the crowd were all moved by what he was saying and were agreeing to it, it was no wonder that Duke Huai let him come forward.

Clap, clap, clap, clap...

A burst of applause sounded, Duke Zhong stood up while clapping, and said with a serious expression, "Duke Xiang, that was on point! The Yun Family is sinful, and their strength has weakened too much. These issues are well-known by everyone, but they are still staying as one of the Guardian Families. At first, this duke didn't think much about it, but hearing what Duke Xiang had said, this duke felt enlightened by these facts. It's true that with the Yun Family's strength now, and the other sins that they've committed, they should not continue to carry on the responsibility of Guardian, or else, they really would disgrace and drag down the reputation of the Royal Family, and become a joke for everyone! Because of the Yun Family's crime, it was too merciful for the Little Demon Empress to only cut off their hundred years resources. It wouldn't be too much to kick them out of Demon Imperial City right this moment!"

Chapter 543 - Confrontation

"A load of rubbish!"

Old Man Mu stood up in rage, pointed towards Duke Zhong and Duke Xiang and roared, "The Yun Family has protected the Demon Emperor for ten thousand years and everyone knows their accomplishments are greater higher than the heavens! They are the most deserving to be the leading family of the Twelve Families! Even if they have faulted, it cannot hide the accomplishments that they have done for ten thousand years! You all know fully well the reason why the Yun Family's strengths have diminished! As for the future of the Yun Family, you guys are even less worthy to criticize it! Instead, I want to ask, for what motive do you all have for ganging up together to force the Yun Family out of the Twelve Guardian Families?!"

Mu Feiyan was the eldest among the Twelve Patriarchs. Along with his loud voice and dense profound strength, he caused the ears of everyone in the great hall to buzz. Duke Zhong did not panic and merely laughed: "Senior Mu, please calm down. What sort of motive could this duke have? This duke is just a small duke within the Illusory Demon Royal Family, whose blood originates from the First Demon Emperor. Naturally, all this duke does is for the sake of the Demon Emperor's bloodline. Even if this duke would invite hatred onto myself, for the sake of the Demon Emperor's bloodline, this duke has no choice but to say it."

“How righteous you sound.” The Su Family Patriarch, Su Xiangnan, stood up, then looked intently at Duke Huai and Duke Zhong, “Although my Su Family has also existed to protect the Demon Emperor for generations, based on qualifications and accomplishments, we are far below the Yun Family! If even the Yun Family has to be expelled from the ranks of the Guardian Families, then which family would deserve to stay?! Wouldn’t this be disheartening for all the people out there who are loyal to the Demon Emperor’s bloodline?!”

“What Patriarch Su said is completely wrong!” The Helian Family Patriarch, Helian Kuang, rose from his seat and loudly replied, “The fact that the Yun Family has vast accomplishments is something that cannot be denied, but they have also committed an unforgivable mistake that would cause all the Demon Emperor Ancestors unrest! The Yun Family’s vast achievements have led to them obtaining their deserved glory and rewards! So shouldn’t they receive their deserved punishment for the mistakes that they have done? If they’re still allowed to stay in the Guardian Families after such an unforgivable mistake, wouldn’t it be telling us, the other Guardian Families that we don’t have to worry about making mistakes, and can act as we please?! If it’s like this, how could the souls of the generations of Demon Emperors rest? Where would the justice of the legislation of Illusory Demons lie? This is what would be truly disheartening for the people!”

“I, Helian Kuang, represent the entire Helian Family to fully support Duke Xiang and Duke Zhong in kicking the Yun Family out of the Guardian Families!”

“We, the Jiufang Family, also fully support the removal of the Yun Family from the Guardian Families!”

“We, the Nangong Family, fully support as well!”

A large faction that supported kicking the Yun Family out of the Guardian Families rose in support. Just like a hurricane sweeping past this ocean, a large commotion was created... Naturally, this commotion came from the east wing seats. At the same, some people who weren’t too sure were influenced by what was said and started to feel that the Yun Family did not deserve to remain within the Guardian Families. They shouted along as well, and as the commotion became louder, more and more people were influenced along. In the blink of an eye, the Yun Family had become the target of the people, as the entire hall burst with shouts for the Yun Family’s removal from the Guardian Families.

The only ones who were completely clear about what happened were the top powers of Demon Imperial City, especially the Guardian Families and those of the Duke Palaces sitting in the west wing seats. As the jeers grew louder and louder, all of them trembled in rage... Duke Huai’s faction was already frightening, if the Yun Family were to be chased away, they would not have any power to resist them anymore.

“Looks like this is where the will of the people lie. Looks like the Yun Family is no longer suitable to continue guarding the Little Demon Empress.” Duke Huai laughed.

The Yan Family Patriarch, Yan Zijong, stood up agitatedly, and raged: “All of you who have ulterior motives, don’t waste your efforts! We, the Guardian Families, only serve the bloodline of the Demon Emperor! In this world, only the Little Demon Empress is able to command the Guardian Families and decide our fates! The Little Demon Empress naturally has an opinion on whether the Yun Family deserves to remain in the Guardian Families! Other than the Little Demon Empress, none of you have any right to decide!”

The Little Demon Empress' expression sunk. Just as she was about to speak, Duke Huai spoke before she could, and said loudly: "Patriarch Yan's words are indeed correct. As the ruler of the Illusory Demon Realm, the Little Demon Empress is naturally the highest authority! But, not only do we, the various dukes and the guardian families, have to serve her loyally, we also have the duty to remonstrate her, especially concerning major matters that involve the prestige and pride of the Demon Emperor bloodline! The mistake that the Yun Family made is undoubtedly a major one, yet the Little Demon Empress allowed the Yun Family to remain within the Guardian Families for the past hundred years, and only received small punishments. This is already great magnanimity that the Little Demon Empress has shown the Yun Family. However, if the Yun Family remained in the Guardian Families, it would be too soft-hearted of her... and how would such soft-heartedness be befitting of a ruler! A real ruler should be clear with rewards and punishment and even decisive when killing! Otherwise..."

"Otherwise what?" Even though the Little Demon Empress looked calm, her gaze was icy cold: "Looks like Duke Huai is more competent than this empress on how to be a ruler."

"This humble duke does not dare." Duke Huai replied calmly: "The Yun Family and my Duke Palace have no grudges; Patriarch Yun and this humble duke could even be considered to be friends. All that this humble duke has said does not benefit me other than causing the Yun Family Patriarch to be unhappy with this humble duke, or even hate this humble duke. However, this is something that this humble duke has to say... This humble duke is absolutely sincere, and all that this humble duke has done is for the Illusory Demon Royal Family! I beg Little Demon Empress to please consider!"

"This humble duke also begs Little Demon Empress to please consider!" Duke Zhong said in a righteous manner.

"Little Demon Empress, the Twelve Guardian Families definitely cannot lose the Yun Family, definitely cannot!" Su Xiangnan shouted out respectfully.

The arena was instantly chaotic, none of the rulers outside of the Demon Imperial City could have imagined that just one phrase from Duke Xiang would lead to such a huge commotion. At this point, the smarter ones were already able to see some things regarding the situation.

Then, an elderly duke who was from the late Demon Emperor's generation stood up, and said: "Since this matter is looked so heavily upon by the various dukes and guardian families and has created such a conflict, it cannot be rashly decided. Otherwise, it would only be disheartening for the citizens. However, this old subject has a suggestion."

The Little Demon Empress looked on coldly without speaking. Since the old man was sat at the east wing seats, he was obviously on the side of Duke Huai and would definitely not say anything that was beneficial to her. However, with so many people present, she obviously could not reprimand a thousand year old subject; she only inwardly sneered.

"Senior, please speak, I'm all open to ideas." Duke Huai looked on respectfully.

The elderly duke sighed pretentiously, and said: "The various dukes and guardian families are the cornerstones of Illusory the Demon Realm. Other than the Little Demon Empress, the dukes and the guardian families do indeed have the most right to speak. It seems as though the decision of whether the Yun Family is qualified to remain in the Guardian Families only concerns the Yun Clan themselves,

but in regards to such a major matter, it cannot be decided based on one person's private wishes. Since it's like this, why not let all the dukes and guardian families whose right to speak is only second to the Little Demon Empress help the Little Demon Empress decide. Since everyone is gathered here, we shall let them witness whether there are more people supporting the Yun Family to remain within the Guardian Families, or whether there are more who support their removal from the Guardian Families. Whichever side has more people, will be the side we shall abide by. Isn't this the fairest way?!"

"Little Demon Empress, how is this old subject's suggestion?"

What the old duke said was definitely reasonable, fair and without loopholes. Under such conditions, even if the Little Demon Empress's temperament was much tougher, she would still not be able to retort against his words. On the other hand, Duke Huai was already nodding in agreement: "If the majority of the dukes and the guardian families who have been guarding the Demon Emperor along with the Yun Family also think that the Yun Family does not have any right to remain, yet they still remain, this duke would not be satisfied, the whole Illusory Demon Royal Family would not be satisfied, and even everyone in this world would not be satisfied!"

"This is indeed the fairest method and this duke would not have any complaints about the results obtained from such a method." Duke Zhong also said loudly.

"Good!" Duke Huai raised a hand, righteous asking: "Alright! Then let this duke and everyone else clearly see whether the Yun Family has the right to remain... Various Illusory Demon Dukes, all the Patriarchs of the Guardian Families, those who agree with this duke that the Yun Family should be kicked out of the Guardian Families, please rise!"

Whoosh!!

Just when Duke Huai finished speaking, Helian Family's Patriarch Helian Kuang, Chiyang Family's Patriarch Chiyang Bailie, Bai Family's Patriarch Bai Yi, Nangong Family's Patriarch Nangong Zhi, Lin Family's Patriarch Lin Guiyan, Jiufang Family's Patriarch Jiufang Kui, Xiao Family's Patriarch Xiao Xifeng and sixty various other Duke Palaces all stood up.

"The Yun Family has long lost the right to remain, they must be removed! I, Helian Kuang am the first to support this!"

"What Duke Huai has said is what I, Chiyang Bailie, has thought all these years!"

"If the Yun Family remains, my Bai Family would not be satisfied!"

Seven Guardian Families, Sixty Duke Palaces; in terms of numbers, this was sufficient to completely overwhelm the opposition. Within the shouts for the Yun Family to leave the Guardian Families, Duke Zhong broke into a slight smile, whispering to Duke Huai: "Now Duke Huai no longer has to worry about Yun Qinghong spoiling matters, right? Once they are kicked out of the Guardian Families, they won't have any rights to speak at this ceremony."

Duke Huai squinted, then suddenly laughed coldly: "Such a great occasion and atmosphere, it's such a waste to only beat down a Yun Family."

Duke Zhong eyes flashed: "Duke Huai, what do you mean?"

“Of course it is to use this opportunity to embarrass those fellows who still remain obstinate, making them unable to raise their heads and straighten their back during this Grand Ceremony. Also, we can let Little Demon Empress know just how easy it is for this duke to replace her, heh...”

“Looks Duke Huai is already well aware of what to do next. Hehe, as expected of Duke Huai, to be able to follow you is the smartest decision this duke has made.” Duke Zhong laughed heartily.

Without question, no matter if it was the Guardian Families or the Duke Palaces, those who stood up were all from the east wing seats. Old Man Mu laughed coldly and roared: “All those who oppose to the Yun Family leaving, stand up... Do you really think we’re all herbivores?!”

Old Man Mu’s words were deafening. Su Family’s Patriarch Su Xiangnan, Under Heaven Family’s Patriarch Greatest Ambition Under Heaven, Yan Family’s Patriarch Yan Chengkong and the forty Duke Palaces on the west wing seats all stood up neatly, each one of them with serious and angry expressions.

One side had seven Guardian Families and sixty Duke Palaces.

Excluding the Yun Family, the other side only had four Guardian Families and forty Duke Palaces.

It was obvious which side was stronger with just one glance.

What was even more obvious was that all the families that wanted the Yun Family to leave the Guardian Families were in the east wing seats.

And those who opposed the Yun Family leaving were all seated in the west wing seats.

Even a fool could tell that now there was something was odd about this with such an obvious confrontation.

This was obviously two entirely different factions!

This was not a fight over the leaving or staying of the Yun Family, but the confrontation between two factions that suddenly sprung up.

What was even more evident, was that Duke Huai’s faction, was far stronger than the faction the Yun Family resided in.

Chapter 544 - Sinister Motives

It was instantly a scene of chaos. For those who supported the Yun Family, or more accurately, the Guardian Families and Duke Palaces who were still loyal to the Little Demon Empress; they were weaker in number, but the difference in strength was not overwhelming. Furthermore, those who stood on the side of the Demon Emperor’s bloodline stood upright, and they seemed to be even stronger than those whose heart had ulterior motives.

The Yun Family, who was in the midst of all this chaos, remained calm. Especially Patriarch Yun Qinghong, who sat there the whole time without saying anything.

However, not saying anything did not mean he had not communicated with anyone. In the midst of the conflict between the two parties, he had already sent several profound energy sound transmissions to the Little Demon Empress.

“Little Demon Empress, please control your emotions. Now is definitely not the best time for you interfere... Also, you shouldn’t unyieldingly protect our Yun Family. Duke Huai’s faction is hoping for you to do so.”

“This matter, let my Yun Family completely handle it!”

The Little Demon Empress’s temper was something Yun Qinghong knew best... Back then, he was beaten up by the Little Demon Empress and had to lie in bed for a month to recuperate. Ever since she became the Little Demon Empress, her temper only worsened. With this situation and her temper, if it weren’t for Yun Qinghong sending a sound transmission to immediately to stop her, she would definitely have started killing already.

Just when Yun Qinghong thought of the best solution to handle the situation, and was about to stand up, Duke Huai suddenly laughed and said, “Everyone, please calm down. Regarding to whether or not the Yun Family should remain as one of the Guardian Families, it’s obvious that more people support removing the Yun Family from the Guardian Families.”

“So what if there’s more people!” Mu Yubai replied harshly, “Duke Huai, do you really think that by pulling enough people towards your side, you can hoodwink everyone? Heh, a bunch of ungrateful, unfilial people. Even if there were ten times more people, they’re all just a bunch of rubbish that everyone looks down upon!”

Mu Yubai’s words instantly restarted the commotion in the great hall, turning it into an uproar yet again. Mu Feiyan nudged him with his elbow and threw him a mean look. Mu Yubai scoffed, and looked away.

Duke Huai’s expression did not change, as he spoke in a leisurely manner, “Brother Mu’s words are something this duke does not understand. However, Brother Mu’s first sentence was indeed true, a greater number of people doesn’t mean anything. After all, in our Illusory Demon Realm, or any other world, what decides everything is not the number...but strength!”

“What are you trying to pull this time!” Yan Zijing asked in caution. They definitely would not naively believe that Duke Huai’s “a greater number of people doesn’t mean anything” was speaking up for them. He definitely had an even more sinister motive.

“What this duke means is simple. Solely based on the number of people, we have thirty percent more than your side! However, you all would definitely not be satisfied based on numbers alone and neither would the rulers who came from the other places. Therefore, this duke shall represent all those in favor of removing the Yun Family from the Guardian Families, and propose a method much fairer, and easier to convince you all... At the same time, treat this as an opportunity gifted to the Yun Family from this duke!”

“During all the previous Demon Emperor’s Hundred Year Reign Ceremonies, there has always been the tradition where the various Guardian Families and Duke Palaces would perform on stage, show off their skills, strengths and might. This is the Little Demon Empress’s first Hundred Year Reign Ceremony and it naturally cannot be excluded! So how about this...” Duke Huai raised his hands up, grinned as he snapped his fingers, “Each side select twelve people to compete. Of course, in the previous Reign Ceremony competitions, it has always been battles between the young generation. After all, the strength of the younger generation determines the position of a force for the next hundred years. There

would be no exception this time! The range of the age for choosing would be those who are below the age of thirty five!”

“If we luckily managed to win in the end, then you guys wouldn’t have any more complaints, right?” Duke Huai asked with all smiles.

“Good! Duke Huai’s suggestion is great!” Duke Zhong praised.

“In terms of numbers, we have already won. But by competing with strengths, the results would be more convincing. I have no objections!” Helian Kuang agreed loudly.

Duke Huai’s suggestion made everyone seated in the east wing reveal a mocking smile, and darkened the expressions of the ones seated in the west wing.

They knew fully well that the west wing did not lose only in terms of numbers, but they also had a huge disadvantage in terms of “quality”.

The east wing contained seven of the Guardian Families. If each family sent their number one genius of the young generation, then seven representatives would be the top seven elites of Illusory Demon Realm’s young generation: Helian Family’s Helian Ba, Chiyang Family’s Chiyang Yanwu, Bai Family’s Bai Jie, Nangong Family’s Nangong Yan, Lin Family’s Lin Hanchuan, Jiufang Family’s Jiufang Yu, and Xiao Family’s Xiao Donglai... Every one of them were figures whose reputation resounded within the entire Illusory Demon Realm.

As for the west wing, the members of the young generation who were on the same level were only Su Family’s Su Zhizhan, Yan Family’s Yan Chengkong, Under Heaven Family’ Number Six Under Heaven, and Mu Family’s Mu Hengyi... Yun Family did not have any disciples of the young generation at that level; the only one, Yun Xinyue, had already died tragically.

Just based on strength alone, Su Zhizhan and Helian Ba were the joint strongest members of the young generation within the guardian families. He was also the only person who could stand his ground from the west wing seats. For the other three, Number Six Under Heaven was only in the fourth level of the Tyrant Profound Realm while Yan Chengkong and Mu Hengyi were in the third level of the Tyrant Profound Realm.

As for the other side, among the favored children of the seven families, the weakest was still a fourth level of the Tyrant Profound Realm!

This was even not the worst part.

In the east wing seats, there were five members of the “Illusory Demon Seven Scions” who signified the most pinnacle strength of the young generation within Illusory Demon Realm!

Adding them to the seven geniuses of the seven guardian families, there were twelve people!

This was also the reason why Duke Huai suggested for each side to select twelve participants.

In the west wing seats, there were only two members of the “Illusory Demon Seven Scions”.

And these two... were ranked sixth and seventh.

In the west wing, the various patriarchs and dukes all gnashed their teeth in anger. With such a disparity in strength, how could the west wing win! The only possible result was not just an ordinary defeat, but an overwhelming one! Even though Duke Huai denounced his advantage in terms of numbers and seemed as though he gave the Yun Family a “chance”, his true motive was to chase the Yun Family out, while, at the same time, mercilessly defeat the families and dukes that did not stand on his side in front of everybody present; an extremely vicious thought.

“As for the rules, although it would be different from the usual spars held in the past, it should be fairly simple.” While appreciating the faces of everyone from the west wing seats, Duke Huai continued in all smiles: “The two sides will fight one versus one and the loser is eliminated while the winner stays until he is defeated by his opponent. Therefore, the competition would naturally be decided when one side is completely defeated and the other still has people standing on stage. Not only would this be the fairest way to determine the victors, the differences in strength between the two parties can be easily seen. If both parties compete and only one person from each team remains on stage, then the strength of both parties would be similar. However, if one side is completely defeated and the other side still has numerous people who have not competed yet... Tsk, tsk, wouldn’t that be extremely embarrassing... Do you guys... dare accept?”

The moment Duke Huai suggested this rule, the faces of the people from the west wing seats darkened yet again, their hearts becoming bitter.

If it was one versus one, twelve people each battling only once with the other side for twelve matches in total, and the number of matches won was used to decide the winner, then if their strength were extremely luckily malpositioned, the west wing side would still have that tiny bit of hope to win, or tie.

However, even though Duke Huai was extremely confident that he would not lose, he still chose an elimination style competition, so it must be noted that Duke Huai was an extremely cautious person. Because such a method was indeed the fairest, and it also completely removed any hope of victory for the west wing seats. The difference in strength could also be clearly seen by the number of people who did not participate, and from there, completely humiliate the other party.

The faces of the patriarchs in the west wing were sullen and they gnashed their teeth in anger... This battle, definitely could not be accepted! Accepting it would be certain defeat and they would also be harshly disgraced!

Even though not accepting would result in a great loss for them, it still could not be accepted.

Greatest Ambition Under Heaven who usually did not participate in conflict could not remain seated any longer. He stood up and asked with a sullen expression: “Duke Huai, do not forget your own identity! Your influence is still not big enough that you can decide the fate of us guardian families! So what if you win? Why must the Yun Family leave the guardian families if you win?!”

“Patriarch Under Heaven asked a good question!” Duke Huai closed his eyes, which now seemed as narrow as swords: “Let this duke give you a clear answer: If we win, it means we are stronger than you! In this world, strength is absolute! The amount of strength one possesses is equal to how much right they have to speak and how much authority they have! As for the stronger party, they naturally have the right to decide. In regards to the weaker party, they do not even have the right to refuse! No matter what world, what plane, this always holds true!”

“Is Patriarch Under Heaven happy with my answer?”

Each word Duke Huai uttered showed the wild ambition he had. At this stage, many could already tell how unusual this was. Strength being absolute was indeed the most basic law in life. With so many people practicing profound cultivation, which one of them did not do it in order to pursue strength, and which one of them did not do it to be above others?!

Duke Huai’s profound strength was not something to be looked down upon and his followers possess enough strength to shake the world. These words of his were said with a confidence and haughtiness that caused Greatest Ambition Under Heaven to be left speechless for a while.

“Yun Qinghong, this matter happened because of your Yun Family and its results would impact the fate of your Yun Family. Do you not even have the guts to make a decision?” Duke Huai turned towards the silent Yun Qinghong: “You can tell this duke straight. This extremely fair competition, are you going to accept it, or not?”

“Brother-in-law, you can’t accept this! The only person who can decide your fate is the Little Demon Empress. You don’t have to bother with those hoodlums!” Mu Yubai said lowly.

What Mu Yubai had said were also the words echoing within the hearts of everyone sitting in the west wing seats. However, just as he finished speaking, Yun Che stood up before Yun Qinghong, and shouted loudly: “Accept! We must accept! Does our Yun Family have anything to fear?!”

“Preposterous!!!”

Mu Feiyan’s beard had already curled up: “This is a major matter of the Yun Family, why are you, a junior, speaking nonsense! Qinghong, Yubai is right. The Yun Family does not need to bother with this matter. Let me see who dares to strip your Yun Family off the Guardian Families!”

Chapter 545 - Yun Che’s Attack

“Hahahahaha!” Duke Huai threw back his head and laughed loudly. He shook his head, and his face expressed mockery, “Tsk-tsk-tsk-tsk, the Yun Family who was once the head of the Guardian Families and gloried for ten thousand years doesn’t even have the guts to accept the competition, and need other families to stand up for them now. So pathetic and pitiful. A Yun Family like this really doesn’t qualify to even look this duke in the eye. If they could still be one of the Guardian Families, it would be the biggest joke in the world, and it would be our Illusory Demon Realm’s number one laughingstock. Hahahaha.”

“Brother Yun, don’t listen to him!” Su Xiangnan’s eyebrows lowered as he said, “He was just provoking you. Everyone under heaven witnessed your Yun Family’s honor, and no one dares to erase it. I believe it more than anyone else that the Yun Family being at low ebb is only a temporary thing. The Yun Family has you, Yun Qinghong, and the protection of the heroic spirits of Yun Family’s ancestors. It will one day rise again!”

“I completely agree with what Patriarch Su had said.” Yan Zijing nodded heavily, and directly sent Yun Qinghong a Profound Energy Sound Conversion, “You mustn’t accept the challenge! Or else, there would be no coming back from this; even our families and the Duke Palaces would all suffer a setback.”

Under the gaze of the crowd, Yun Qinghong stood up slowly. He didn't panic, and didn't seem to be expressing any anger. Instead, he looked directly at Duke Huai, and smiled lightly, "I agree with what Che'er had said. This battle, our Yun Family must accept!"

"What!" The three brothers, Mu Yubai, Mu Yukong, and Mu Yuqing, all yelled at the same time, "Brother-in-law, have you gone crazy?!!"

"Not crazy," Yun Qinghong said smilingly. Even though he was the one standing in the eye of the storm, he was the calmest out of everyone, "If someone wants to challenge, then our Yun Family should naturally accept the battle, and this does not have to do with whether or not it determines our Yun Family's destiny. For ten thousand of years, our Yun Family had encountered countless of battles, won countless of times, and have also been defeated before, but we have never chickened out!"

"If someone dares to challenge, then our Yun Family would dare to accept! Our Yun Family can lose, and we can afford to lose. But even if we suffered a crushing defeat, we would not lose our dignity!!"

Yun Qinghong's words resounded and echoed in the hall. It pierced in people's hearts, and made countless of people feel deep respect and admiration.

Old Man Mu raised his arms. He seemed to want to say something, shook his arms a little, and eventually put them down. He sighed and said, "Sigh, I knew you would make such a decision. You Yun Family are all stubborn. Yun Canghai was so, and so are you... Sigh, I guess that's that. Since you choose to accept the challenge, then we, the Mu Family, will fight by your side."

"Hehe, this momentum, sure enough, is still the same Yun Qinghong from twenty-five years ago!" Su Xiangnan bursted into laughter after a moment of silence. "If so, our Su Family will do everything to help!"

"Count our Under Heaven Family in!" Greatest Ambition Under Heaven said loudly. "Since Brother Yun had said so, then we shall advance and retreat together!"

"Can't do it without us Yan Family!" Yan Zijing nodded heavily towards Yun Qinghong.

The Little Demon Empress who was on the throne didn't make a statement because of Yun Qinghong's strong persuasion. Her eyes were flickering, as she looked towards the left side of Yun, Under Heaven, Su, Mu, and Yan Family... Duke Huai's ambitions, she had known long ago. As for how bad the situation was, she saw that even more clearly.

Under this situation, these five families were still willing to, and insisted, on standing by her side. This kind of pure loyalty, as well as the collective burst of pride in this nearly hopeless situation, let the feeling of being "moved" appear for the first time in hundred years in her emotions that were sealed in ice with resentment and sadness.

"Hehehehe, Yun Qinghong is Yun Qinghong after all." Duke Huai twisted his mouth, "You really didn't let me down. Even though you know you would definitely lose, you are not willing to be a coward."

"But you let me down." Within Yun Qinghong's calm and indifferent tone, there was deep contempt.

This calmness and contempt caused an incomparable discomfort to surface in Duke Huai's heart. He scoffed, and immediately looked away.

At this moment, Yun Che stepped forward, and used a voice loud enough so the people surrounding him could hear, "Father, may I take your place and say a few words to this Duke Huai?"

Yun Qinghong gave him a look, and nodded slowly.

"Good!" Yun Che's raised his head, and faced Duke Huai directly. His question to Yun Qinghong and his actions immediately gathered everyone's attention towards him.

Before, when the Little Demon Empress asked Yun Qinghong of his identity, it let everyone here know that he wasn't one of the Yun Family, and instead was Yun Qinghong's adopted son. Just now, when he yelled "accept the battle" before Yun Qinghong had even spoke, it made many people despise him, and now that he suddenly wanted to come out and speak to Duke Huai, they scoffed against this as well.

"Oh? You have something you want to say to this duke?" Duke Huai looked at him with a sideways glance, and laughed softly.

"I just want to ask Duke Huai a few questions." Yun Che smiled innocently, "You asked for this battle, does that mean if we lose, our Yun Family would have to leave the Guardian Families?"

"That's right." Duke Huai laughed mockingly. "As for the reason, this duke thinks that it had already been stated clearly enough."

"Oh!" Yun Che nodded, and said, "Then, what if we win? What good does it do for us?"

"Win? Hahahaha." Duke Huai looked to the side, threw his head back and laughed loudly. The east wing also immediately fell down laughing, as if the whole group just heard a huge joke. Even the face of the people sitting in west wing were twitching.

Yun Che said smilingly, "What? What is the meaning of Duke Huai laughing loudly like this? If the two sides were competing with our strengths, then there will be winners and losers. And in this world, there are no competitions that one side will 'absolutely' win! If there really were, then the match would be meaningless, and there would naturally be no need to continue this... Duke Huai, do you agree?"

Duke Huai's smile converged, and for the first time, he looked at Yun Che with some interest. The youngster in front of him was extremely calm and leisurely, even his gaze was unflinching. Duke Huai could vaguely see the shadow of Yun Qinghong within him. He smiled lightly, and said, "You are quite right. Since it's a duel, naturally, anyone can lose, and anyone can win. But no matter who loses and who wins, the results will be pretty clear. If we win, then your Yun Family will have to leave the Guardian Families. But if you win, then you can naturally stay within the Guardian Families, and the people who are against would have no complaints."

"Duke Huai, don't you think what you've said was ridiculous?" Yun Che's expression suddenly changed, and revealed a mocking smile.

"Ridiculous?" Duke Huai's eyebrows slanted.

"Not only is it ridiculous, it's extremely ridiculous." The expression in Yun Che's eyes became full of aggression. Even facing this imposing Duke Huai, his face clearly showed an incredible amount of contempt. "If we lose, the entire Yun Family would have to leave the place where we have stayed for a

whole ten thousand years. The lives and destinies of the top and bottom of the whole clan would be turned upside down, and the consequences would be extremely tragic.”

“But if you lose, you don’t suffer any consequences!” Yun Che scoffed. “How in the world could there be something so unfair! This duel can be described as a gamble. And the bargaining chip on our side is the destiny of the Yun Family. And you... don’t even have any bargaining chips. This kind of duel that doesn’t even have the most basic fairness, what point is there for a duel?”

Duke Huai’s eyes narrowed. Then, he laughed loudly, “Hahahaha, Yun Qinghong, you really did adopt a good son. I’m surprised that he knows how to advance while stepping back. But attempting to get this duke to give up with this kind of clumsy method, that’s too ridiculous. You want this duke to wager something? Very well. This duke shall give you this opportunity. Just tell me, what kind of leverage should our side give?”

“Since Duke Huai had said so, then I will not hold back.” Yun Che steadily raised his arm, pointed at the seven Guardian Families behind Duke Huai, and said, “If we win in the end, then of the families of Helian, Chiyang, Bai, Nangong, Lin, Jiufang, and Xiao, each family must turn in two and a half kilograms of Purple Veined Divine Crystals in a month! And you, Duke Huai, must gather ten kilograms of Purple Veined Divine Crystals to our Yun Family!

As soon as Yun Che said this, everyone in the hall was stunned. The expression of the seven great Guardian Families in the east wing suddenly changed. Even Yun Qinghong’s facial muscle twitched violently.

If defeated... every family would have to turn in two and a half kilograms of Purple Veined Divine Crystals... Two and a half kilograms of Purple Veined Divine Crystals, not Purple Veined Heaven Crystals, not even normal Purple Crystals!!

Two and a half kilograms of Purple Veined Heaven Crystals were already priceless. As for Purple Veined Divine Crystals, that was something that could be called as a worldly treasure. To more than ninety percent of the citizens in the Illusory Demon Realm’s worldview, it was a mythical item that only existed in legends. It was so precious that even the word “precious” couldn’t describe it.

A whole two and a half kilograms of Purple Veined Divine Crystals, even the Guardian Families who had the top strength, skill, and resources would have to take hundred of years to accumulate two and a half kilograms of Purple Veined Divine Crystals!

With the power of two and a half kilograms of Purple Veined Divine Crystals and the background of the Guardian Families, they could easily cultivate at least five Overlords of the age under thirty. This generation of Yun Family’s young disciples’ strengths had fallen back greatly, and the main reason was because of the extreme limitation of resources, especially of the Purple Veined Divine Crystals... in the past hundred years, they weren’t able to receive any of it.

If a Guardian Family really handed over two and a half kilograms of Purple Veined Divine Crystals, then their strengths would definitely fall just like the Yun Family in the following generations of the next hundred years... and the Yun Family who received a large amount of Purple Veined Divine Crystals from the seven families, would not find it hard to become strong.

Moreover, with Duke Huai's full ten kilograms... even if Duke Huai plundered everything from the sixty Duke Palaces that were on his side, it might not even add up to ten kilograms. And if he really did that, it would definitely induce the hatred of many of the Duke Palaces.

The "bargaining chips" Yun Che had shouted out, was far more than a lion opening its mouth wide!!

So, even if they knew they would absolutely not lose, the expressions of the seven great families and Duke Palaces all changed. Several of the Patriarchs' bodies just shivered, and they couldn't wait to point at Yun Che's nose and yell and curse at him.

Faced with this kind of "wager", Duke Huai was also starting to become unnerved. He laughed in a disdainful manner and said, "This duke didn't think that with your young age, your appetite would be so large. However, you are merely Yun Qinghong's adopted son. Even if Demon King Yun Canghai were alive, he wouldn't have the right to order this duke and the Duke Palaces behind this duke. Why must we listen to your words if we lost? Mn?"

"Duke Huai asked a good question!" Duke Huai's words not only failed to make Yun Che speechless, it in turn made his voice grow louder, "Let me give Duke Huai a clear answer: If we win, it means we are stronger than you! In this world, strength is absolute! The amount of strength one possesses is equal to how much right they have to speak and how much authority they have! As for the stronger party, they naturally have the right to decide. In regards to the weaker party, they do not even have the right to refuse! No matter what world, what plane, this always holds true!"

"Is Duke Huai satisfied with this answer?"

Duke Huai's face immediately became stiff, and everyone was stunned once again.

The passionate, ambitious words that Duke Huai shouted out earlier when he faced Greatest Ambition Under Heaven's questioning, was used by Yun Che without changing a word. Every single word was slapped back onto Duke Huai's face.

"These are Duke Huai's original words. I wonder if Duke Huai still remembers them?" Yun Che said smilingly. "Oh, if Duke Huai treats his own words like fart, then just pretend I never said anything, hehe, pretend I never said anything."

Many people in the west wing were gnashing their teeth. Old Mu Feiyan revealed his grinning lips and said, "Tsk, tsk, this brat... even though we can't win at all, and it would be useless to ask a hundred times more, being able to slap that guy on the face is also fantastic!"

Duke Huai's face darkened slightly, and he didn't make a sound. In this world, his own words were the hardest things to refute... because once he refuted them, then there was no doubt that he would be hitting his own face.

"Arrogant junior, you are not qualified to speak!!" The Jiufang family's Patriarch, Jiufang Kui, couldn't hold back anymore, as he stood up and roared angrily. Facing a whole two and a half kilograms of Purple Veined Divine Crystals, no one in the whole Illusory Demon Realm would be able to stay calm.

"Duke Huai, you don't have to acknowledge this junior!" Helian Peng said in a deep voice, "Yun Che, who do you think you are, what qualification do you have to clamor in front of Duke Huai. Get down from there this instant."

“Hahahahaha!” Yun Che threw his head back and laughed loudly. He shook his head, looked at Duke Huai and the seven Guardian Families, with a face full of contempt and mockery, “If we lose, the Yun Family would lose ten thousand years worth of mission, status, and honor. But our Yun Family, even facing these cruel consequences, and in the situation with an absolute disadvantage, we still dare to fight!”

“And if you lose, you merely lose two and a half kilograms of Purple Veined Divine Crystals! Compared to the ten thousand years of Yun Family’s honor, let alone two and a half kilograms, even two hundred and fifty kilograms is not worth mentioning! Pity, what a pity... when you were calling us out and trying to expel us, each and everyone of you were more thrilled than the other. And in the case when you have absolute advantage, facing a wager ten thousand times smaller than our Yun Family’s, you chicken out like this. Tsk-tsk-tsk-tsk, it really is ridiculous and pathetic. Lined up with a bunch of families like this as the Twelve Guardian Families, even I, am embarrassed for our Yun Family!”

“And you, Duke Huai!” Yun Che simply ignored the murderous gazes of the various patriarchs. He stared at Duke Huai and laughed coldly, “If you are ready to gather a bunch of people to expel our Yun Family, ready to arrange a battle, and ready to say it’s for the whole Illusory Demon Realm whenever you please... I thought you were bold and daring, but you are nothing more than this! I merely suggested a far smaller wager than our side, but you didn’t even have the guts to accept, and even need the people behind you to clamor and protect you. Hehe, compared to my Father... Oh, no-no, from what it seems like now, you don’t even have the qualifications to be compared to my Father.”

After saying that, Yun Che didn’t even bother to look at Duke Huai. He directly turned to Yun Qinghong and said, “Father, we should just not compete in this battle. The chickens across from us are ridiculous. If we treated them seriously, it would lower our Yun Family’s class.”

Chapter 546 - Showdown!

Duke Huai had always been as tranquil as water, as if he had everything in the palm of his hands, so this was the first time his face had turned green.

“Hahahaha! Good kid!” Once Old Man Mu saw Duke Huai’s expression turn ugly, he let out a completely unrestrained roar of laughter. Originally, their side had been suppressed by Duke Huai since the very beginning, and they were suppressed to the point until they could hardly even breathe. Now that Yun Che had shown up, he forced the other seven families to collectively lose their rags, and also made Duke Huai reveal a deflated expression... It simply felt way too refreshing.

Everyone discovered that they had completely underestimated this young man. When he faced Duke Huai, his temperament was calm and collected from start to finish, and he did not back down an inch. Moreover, his words were extremely sharp and incisive; they rendered Duke Huai speechless and caused each of the seven Patriarchs to tremble in rage.

And what caused the people to truly gasp in astonishment was the immense nerve Yun Che showed! The person who was standing opposite him was Duke Huai, an individual who could strike a profound fear in the hearts of the Patriarchs of the Guardian Families and even the Little Demon Empress. Not only was Yun Che vigorous towards him, he yelled at him freely and recklessly. The imposing Duke Huai was called out to be good-for-nothing, and a chicken that cannot even be compared to his father. That expression of disdain and his tone of despise was clearly seen and heard by everyone.

Just based on what Yun Che just said earlier, the thought of killing him had already emerged in Duke Huai's heart. His mind quickly calculated; he quickly confirmed the combat capabilities on his side and the strongest twelve people that the other party could send out. Then, he considered every possible uncertain factors, and the conclusion that he had reached, was that it was absolutely impossible for his side to lose.

Then, the only explanation that he could think of was this... the Yun Che before his eyes, was obviously pretending to be strong, trying to make him afraid, so he would avoid the battle that could make the other party lose their dignity!

That was the only possibility!

Thinking of that, Duke Huai immediately calmed down. He faced Yun Che's back, and said, "Yun Che, your solo performance is too clumsy. Has this duke ever said that we don't dare to accept?"

"Oh?" Yun Che turned around, and an expression of surprise flashed in his eyes... Even though it was only a split second, Duke Huai's eyes were very sharp and he captured it crystal clear. He scoffed in his mind: I knew it.

"If so, that means Duke Huai accepts?" Yun Che asked seriously. He arched his eyebrow, and said while laughing lightly, "But, it doesn't mean anything if only Duke Huai accepts. Can you represent the seven Guardian Families behind you?"

"Heheheheh," Duke Huai had recovered the leisurely attitude from before, and said smilingly, "This duke had never really been afraid of anyone all my life, and I will definitely not be afraid of this wager you suggested. It doesn't matter to this duke what this so-called 'wager' is, because this duke... will absolutely not lose, hahahaha."

Duke Huai started laughing; although the laughter was not too loud, it was filled with deep arrogance. He turned around, looked at the seven Guardian Families, and asked, "Patriarchs, do you all have any objections?"

"If Duke Huai has no objections, we naturally would not have any either." All the Patriarchs nodded in agreement. Looking at the confident Duke Huai, they all calmed down and thought... That's right, if the fight was carried out according to the rules Duke Huai had suggested, it would not be possible for their side to lose! The differences in combined strength of the young generation between the two sides was too overwhelming, there was no chance that they would lose. Even if they could only send six people, they still had absolute confidence in defeating the twelve opponents!

Let alone it being twelve against twelve!!

Although the so-called "wager" that Yun Che had suggested sounded overwhelming, it was merely a thought that would never come true!

"Did you hear that?" Duke Huai looked at Yun Che with narrowed eyes, "We have agreed on the wager that you have requested. This competition will decide the Yun Family's fate. Can we begin this competition yet? Or, do you still want to find other reasons to delay it?"

"Delay?" Yun Che looked shocked, "Why would we want to delay? From the start, I've agreed with holding the competition, I can't even wait for it to begin. However, since Duke Huai knows that this

competition is going to decide my Yun Family's fate, then the fairness and the conclusion of the competition is undoubtedly crucial! This competition requires the absolute authority to oversee it."

After Yun Che finish speaking righteously, he faced the Little Demon Empress, bowed and said, "Little Demon Empress! This competition, I request for you to please witness the whole process and the end results, then announce the end results to everyone here... and even announce it to the whole world!"

The Little Demon Empress looked at Yun Che steadily for a while, and her voice that was as cold as ice sounded, "Whether or not your Yun Family can continue to be part of the Guardian Families, the only person in this world who can decide that is this empress! Even if ten times more people are against you Yun Family, if this empress doesn't agree, no one can interfere with Yun Family's destiny. However, if this competition begins, and you lose in the end, then you will have to obey to the 'wager', and not be able to continue your duty as one of the Guardian Families. At that time, even this empress will not be able to keep you... Even so, are you sure you want to battle?"

"We must battle!" Yun Che said without any hesitation, "Our Yun Family is incredibly thankful for the Little Demon Empress' high regard, but this battle is not only about our family's destiny, but more importantly, our family's dignity! If we don't fight, even if the Little Demon Empress gave mercy and let our Yun Family continue staying on the position of one of the Guardians, there would be even more voices that want the Yun Family to leave, and everyone under the heaven will despise us. Our Yun Family is bound to fight this battle, and forever silence those dishonest people!"

Yun Che's words deeply moved the hearts of many Yun Family members; made them clutch their fists, and nod their heads. They no longer thought that he was impetuous and reckless. The Little Demon Empress locked her brows and raised her head to look at Yun Qinghong... Yun Qinghong nodded slowly towards her.

"Very well!" The Little Demon Empress stood up, and a dominating force like the ocean instantly filled every corner. Her every word shock people's hearts, "Then this empress will witness this battle personally! This battle, if Duke Huai's side wins, the Yun Family will lose their right to be one of the Guardian Families; if the Yun Family's side wins, then Helian, Chiyang, Bai, Nangong, Lin, Jiufang, Xiao, each of these seven families will have to gather two and a half kilograms of Purple Veined Divine Crystals in a month's time, and turn it over to the Yun Family! And Duke Huai, you will also have the same amount of time to gather ten kilograms of Purple Veined Divine Crystals to the Yun Family!"

"These are the wagers that you have agreed to yourselves. No matter who loses, there is no going back on your words! Or else, this empress will be the first to not forgive this!"

"I thank Little Demon Empress!" Yun Che loudly said right after the Little Demon Empress's voice. He then turned around, and faced everyone in the hall, "And everyone from different regions, brothers and sisters of our Illusory Demon Realm, Seniors, may you all please witness this together! With all the heroes in the realm witnessing this together, if the losing side still goes back on their words, then it would truly be embarrassing. At least, our Yun Family would never do something like that."

With the witness of everyone, it was no question that these were the strongest witnesses! The result of this match, would also be brought to every corner of the Illusory Demon Realm because of the people here. If under a witness like this, the losing side wanted to go back on their word, then it would really be as Yun Che had said; their entire family would be humiliated.

“Well said, that was very well said. With the Little Demon Empress and everyone here as witnesses, that really couldn’t be better.” Duke Huai’s eyes narrowed until it was only a small line. As calm and as passionate Yun Che’s side acted, the more peaceful he felt. Because from how he saw it, this was obviously the other party using this method to try to earn some last pride for the Yun Family knowing that they would definitely lose. He used his lifetime’s amount of wisdom, and still could not think of any possible ways for the other party to win.

“No need to continue talking!” The Little Demon Empress waved her hand, her eyes were like cold stars, “I will give each side three hundred breaths of time to prepare and decide who will represent them. Twelve people on each side, and the age cannot surpass thirty-five! This empress will personally select the location for the battle!”

“We solemnly obey the Little Demon Empress’ order.” Duke Huai casually cupped his hands, and didn’t make any other movements so he could have time to look at Yun Family’s side. He had already decided who would take part in this battle, so there was no need to waste more time to make a selection.

Yun Che went back to his seat, his expression serious. Xiao Yun’s face was already so tense that it was sometimes red and sometimes pale. After all, the showdown that was about to take place was going to determine the whole Yun Family’s destiny! He was extremely nervous as he said, “Big Brother, is... is everything really okay?”

Yun Che’s brows twitched, as he faced Yun Qinghong and said: “Father, do you trust me?”

Yun Qinghong looked at him, then said smilingly: “You are my son. If I don’t even trust you, who else would I trust in this world?”

Yun Che’s heart warmed. He smiled: “Father, don’t worry, I won’t fail to live up to your trust.”

However, Yun Qinghong shook his head: “Che’er, you don’t need to pressure yourself this much, nor do you need to take this burden on yourself. Since we’ve been forced to such a state, no matter if we win or lose, we still have to fight this battle. So what if we lose? So what if we are banished from the Guardian Family position? As long as the whole family still exists, no matter where the Yun Family ends up, there will be a day where we’ll rise up again! If we win, that’ll obviously be delightful, if we lose, we can afford to lose!”

Yun Qinghong’s words caused the nervousness in Xiao Yun’s heart to be blown away by a gust of cool wind. His expression eased, as he gripped both his hands: “Father, you’re so right! It’s exactly like this, even if the Yun Family loses, Father, Mother, and Big Brother are still here! What is there to be afraid of?!”

“Hehe.” Yun Che began to laugh, then said with incomparable seriousness: “Father, Mother, Xiao Yun, don’t you ever worry! Even though I can’t say with great certainty that we would be able to win this competition, I can promise you that even if we lose, we will still not be kicked out! Our Yun Family’s dignity also wouldn’t receive the slightest bit of taint either... So much that when the time comes, even if we want to voluntarily leave, everyone in the world wouldn’t be willing!”

“Ah?” Xiao Yun forcefully blinked his eyes, his face full of astonishment and bewilderment.

In comparison, Su Family, Yan Family, Mu Family, and the Under Heaven Family, were even more tense than the Yun Family.

“Zhizhan, our side’s core fighting strength in this battle is you! You have to remember, this is not merely related to the Yun Family’s matter, you have to give it your all!” Su Xiangnan gravely told his son.

“Rest assured Father, I will do my very best.” Su Zhizhan said with determination.

“Chengkong, our Yan Family will naturally take you out to battle. Remember, don’t slack off just because you think we’ll definitely lose. This is not only related to Yun Family fate, it also concerns our Yan Family’s future and honor! Even if we lose, we still have to lose tragically, after using all we have! Show our Yan Family’s heroic appearance in defeat!” Yan Zijing said while grabbing Yan Chengkong’s shoulder.

“Yes! I definitely won’t dishonor our Yan Family!” Yan Chengkong nodded heavily.

“Old Six, it’ll be your turn soon.” Greatest Ambition Under Heaven only spoke a few dull words, but his expression had already said everything.

“Old Six, no matter who the opponent is, you must never hold back!” Number One Under Heaven exclaimed.

“Old Six, good luck.” Number Seven Under Heaven said with a nervous expression.

“Father, and everyone else, don’t worry. I know what this competition means... how could I dare slack off!!” Number Six Under Heaven said with a cautious expression.

“Hengyi, you are the most outstanding person within our Mu Family’s young generation. This time, you shall go out to represent our clan. The opponents are all far stronger than we are, are you scared?” Mu Feiyan asked personally. Mu Yubai, Mu Yukong, Mu Yuqing were all unmarried, and didn’t have kids either. This Mu Hengyi was Third Grand Elder’s eldest grandson.

“Rest assured Patriarch. Even though my cultivation is low, if they want to beat me, it wouldn’t be that easy!” Mu Hengyi said with complete vigor.

After one person from Su, Yan, Under Heaven, Mu, and Yun Family, there were still seven remaining people that came from the Duke Palaces. Among these seven, there were two “Illusory Demon Seven Scions”, that were naturally selected while the various duke palaces had difficulty selecting the other five.

In this kind of tense and heavy atmosphere, three hundred breaths went by very quickly.

“It’s time.”

The Little Demon Empress who was closing her eyes in silence opened her eyes. She got up and instantly teleported to the center of the hall. Underneath her grey robe, her white, delicate skin was burning with bright, red fire.

At that instant, a red ring with a diameter of three hundred meters was deeply imprinted in the center of the jade floor, and the bright, red ring was made with many small, eternal flames.

Being the most vital great hall of the entire Illusory Demon Realm, every tile and pane present were extremely difficult to destroy, and a person who could imprint such a huge mark in an instant was scarce within the entire Illusory Demon Realm. This was also why the battles between the twelve families and the duke palaces were held within the great hall with no need to search for another venue during all the previous Demon Emperor Reign Ceremonies.

“The area of this ring is the competition area! During the battle, if one side surrenders, falls for more than ten breaths of time, or is hit out of the competition area, it would be counted as their loss!”

Chapter 547 - Instant Defeat

The arena that the Little Demon Empress had drawn just happened to be at the center of the Demon Imperial Hall. Duke Huai stood up and laughed, “You may enter first.”

The west wing patriarchs and dukes all gathered at Yun Qinghong’s side, with the eleven selected participants also standing behind them. As for the twelfth participant, that was naturally to be chosen from the Yun Family, but Yun Qinghong seemed to not have completely decided on who to select for battle.

“Brother Yun, how we’ll fight will be up to you to decide.” Su Xiangnan said. With Yun Qinghong directing them, he believed that no one would object.

Yun Qinghong slightly mumbled, “The outcome of this competition isn’t really judged by the number of wins, rather, it’s by an elimination system, so the order in which they go on stage isn’t all that important. Thus, the order should just be up to the children to decide. However... with how much I know about Duke Huai, even though he moves flamboyantly, he is still an extremely meticulous, cautious person. Even if he is absolutely sure about the outcome, he still won’t hold back. Therefore, he will dispatch all five of their ‘Illusory Demon Seven Scions’... including Hui Ran! You all have to mentally prepare yourselves enough for this.”

The various patriarchs and dukes nodded, their expressions becoming even heavier.

“Even though Duke Huai would not outright send his first string which possessed absolute power, he still would not forget to give us an initial show of strength. Thus, even if the other party’s number one is not their strongest, it still wouldn’t be their weakest, so the one who chooses to go out first must not hold on to the hope that their first selection would be their weakest. Instead, you must be aware that you are going up against a powerful opponent.” Yun Qinghong slowly analyzed. His brows condensed, “I only have one word of advice, even if the other party’s strength is enough to thoroughly crush you, you must never concede that easily! Under a situation in which you are bound to lose, try to make the opponent use up the greatest amount of energy possible, or even sustain injuries. That is how we’ll be able to win this competition! Win with dignity, and also allow the teammate behind you to have a greater chance of winning!”

“Understood!” The eleven participants at the rear voiced out, each of their expressions becoming unwaveringly determined.

“In addition, you must be cautious to not be knocked out of the arena. With that kind of loss, the other party would use up the least amount of energy. Similarly, that is also the most desirable way for you to win against your opponent.”

“Then I’ll go first!” Mu Family’s Mu Hengyi deeply roared.

As his voice fell, his entire person had already flown high in the air, then landed in the center of the arena. In the instant the tips of his feet landed, freezing-cold profound energy had already erupted from his body, as a current of ice-cold violent wind swept toward his surroundings. With a wave of his arm, an Ice Crystal Long Whip lashed out.

“Mu Family’s Mu Hengyi.”

It was only a short four words, but it was incredibly imposing.

“Oh, so you are the Mu Family’s Third Grand Elder’s young master Hengyi.” Duke Huai looked at Mu Hengyi with an admiring expression for a while, then turned to the side and said, “Who among you will come forward for the battle?”

No one responded to Duke Huai’s calling. The corner of his mouth slanted slightly, and said, “If no one would willingly come forward on their own, then this duke will make the selection. Zihuan, you will be the one to fight against the Mu Family’s Young Master Hengyi.”

As soon as Duke Huai spoke of the name “Zihuan”, the expression of everyone in the west wing changed altogether.

Duke Zihuan, a young duke from Duke Zhao’s Duke Palace, but this wasn’t his most notable title. His other identity was one of the “Illusory Demon Seven Scions” that were prestigious in the Illusory Demon Realm, and he was ranked fourth!!

Yun Qinghong’s guess was right. The first person that Duke Huai had sent forward was someone who wasn’t in the first tier, but was someone who definitely was not weak. Even though they had enough mental preparation, the faces of the dukes and patriarchs from each family still showed nervousness. Especially the people from the Mu Family, half of them immediately stood up.

Because Mu Hengyi, was definitely not a match for this Duke Zihuan... definitely not!

Just in terms of profound strength, Mu Hengyi was at the third level of the Tyrant Profound Realm, whereas Duke Zihuan was at the peak of the Tyrant Profound Realm’s fifth level! Among the many in the east wing, his strength was placed in the middle, but in the west wing, only Su Zhizhan could beat him.

At the lower stages of profound strength, a difference of one stage wouldn’t be too much, but once it reached the Tyrant Profound Realm, a difference of one stage would amount to an enormous disparity in skill. Even with the Yun Family’s powerful Profound Handle, it could only surpass one stage. Mu Hengyi and Duke Zihuan’s difference of two stages was something that could not be compensated. Moreover, Zihuan was not a normal level five Tyrant Profound Realm, he was at the peak of level five.

On top of that, Zihuan belonged to the Illusory Demon Royal Family. Even though his Demon Emperor’s bloodline was thin, it was still the blood of a divine beast. In terms of physique, he already greatly exceeded normal humans and demons.

So, Mu Hengyi would definitely lose this battle!

Duke Zihuan, whose name was called upon, was distracted for a second. Then, he stood up, gave Mu Hengyi a glance, and responded with an “Oh” in a feeble tone; he obviously looked unwilling to do so.

He jumped up and entered the arena. He held his arms around his chest and gave Mu Hengyi a sideways glance. His eyes were filled with disdain, even a fool could see it clearly... It was obvious that he didn't even take the competition in front of him seriously, and he was even somewhat upset at Duke Huai making him fight against someone who was this weak.

Duke Huai said slowly, "Zihuan, Hengyi is the grandson of the Mu Family's Third Grand Elder, and is the number one in the Mu Family's young generation. He is a strong opponent, you must not underestimate him. You must give him your best."

"Oh, I got it." Duke Zihuan still responded with a feeble tone. A profound formation flashed in his hand, and a blood-red long blade instantly appeared in his grasp. With its blade tip pointing at the ground, he put his other hand behind his back, then gave Mu Hengyi a twisted smile, "Um... oh, what was your name again... let's hurry up and start this. Oh, you can go first, attack however you like."

Even though Mu Hengyi's expression didn't change, his eyes almost shot out fire.

He himself knew that his profound strength could not compare to this Duke Zihuan, but he was still number one of the Mu Family's young generation, and everyone in Demon Imperial City knew that he was the Mu Family's third young master. He had never endured such contempt before!

His eyes showed disdain, his expression showed disdain, even what he said was filled with mockery and loathing.

Even if I can't beat you... I must leave a scar on your neck!!

It was as if a volcano exploded within Mu Hengyi's heart. He roared deeply as he swung his Ice Crystal Long Whip, and created countless ice crystals that could pierce through bone. They flew towards Duke Zihuan like a swarm of locusts in the sky. At the same time, a blue light flashed on his body. A layer of ice crystals formed on the surface of his body, and as his shadow swayed, it created a freezing-cold storm that headed straight towards Duke Zihuan, who hadn't entered his fighting stance.

"Looks like Hengyi is completely enraged. He used 'Frost Crystal Annihilation' as soon as the fight started," someone from the Mu Family said.

Yun Qinghong's eyebrows fiercely jumped at this moment, and then he sighed helplessly, "Oh no!"

Standing there, Duke Zihuan, whose face expressed laziness, suddenly flashed with a split-second sneer. The hand that was at his back grabbed onto the handle as quick as lightning. His body that was originally not imposing at all, immediately burst with a strong aura of profound strength... the long blade in his hand shined with a bright, blood-red profound light.

The silence just now wasn't because of underestimation and arrogance... he was quietly building up his power! And it exploded at this very second!

Because people from the Illusory Demon Royal Family possessed the Golden Crow's bloodline, they had an incomparable gift when it came to cultivating fire attribute profound arts. Therefore, even though the dukes of Illusory Demon Royal Family didn't have the right to cultivate the 《Golden Crow's Record of the Burning World》 that was exclusive to Demon Emperors, they all cultivated fire attribute profound arts.

It was no different for Duke Zihuan.

The blade he wielded in his hand was named “Scarlet Blood” and the skill he executed was the “Blood Flame Strike” that all the Illusory Demon profound practitioners feared!!!

The Duke Zihuan before his eyes, who was previously as calm as lake water, suddenly became as ferocious as an oncoming tsunami. Since Mu Hengyi’s all-out attack was made in anger, added to the fact that he never expected the opponent who was obviously looking down on him to suddenly burst out with a fierce counterattack, there was no chance for him to avoid this strike, and he could only face the Scarlet Blood Blade straight on...

A scarlet, blood-red radiance flashed past the sky and the cool air became a vicious storm, as the ice crystals that filled the air quickly turned into the smallest of particles.

Bang!!

Mu Hengyi’s Frost Crystal Annihilation which bore great destructive powers was instantly torn apart. After that, the ice layer on the surface of his body was also cut open... The red beam continued onwards, and slashed onto his protective profound energy. A ball of red light burst mercilessly at that instant... and right now, a sneer appeared on Duke Zihuan’s face.

“Kid, what we want is not only to win, but to make you lose in the ugliest way possible!!”

A low, mocking whisper resounded in Mu Hengyi’s ears as he flew out of the battle arena with his body covered in shattered ice crystals and long streaks of bloodstains, crashing toward the Mu Family’s seats.

“Hengyi!!!”

A Mu Family member cried out in alarm. Mu Yubai quickly flew over, catching Mu Hengyi who had been sent flying while splattering blood.

A deep cut went from Mu Hengyi’s waist all the way to the position of his heart. It was a foot long, so deep that even his internal organs could be seen.

“Hengyi!!”

“Hengyi, are you alright...”

“Quick!! Quick, bring the medicine!”

Mu Family’s members quickly gathered at Mu Hengyi’s side. Several Great Elders evenly channeled profound energy, sealing his wound. Mu Hengyi unwaveringly gritted his teeth, not uttering the slightest of screams, but his complexion was as white as paper. He gasped heavily, looked at Mu Yubai and Mu Feiyan, and said in shame, “Patriarch... Hengyi is useless... lost... so unsightly... lost... our clan’s... face...”

Everyone knew that Mu Hengyi would lose, but no one would ever think that he would actually lose this fast.

Instant defeat... a completely unexaggerated instant defeat!!

Even though there was a large disparity between the strengths of Mu Hengyi and Duke Zihuan, an all-out reaction should not have caused such a tragic defeat. However, the other party’s strength was

obviously an absolute advantage, yet he still used such an act of contempt and ridicule to anger Mu Hengyi, causing him to lose his cautiousness. As for Duke Zihuan's disdainful appearance, he was actually already maneuvering the energy in his body in secret... In an all-out direct collision, how could a level three Tyrant Profound Realm defeat a peak level five Tyrant Profound Realm, moreover, against an Illusory Demon's duke who held an absolute advantage in terms of innate talent?!

Not only was Mu Hengyi instantly defeated, he didn't even cause the other party the slightest bit of injury, and the amount of power the other party used was also very small.

Number One Under Heaven flew to Mu Hengyi's side and injected his elven powers. Soon after, Mu Hengyi's cut stopped aching.

Mu Feiyan's chest heavily heaved. He didn't blame Mu Hengyi, and instead said with a heavy expression, "Your loss was indeed unsightly, and losing this match is of no value... However, to you, this match has great worth! Because luckily, you are not against your mortal enemy this time, otherwise, you wouldn't have ended up just being simply injured and defeated! Properly reflect on why you have lost this shamefully. Once you realize it, you would be able to live longer next time!"

"Yes..." Mu Hengyi closed his eyes, and said in shame, "It was I... who let my guard down... because of the opponent's provocation... I will remember this lesson for my entire lifetime..."

"Alright, close your eyes and rest now. If you have something to say, say it when you've recovered from your injuries." After Mu Yubai finished speaking, he turned around, and icily gazed at Duke Zihuan.

"Cough, didn't expect Brother Hengyi's body to be this weak. This humble duke merely hit him once, and he was injured this seriously. If I knew beforehand, I would have only used half of the strength just now." Duke Zihuan acted as if he was blaming himself, "Senior Mu, during the competition, injuries cannot be avoided. You won't give this humble duke a hard time because of this, right?"

No one could be held responsible for the wounds from a sparring competition. Moreover, it took place in Demon Imperial Hall with everyone watching. Mu Yubai knew for sure that even if he intentionally maimed Mu Hengyi, he couldn't say anything about it. He scoffed, and didn't say half a word to Duke Zihuan, turning his gaze towards Yun Qinghong.

They could already tell, not only did Duke Huai's side want to beat them, they wanted to make them lose in the most awful, miserable, ugly way possible, and step all over their dignity and pride.

Chapter 548 - Four Consecutive Defeats

"Wen Ji, you're up!" Yun Qinghong said after he pondered in silence for a while.

"Ah... me?" Behind Yun Qinghong, a callow youth dressed in the attire of the Duke Palaces pointed at himself as he wore a lost and panicked look on his face.

Wen Ji was the son of Duke Xu, and his talent and strength were both uncommon. But taking account his profound strength at the second level of the Tyrant Profound Realm at the age of twenty-nine, he would be labelled as a bottom-feeder among the creme de la creme of the Illusory Demon Realm's young elites that were gathered here... Even among the west wing, which was much weaker than the east wing, he was still at the bottom.

In the first round, Mu Hengyi had already suffered a crippling defeat at the hands of Zihuan. So for the second round, it stood to reason that a person who was sufficient to challenge Duke Zihuan should step up to the plate, because even if that person could not win, that person would still be able to retain some dignity in defeat. And if Wen Ji were to face an opponent who had completely dominated Mu Hengyi, he would only lose in a more spectacular fashion.

“Yes. Wen Ji, you’ll be the one taking the second round.” Yun Qinghong turned to face him and declared with sunken brows, “The one you are about to face is indeed an opponent that is hard for you to fight, but as both of you are dukes of the Illusory Demon Royal Family, even if you lose in battle, you would have simply lost in power. However, you cannot lose your fighting spirit even before you have not even lost yet.”

Wen Ji ground his teeth together and quickly regained his equilibrium. He simply stated, “Understood!”

“Even though you and Zihuan are separated by three levels, the two of you are still both Overlords. Even if he wins, he will still have to exert himself. Your goal is to exhaust as much of his profound energy as you can... Remember, concentrate thirty percent of your power on offense and the rest on defense and when you attack, only target his vitals when you are confident of delivering a critical strike. Also, no matter what he says, you must always maintain your cool! If you can do all of the above, then this match can be counted as a win.”

“I understand!” Wen Ji nodded his head vigorously and flew into the air to land inside the arena.

“Duke Xu Palace’s Wen Ji, please give me your guidance.”

“Ah, so it is Brother Wen Ji.” Duke Zihuan said as he narrowed his eyes and smiled, “It really looks like your side can’t find any proper candidates, because they actually sent you out as well. Ah, even I am filled with pity for you right now.”

Wen Ji, “....”

Duke Zihuan extended his finger towards him and beckoned him with an incomparably contemptuous crook of that finger, “Come, feel free to attack whenever you want. Because if I can’t subdue an amateur like you in ten moves, then I won’t have any face to continue living in this Demon Imperial City.”

Any member of the Illusory Demon Royal Family were individuals exalted above all others, so they would never have faced such humiliation before. So Wen Ji clenched both his fists tightly, he almost lost himself to rage, but he quickly recalled Yun Qinghong’s advice. There was a quick intake of breath as he sought to swiftly calm himself down, and after that, he did not speak as he planted both feet on the ground. A golden spear then appeared in his hands. As it pierced towards Duke Zihuan’s chest, it produced a golden afterimage; at the same time, his domain was opened at full strength.

“Explosive Flame Domain!!”

A deep red flame was concentrated at the tip of the golden spear as the gigantic energy of the domain suddenly explosively swelled up like a tsunami, amplifying the power of the spear as it streaked towards Duke Zihuan’s body... Scarlet flames might have been the lowest form of profound fire, but the scarlet flames used by the Illusory Demon Royal Family was the lowest form of the Golden Crow’s Flames and its strength was far superior to even the regular deep purple profound flames.

“See how this duke will shatter your lousy spear!”

Duke Zihuan roared out arrogantly as he swung his Scarlet Blood Blade, instantly producing seven blood-colored blade beams. These extremely sharp blades beams carried a scorching heat and easily tore Wen Ji’s domain apart. The sound of the blades splitting air was akin to a blade being scratched over glass; it was extremely ear-piercing.

At this time, the golden spear that was streaking towards Zihuan suddenly slowed down and after a violent shudder, it was instantly displaced. Four of Duke Zihuan’s blade beams that shot out of his Blood Blade struck empty air, but the other three clashed with the tip of Wen Ji’s spear. After a chaotic and ear-piercing shattering sound, the three energy blades were completely neutralized and Wen Ji was pushed ten steps back by the ensuing impact.

“Mn?” Zihuan’s eyebrows twitched, then let out a cold laugh. His body blurred and his blade danced like a dragon as he instantly unleashed a lightning quick slash at Wen Ji.

“True Flame Shield!!”

Bang!!

The Scarlet Blood Blade made contact with the flame vortex that suddenly materialized in front of Wen Ji, but it only took a breath for this flame vortex to be torn. With the flashing of two blood-colored flashes, the flame vortex completely disappeared. As the Scarlet Blood Blade plunged straight through, it smashed into Wen Ji’s golden spear with a resounding clash.

A heavy ring resounded in the air and Wen Ji’s body swayed as blood leaked out from the corner of his mouth. However, he stubbornly endured and did not retreat. The Scarlet Blood Blade had cut half an inch into the golden spear he had infused all of his might into, but it was still very far from cutting it apart.

Zihuan had arrogantly yelled that he wanted to shatter Wen Ji’s spear, but after five strikes, Wen Ji still managed to hang on... Wen Ji initially looked as if he had poured all his strength into a fierce assault, but he suddenly switched positions, avoiding Zihuan’s attacks and reverted from defense to attack as quickly as he possibly could. Even though he had been injured, he had yet to retreat a single step.

Zihuan’s eyes narrowed and he yelled in a low voice, “You punk, collapse!”

The flames on the Scarlet Blood Blade suddenly flashed and an enormous energy exploded outwards as Zihuan put all of his strength into this strike. Wen Ji’s face paled and his body was blown backwards, but Zihuan’s blade followed after like a striking viper. In a short space of time, three streaks of thick, eye-piercing blood-colored blade beams flew out.

Clang!! Clang!! Scree!!

After enduring the second blade beam, the golden spear finally flew out of Wen Ji’s hand. The third blade beam slashed into his chest, cutting apart the profound energy shielding his body and the breastplate wrapped around his chest... But after it had cut through both the profound energy and the armor, the Scarlet Blood Blade had no more power. Wen Ji flew through the air, but he managed to land solidly on his feet, and underneath the broken breastplate, his chest only had one thin red line drawn across it.

Wen Ji made a gesture with his hand and the golden spear was recalled into his hand. He wiped the blood from the corner of his mouth and chuckled, "It has already been eight moves."

Even though he had been beaten like a dog and only had the power to defend than attack, he had managed to solidly resist the attacks of the Zihuan who was three levels stronger than him in profound strength... And especially those last three blows, they were executed using Zihuan's full strength.

And the boast that Wen Ji would be beaten down in ten moves was yelled out for all to hear by Zihuan himself. So if he could not win in ten moves, he would undoubtedly have slapped his own face.

"This bastard..." Duke Zihuan ground his teeth silently, but gave off an air of disdain, "This duke was merely showing you mercy just now because I did not want you to lose in too ugly a manner. Did you really think that you are worthy to grace this duke's Scarlet Blood Blade for so long?!"

Duke Zihuan's eyes gained a fierce focus. He suddenly let out a low roar as the bloody light on the blade suddenly exploded forth. In an instant, Wen Ji's already unstable domain was directly shorn into two halves.

The profound art that Zihuan cultivated was the Blood Flame Blade and the weapon he used was also the blood-red Scarlet Blood Blade. Even his energy blades were blood-colored, and it was to the extent that even the flames that he released materialized as blood flames. After his profound energy had suddenly flared up and exploded, the air within a hundred meter radius of him was covered in blood-colored ripples of energy, and the entire arena seemed to be covered with a layer of dull-colored blood.

The complexion of Wen Ji, who was the closest to Zihuan, suddenly changed. He doggedly gritted his teeth and positioned the golden spear in front of him.

Duke Zihuan let out a deep, low yell as he raised the Scarlet Blood Blade horizontally across... And the aura of his blade was sufficient enough to manifest an astonishing power so it definitely had exhausted a suitably large amount of energy. But in order to defeat Wen Ji in two moves, he had no choice but to pay the price... the big words had already been spoken, so he had to defeat Wen Ji with this attack, no matter what.

"Nether Flame Strike!!"

Duke Zihuan yelled out as the Scarlet Blood Blade lashed out and in an instant energy blades crazily flew out as they enshrouded the entire area and rended it asunder.

Facing the blade beams and blood flames which seemed to cover the sky, Wen Ji heightened his focus to the extreme. With a loud yell, he retreated as swiftly as he could while concentrating all the profound energy he could muster into the golden spear. The golden spear began rotating rapidly and formed a giant flame barrier.

Bang!!

It was as if a blood lotus had bloomed in midair, and below the blood lotus, the Scarlet Blood Blade fiercely clashed together with the golden spear. The power of both the Overlords surged wildly as it erupted forth and a thirty-three meter wide curtain of flames spread at the center of the Demon Imperial Hall.

Wen Ji's flame domain had completely dissipated and his entire body flew out from within the curtain of flames along with his golden spear, heavily falling onto the ground. It was only after he tumbled and rolled on the ground many times that he was able to force himself up to his feet. But blood was flowing rapidly from one of his arms and he had ended up outside of the arena.

"Wen Ji, you have lost. You may withdraw." The Little Demon Empress declared expressionlessly.

As her voice fell, the people from Duke Xu Palace had already flown to Wen Ji's side, and they carried him back to their seats. At the same time, they excitedly praised him, "You actually forced Duke Zihuan to use the Nether Flame Strike... Young duke, you put up a good fight."

"Heh..." Wen Ji managed to croak out a laugh. After which he closed his eyes and promptly fainted dead away.

"This punk actually wasted so much of this duke's energy." After the Nether Flame Strike had been used, Duke Zihuan began to show faint signs of strain, but he could not blame anyone else, he could only blame himself for boasting too recklessly. And it was at this moment that a fierce sword wind suddenly descended from above.

"Duke Xi Palace's Zi Feng, please give me your guidance!!"

Duke Zihuan was about to reply, but Zi Feng did not even give him an opportunity to open his mouth. What came at him instead was a series of rapid attacks that consisted of fierce flames and sword shadows. Zihuan had just used a huge skill so he suffered from a temporary deficit of profound energy. Under these series of rapid strikes, he hurriedly retreated from his opponent in a fluster. But in the end, he was still the one who was ranked fourth among the Illusory Demon Seven Scions. Moreover, the other party only had a profound strength at the third level of the Tyrant Profound Realm. His profound energy swiftly surged forward and the bloody light of the Scarlet Blood Blade radiated out, "Trash like you wants to win against this duke? Keep dreaming!!"

Bang-bang-bang-bang-bang!!

He chained together five strokes of his blade and a huge blood-colored wave of fire was blasted out. Zi Feng teetered on the edge of the arena as he was pushed all the way back, but he lifted his sword and charged forward once more as he fearlessly clashed swords with Zihuan. Twenty clashes later, he was inevitably sent flying nearly one hundred meters by Zihuan's blade and vomited three arrows of blood in succession. He wiped the blood from the corner of his mouth and raised his sword anew. He let out a wild yell, and thrust directly towards Zihuan as the howl of his sword caused the entire Demon Imperial Hall to vibrate.

"Rainbow Rend!!"

It was as if a meteor had drawn itself across the space in the Imperial Demon Hall and even the ones in the corners of the hall could feel a shocking sword intent. Facing Zi Feng's sword strike, Duke Zihuan let out a wild and arrogant shout. He did not dodge or duck, an instead, took it head on...

"Phantom Flame StrikeBlade!!"

Bloody light and sword shadows clashed chaotically, but the bloody light suddenly flashed, passing through layers of sword shadows and cut across Zi Feng's body.

Zi Feng gave out a low moan and his long sword flew out of his hand as his entire person flew out as well as he landed in the seats which were more than six hundred and fifty meters away.

“Zi Feng has lost, it is still Zihuan who is victorious!” The Little Demon Empress said with furrowed brows.

Within the east wing, Zihuan’s ability was only in the middle of the pack, but the three people who had been sent forth from the west wing had all fallen under his blade! The expressions of all the people who were seated in the west wing had become uglier and uglier, and at this time, a person from the Duke Palaces flew up into the air and sent a blast of fierce fire towards Zihuan.

“Duke Gu Palace’s Cheng Yang, take this!!”

The fourth representative presented himself thusly and greeted Duke Zihuan with a fierce assault.

Flames clashed and profound energy rumbled, as the middle of the great hall was filled with endless explosions and roars of power. The two opponents clashed fiercely for tens of rounds, but following the explosion of a cluster of blood flames, Cheng Yang directly fainted due to his serious injuries.

The fourth representative of the west wing... had lost yet again!!

Chapter 549 - “Mutual Destruction”

The overall strength of the east wing was far stronger than that of the west wing. This was something that everyone knew. But no one thought that the west wing would lose this badly as soon as they got on the stage. The four people that went up there all lost miserably, and the other side only sent out Duke Zihuan, who was still in the arena. He was sweating and panting deeply, but aside from that, only his armor was slightly damaged, and there was no trace of bloodstains on him at all.

The four consecutive wins just now, apparently wasn’t too difficult!

And in the entire east wing, there were more people whose strengths were on par with that of Duke Zihuan, such as Chiyang Yanwu, Bai Jie, Lin Hanchuan, and people who were even stronger than him, such as Helian Ba, the Illusory Demon Seven Scions’ third rank Duke Hui Ye, second rank Duke Yuan Que... and, the one who had already exceeded the others of the young generation, whose power was so terrifying it was abnormal, the head of the Illusory Demon Seven Scions — Hui Ran!!

This battle, how could it continue to proceed?

Within the west wing, those who originally held the attitude that losing was okay but would absolutely not yield, were heavily influenced at this moment in their heart and mind, and a deep sense of helplessness and desolation emerged.

“Who’s next? Who’s next to battle?”

Duke Zihuan swung his Scarlet Blood Blade, faced the west wing, and yelled insolently. He had really stolen the spotlight today after consecutively defeating the other party’s Guardian Family’s number one and three top-skilled dukes from the same generation as him.

“A four-loss streak, that’s pretty rough,” Yun Che frowned and whispered.

“Mu Hengyi was instantly defeated because he was careless. There was too much difference between the strengths of the three young dukes just now and their opponent, so it was certain that they would lose. However, this Duke Zihuan’s profound strength is already exhausted by over sixty percent, hopefully we can win the next battle,” Yun Qinghong said calmly.

“Patriarch Yun, let me fight this round,” said Yan Family’s Yan Chengkong as he came forward. With four straight losses, there was no doubt that the fifth challenger would have to bear enormous pressure. Because if the west wing lost again, then it would be extremely humiliating, and it would have a huge negative impact to their own reputation. But Yan Chengkong, who was also at the third level of the Tyrant Profound Realm, requested to fight by his own will... Yun Che couldn’t help but give him another look.

The Yan Family’s strength was at the bottom of the Twelve Families, and Yan Chengkong’s strength was also on the bottom of the geniuses in the Twelve Families, but in him, righteousness and assuredness that was inconsistent with his age was revealed.

Yun Qinghong moved his brows and said, “Even though this Zihuan has defeated four of our people consecutively, his energy consumption wasn’t that great... be cautious.”

“Mn,” Yan Chengkong shook his head heavily, and answered with a simple syllable. He then he flew up and landed in the arena.

“Yan Family’s Yan Chengkong, may Duke Zihuan enlighten me!” Yan Chengkong didn’t attack immediately, and instead greeted him graciously.

“Oh, so it’s the Yan Family’s young patriarch.” Duke Zihuan won four battles consecutively, and the arrogance in his heart had been magnified countless times. He took a look at Yan Chengkong, and suddenly burst into laughter, “Hahahaha! This duke thought a decent competitor has finally shown up, but I didn’t expect it would be the Yan Family’s young patriarch, and he’s only a pitiful Tyrant Profound level three. Tsk, tsk, the Yan Family has been at the bottom of the Twelve Families for ten thousand years, but didn’t seem to be too far behind. How come, with your generation, it became this miserable? Looks like the Yan Family is doomed as well.”

“Presumptuous!!”

As soon as Duke Zihuan finished speaking, a shout as loud as a clap of thunder rung, and it shocked Duke Zihuan, making his whole body shudder. His sight went dark, and he almost spat blood. The Little Demon Empress slammed on the armrest of her throne heavily. Her eyebrows, which were shaped like new moons, slanted, and her freezing-cold eyes stared directly at Duke Zihuan. It made his whole body come to a stop. It was as if he was frozen, and he didn’t dare to move at all.

“The Yan Family has guarded my Demon Emperor’s bloodline for ten thousand years. They are loyal, devoted and achieved numerous meritorious contributions. The generations of previous Demon Emperors all respected and valued the Yan Family. You are merely a tiny junior from one of the Duke Palaces, how dare you speak such nonsensical words towards the Yan Family. Who gave you the courage!!”

Duke Zihuan was one of the Illusory Demon Seven Scions, and he had the power enough to look down upon all of the others in his generation, but how could he withstand the anger and momentum of the

Little Demon Empress? He was frightened, and his face immediately paled. His body was shaky, and he almost knelt down on the spot.

Within the east wing, Duke Zihuan's father Duke Zhao hurriedly stood up, bowed and said, "May the Little Demon Empress's rage subside. My son was merely trying to lower his opponent's morale, and made an indiscreet remark. He absolutely did not have the intention of disrespecting the Yan Family... Zihuan, hurry up and apologize to the Little Demon Empress and the Yan Family!"

Duke Zihuan promptly said, "Zihuan made an indiscreet remark, and said something I shouldn't have said. May the Little Demon Empress and everyone from the Yan Family forgive me."

With four straight losses for the west wing, the Little Demon Empress' mood naturally wasn't good. She scoffed softly and her rage finally settled a little, but she didn't say anything in response as she sat back to her throne and gazed at the center of the arena coldly.

That burst of pressure that was heavy as a mountain finally disappeared. Duke Zihuan was secretly relieved. It was just then that he realized his whole body was covered in cold, wet sweat.

However, Yan Chengkong obviously couldn't forgive him so easily. He looked calm and peaceful, but his eyes were full of anger. He grabbed his Heavy Profound Spear, pointed the tip at Zihuan's throat, and said slowly, "Solely based on what you have just said... I bet my, Yan Chengkong's, lifetime of dignity and honor. Today, I must defeat you under my Yan Family's Imperious Spear!"

"You?" Duke Zihuan sneered, and said in an extremely deep voice, "Even though I only have forty percent of my strength right now, even if I only had twenty percent left, I could easily step all over you! I will not mention what will happen to your Yan Family, but you, Yan Chengkong, heh, the so-called Yan Family's 'number one genius' of this generation, in the eyes of this duke, you have always been complete trash!"

Yan Chengkong was not angry at all. Instead he sneered and said, "Looks like you have never fought against people from our Yan Family. Even though the level of profound energy of our Yan Family has always been the lowest of the Twelve Families, that is because for generations, our family cultivated our profound energy second, and focused cultivating spears first! Our Yan Family's greatest pride and wealth is not our family's profound art, but our Imperious Spear! You will soon know how you'll end up if you underestimate our Yan Family!!"

"We're not called the number one Divine Spear Clan of the Illusory Demon Realm... for nothing!!"

Yan Chengkong's glare became as sharp as the tip of his spear. He swung his arms, and his silver Heavy Profound Spear burst out with lightning speed, like thorns. At that instant, a wave of violent wind swirled up with a sharp roaring sound.

Facing Yan Chengkong's spear, Duke Zihuan gave a face of disdain. The profound energy of his Scarlet Blood Blade rippled, and he let out a fierce slash accompanied by a blood-red light.

Clang!!

The weapons collided and the deafening sound of metal rang in the hall. Although Duke Zihuan had exhausted half of his strength, in terms of profound energy density, his was still largely above that of Yan Chengkong. Yan Chengkong's Heavy Profound Spear was reflected off directly and slightly bent by

his Scarlet Blood Blade. The corner of Duke Zihuan's mouth slanted, but before he could make a sneer, the Heavy Profound Spear that was bounced out of the way and bent became like a boneless snake, then pierced directly towards his heart at an unusual angle.

What?!

Duke Zihuan's heart stuttered as he quickly withdrew. His avoidance was extremely swift, but he was still grazed by the Heavy Profound Spear. He could clearly feel his protective profound energy being severely torn, and it made an extremely harsh ripping sound.

Yan Chengkong's dominating momentum burst completely at this moment. The Heavy Profound Spear in his hand became like a flexible demon snake. It danced in the sky, filling it with multiple spear shadows, and trapped Duke Zihuan within them. Every prick, smash, thrust, and slash... was all flawlessly on the spot, aimed directly at Duke Zihuan's weak points and vital spots.

"Good spear technique!" Yun Che exclaimed as he leaned forward. He couldn't help but be impressed.

Yun Qinghong nodded slowly and said, "It is said, months for staves, years for punches, yet decades to learn spears. The art of the spear is difficult to train and master. If you don't put in enough hard work, it would be hard to have even a small achievement. The Yan Family is hailed as Illusory Demon Realm's number one Divine Spear Clan. Their clan's spear tactics are unpredictable. It could be said that they exerted the power of the spear to the max. Once they are able to handle it effortlessly, they could sweep through everyone under heaven, and even ten thousand soldiers cannot compare to them. They absolutely live up to the name of number one Divine Spear Clan. Even though Yan Chengkong's profound strength is weaker in comparison, in terms of his skill in the Imperious Spear Arts, he has already entered the highest mastery! Among others of the same level, it is hard for him to meet a worthy foe. With Zihuan's current state, he can easily win against another peak-level Tyrant Profound Realm, but it is extremely hard for him to win against Yan Chengkong, who is only a mid-stage third level Tyrant Profound Realm."

The whizzing sound of the spear and the sound of the wind from the spear were piercingly sharp. Duke Zihuan kept increasing his profound energy. The bones in his entire body were making cracking sounds from him using his full power, as he deflected Yan Chengkong's attacks one after another... but it was only deflecting. He didn't have a chance to fight back, and the tip of the spear had already roared towards him once again. Just based on the weapon's characteristics, the spear's power and range of attack was better than a blade, but the flexibility, speed, and maneuverability were inferior to that of a blade. However, at this moment, the spear shrouding over Duke Zihuan was swift as lightning, and as flexible as a living thing. It forced him several times into a frenzied state.

One had the advantage in profound strength, the other had skills in draconic divine spear techniques. The two of them originally had a large level difference in profound strength, but now they were stalemated in the arena. The weapons collided countless times; space was disturbed for an extended time and it continuously rippled. As the audience in the great hall looked upon this scene, the fight was distorted the whole time. Duke Zihuan couldn't get rid of Yan Chengkong's spear shadows throughout the fight, and for the time being, Yan Chengkong also couldn't really hurt Duke Zihuan.

Among all the Duke Palaces, there were also many who used spears, and Duke Zihuan had gone against many who used a spear as a weapon, but he hadn't fought against anyone from the Yan Family. He'd

never thought the power of the Yan Family's Imperious Spear was this astonishing. The Heavy Profound Spear in Yan Chengkong's hands attacked and defended freely according to his will. When he attacked, his spear sprung like the wind and clouds, with its momentum able to swallow mountains and rivers. It made the duke's movements all seem sluggish, as it suppressed both his blade and flame. When Yan Chengkong defended, it was like placing an iron chain across the river, it was impervious.

The two of them exchanged over a hundred blows, but none of them could do anything to the other. Yan Chengkong was calm and steady throughout, but Duke Zihuan was getting impatient. Before the battle, he mocked Yan Chengkong harshly, even insulted the whole Yan Family, got scolded seriously by the Little Demon Empress, and was humiliated hard. Now, after a hundred exchanges, he still wasn't able to defeat this person whom he had ridiculed in front of everyone. Instead, he was being suppressed, and he was extremely aggrieved and furious.

Duke Zihuan gritted his teeth, and suddenly roared deeply. The light on his Scarlet Blood Blade intensified, making a fierce ripping sound, tearing up the space... This strike was exactly the same "Blood Flame Strike" that defeated Mu Hengyi before, but because he had already exhausted much of his profound strength, the power of the "Blood Flame Strike" was far weaker than when it defeated Mu Hengyi.

A terrifying force headed towards Yan Chengkong, as he positioned his spear horizontally and entered a defensive stance, causing the power of the Blood Flame Strike to be decreased by seventy percent. At this moment, his eyes were flickering in the attack's brilliance, but he didn't retreat and disarm the thirty percent power left of the Blood Flame Strike. Instead, he turned the body of his spear, let the blood-colored reflection of the blade graze his waist, and the Heavy Profound Spear became like a dragon flying out of the seas. It created an unstoppable profound energy storm that passed through the Blood Flame Blade, and stabbed Duke Zihuan viciously on the shoulder... The instant the tip of the spear touched his shoulder, all of the power immediately collected at the spear tip, and passed straight through Duke Zihuan's protective profound energy and armor.

Pfft!

A splash of blood splattered out from Yan Chengkong's waist, and the tip of the Heavy Profound Spear was stabbed deep into Duke Zihuan's shoulder, stuck in between his shoulder blades.

A sense of pain came from his left shoulder, and it, along with the feeling of humiliation, stimulated Duke Zihuan's ferocious personality. His eyes widened and emitted a radiance of craziness, "Go... to hell!!"

Duke Zihuan's whole body instantly started burning in blood-red flames, as if he just walked out of a pool of blood... Watching his movements, the Yan Family's Patriarch, Yan Zijing, was shocked and became pale. He yelled loudly, "Kong'er, dodge it, quick!!"

"Blood Cage Nether Flame!!"

The blood-red flames suddenly burst open, and a terrifying aura shrouded Yan Chengkong as his pupils shrank, but he didn't choose to abandon his spear and retreat. Instead, he gritted his teeth, and poured all the profound energy he had into the Heavy Profound Spear... The next second, it was as if his chest had been slammed with ten thousand sledgehammers, as he instantly lost consciousness.

Boom!!!

The blood flame exploded, and Yan Chengkong was thrown out backwards into the distance. When he was caught by Yan Zijing in the air, his chest was already torn and bloody. But Yan Chengkong wasn't the only one who was thrown out backwards in the blood flame. In the instant that the blood flame exploded, the Heavy Profound Spear that Yan Chengkong poured the last of his powers into, pierced directly through Duke Zihuan's shoulder, and poked open a real, transparent hole. The rest of his power pounded Duke Zihuan high up in the air, causing him to crash into the east wing with his blood sprinkling all over... That Heavy Profound Spear fiercely pierced the seats in the east wing, without any hint of blood on its surface.

"Chengkong!"

"Zihuan!"

Both sides were extremely shocked. None of them thought that the two of them who were originally at stalemate would meet such a tragic outcome in a single instant. To ignite those streaks of blood flames, Duke Zihuan did not hesitate to exhaust his entire body's profound strength, and his body was pierced through with a transparent hole. It was impossible for him to continue fighting. But Yan Chengkong was no better than him; the front of his flesh was all torn, and his internal organs were all shifted. If it weren't for his strong willpower, he would have been unconscious already. However, it was impossible for him to continue fighting.

This battle, Yan Chengkong and Duke Zihuan had achieved "mutual destruction".

"Brothers of the Under Heaven Clan, thank you for your help!" Facing the heavily injured Yan Chengkong, Yan Zijing was fairly calm.

"Don't worry, with us here, your son will definitely be alright," two Elders from the Under Heaven Clan said as they nodded. They reached out their palms, and a dark green light shrouded Yan Chengkong's wounds.

Under the natural healing power of the elven race, even though Yan Chengkong's injuries were serious, they quickly stabilized. He took a deep breath, and said with shame, "Father, your child's cultivation was too immature... I let you down..."

"Don't blame yourself." Yan Zijing said reassuringly, "After all, Zihuan is ranked fourth in the Illusory Demon Seven Scions. There's a huge gap between you and him. To have such a result, Father is already very proud of you. Concentrate and calm down now, don't talk anymore."

Duke Zihuan was finally defeated, but none of the expressions on anyone from the west wing eased up in the slightest. Because it took five people for them just to beat Duke Zihuan.

"Sigh, the difference in strength between the two sides is too great." Many in the hall were sighing.

"Yes, I don't understand why the Yun Family accepted the challenge... Even though they would rather lose the battle than lose their dignity, when losing this miserably, what dignity is left?"

"There's also a Su Family. I heard that Su Zhizhan from the Su Family is one of the best in the Twelve Families' young generations. He should be able to recover some disadvantages."

“Come on, Helian Ba from the Helian Family, second and third rankers of the Illusory Demon Seven Scions Duke Hui Ye and Duke Yuan Que, none of them are weaker than Su Zhizhan. And first rank Duke Hui Ran... it’s not exaggerated at all to say that just his strength alone is enough to beat the twelve people from the other party single-handedly!” a citizen of Demon Imperial City stated while he shook his head.

Chapter 550 - Zhizhan’s Last Stand

Clap, clap, clap...

Duke Huai stood up as he clapped and he said while laughing, “Marvelous, that was truly a marvelous battle. I would never have thought that in this series of contests, there would actually be a scenario where both contestants would defeat each other. It is truly exciting to the point where this duke simply could not have imagined it. However...”

Duke Huai looked directly at Yun Qinghong and laughed, “Are you sure your side still wants to continue? You have gone through roughly half of your representatives just to take down one of ours. This result is truly regrettable and this duke simply does not feel at ease continuing this contest any longer. However, from this duke’s understanding of Patriarch Yun, no matter how ugly Patriarch Yun’s loss turns out to be, he will still resolutely soldier on, correct?”

“Hahahaha,” Yun Qinghong also started laughing, “Duke Huai, you truly understand this Yun well. However, your words are seriously puerile and ridiculous. Our contest has merely just begun, but you have already asserted that we have lost. Isn’t it a bit too early to say that?!”

“Hahaha!” Duke Huai let out three great laughs, “Ah this truly sounds like the words that you, Yun Qinghong, would say! Then let this duke clearly see where your confidence comes from, Yun Qinghong! But what this duke really wants to see is how much longer your arrogance can last... Wen Bo, you are our side’s second representative, so you’re up next.”

The words “second representative” was heavily emphasized by Duke Huai and the mockery in his tone could be heard by all. As his voice fell, a tall and big young man flew up in the air and landed in the arena.

Illusory Demon Seven Scions’ rank five — Duke Wen Bo! And just like Duke Zihuan before him, he was also at the Tyrant Profound Realm level five.

And from the west wing, another person immediately took the air as well and he landed in front of Duke Wen Bo. This person was also the strongest person sent out by the west wing so far — Also amongst the Illusory Demon Seven Scions, the sixth ranked Duke Yong Yi!

Both people belonged to the Illusory Demon Royal Family and both of them were also part of the Illusory Demon Seven Scions, so their strengths were not far apart. This was in addition to the fact that they had often dueled many times and had also gotten used to each other’s Golden Crow Flames and profound arts. So the battle between the two of them was exceptionally ferocious as they fell into a stalemate, and it was only after thirty minutes of battle that the winner was finally decided... Duke Wen Bo barely scraped a victory while Duke Yong Yi fell in defeat!

The west wing lost once again! And they were caught in the miserable scenario where they were at five losses and one draw.

Even though Duke Wen Bo had won, all of his moves and hidden cards had been played. He had sustained many wounds in battle, and his profound energy had been greatly exhausted. So in the seventh contest that followed, he fell to a young duke from the west wing who still found him rather challenging.

The eighth match: West wing's Duke He Song versus the Lin Family's Lin Hanchuan — It was Lin Hanchuan's complete victory!

The ninth match: West wing's Duke Jia Rong versus the Lin Family's Lin Hanchuan — Lin Hanchuan wins yet again!

At this point, the west wing where the Yun Family was at had a record of one win, one draw and seven losses! And there were only four people left who were still eligible for battle.

The tenth match: Illusory Demon Seven Scions' rank seven: Duke Yu Palace's Duke Ying Nan versus Lin Hanchuan — Duke Ying Nan wins!

The eleventh match: Duke Ying Nan versus Nangong Family's Nangong Yan — Duke Ying Nan achieved a pyrrhic victory. And while the west wing had finally won two consecutive victories for the first time after their last two fights, not a single person from the west wing had an expression of joy on their face. Even though Ying Nan had won, he had completely exhausted his strength, so he was bound to lose the following match. And at that time, the west wing would be down to three people, while the other side would still have eight. Moreover, the other side's elite four had not even shown their faces yet.

The twelfth match: Duke Ying Nan versus Bai Family's Bai Jie — It was undoubtedly Bai Jie's complete victory!

The west wing was only left with three competitors: Su Zhizhan, Number Six Under Heaven and the Yun Family's unknown representative.

In the thirteenth match, Number Six Under Heaven took the stage. The elven race possessed the strong ability to use profound bows while having abundant innate talent, but the nature of their profound energy determined that their attack power would not be too high. Moreover, as contests of this nature took place within a confined boundary of an arena, the strength of their profound bows would also be greatly restricted. So once it was Number Six Under Heaven's turn, he would be subject to an immediate and irreversible disadvantage and despite struggling bitterly, the miracle of the weaker triumphing over the stronger did not occur. He was defeated by Bai Jie.

So far, the two sides had fought thirteen matches and the west wing had lost ten representatives while the east side had lost a mere four. And besides Bai Jie, who was currently representing the east, they still had seven other young elites who had yet to battle. Among these young elites were the Xiao Family's Xiao Donglai and the Jiufang Family's Jiufang Yu who were at the Tyrant Profound Realm level four, the Chiyang Family's Chiyang Yanwu who was at the Tyrant Profound Realm level five, the Helian Family's Helian Ba who was at the Tyrant Profound Realm level six and the ones ranked number two and number three among the Illusory Demon Seven Scions, Duke Yuan Qiao and Duke Hui Ye who were also at the Tyrant Profound Realm level six.

There was still even the head of the Illusory Demon Seven Scions, Hui Ran, whose profound strength had actually reached the astonishing level of Tyrant Profound Realm level eight!

The other side was only left with Su Zhizhan who was at the Tyrant Profound Realm level six. As for the Yun Family, they did not even have any proper candidates to send out because among their young generation, the strongest was only at the Tyrant Profound Realm level two.

This contest between both sides did not have any suspense even from the start and no one felt that the current scenario was the least bit odd. In fact, everyone felt that the side the Yun Family was on had just lost in a much too miserable fashion.

The various great powers within Demon Imperial City gave silent sigh. This was only a competition between the young generation of both factions, and even though it could not be indicative of their true strength, it was clearly sufficient to demonstrate just how dominant Duke Huai's faction was; and his faction possessed a strength that completely suppressed their opposition! And this contest which was deliberately arranged by Duke Huai was arranged with two goals in mind. The first goal was to drive out the Yun Family; the second goal was to use pure strength to oppress and cruelly destroy the other faction's presence, to grind the dignity and prestige of the other faction, the Little Demon Empress included, completely under their heel.

And once the Yun Family had been expelled, the Little Demon Empress would not have the ability to contend with Duke Huai anymore. Once that happened, Duke Huai would only need an opportunity, whether natural or manufactured, to usurp this Illusory Demon World Demon Emperor's throne...

The faces of all the people on the west wing were shrouded in a cloud of gloom. Once Number Six Under Heaven had lost to Bai Jie, they only had two people left that were eligible to do battle and realistically in their hearts, it was akin to only having one person left. This was because the Yun Family really did not have a single person among their young generation who was up to task.

"Ah." Su Xiangnan slowly let out a sigh. He patted Su Zhizhan on the shoulder as he said, "Zhizhan, the conclusion has already been reached and our defeat as already been determined... In fact, it has been determined from the very start. It's your turn now. Whether we can get back any of our dignity is now up to you and you alone."

"I understand but not matter the result, I will definitely give it my best shot!"

After he had finished speaking, Su Zhizhan grabbed his weapon and soared into the sky, landing in front of Bai Jie who had just won over Number Six Under Heaven. He pointed his sword straight and the aura that radiated out from him was incomparably rich and strong. He did not even show one hint of weaknesses in regards to the great failure of his own faction as he declared, "Su Family's Su Zhizhan presents himself! I have never been willing to cross swords with a woman, so it would be better if you simply surrendered and got off this stage."

He faced Bai Jie, who was clothed in white and had a figure that was taller than most women. Her face was flushed red and she faintly showed signs of tiredness as it was made clear that her recent battle with Number Six Under Heaven was not easy at all. But upon hearing Su Zhizhan's words, she let out a cold laugh and said mockingly, "Your side has lost in a completely miserable manner so I don't really

know where you are getting the nerve to speak so arrogantly from. And right now, you especially don't have the right to look down on us women."

"Ah, no, I think you're mistaken there," Su Zhizhan said softly as he gave an extremely contemptuous laugh, "I, Su Zhizhan, will definitely never look down on women, I only... look down on ungrateful and traitorous women who are no better than mongrels!"

"You're courting death!" Those venomous words caused Bai Jie to erupt in fury and her jade sword exploded forward. In an instant, the shadow of an enormous white tiger appeared behind her. The image of this white tiger roared at the heavens and the sound of its roar spread through all four corners of the great hall, causing it to tremble. And in that instance, a strong gale rose up and surged violently. This howling gale was sufficient enough to suppress the roar of the white tiger and the arena seemed to be engulfed in thousands upon thousands of windstorms.

"It's the Bai Family's Tiger Roar Domain!"

Bai Jie's domain instantly radiated outwards to envelop the entire arena. Su Zhizhan's hair and clothes were flying wildly as the wind howled all around him. However, his body was nailed to the ground, unmoving. Then, he raised the longsword in his hand and attacked, his sword sweeping forward.

Within Bai Jie's domain, besides herself, the strength and speed of every other person would be heavily restricted, but the speed of Su Zhizhan's sword was still as swift as a bolt of lightning. The might of his sword swept away all of the violent hurricanes around him as a huge tear was immediately formed in Bai Jie's domain. Su Zhizhan sprang forward and every step he took tore a rip in Bai Jie's domain.

"The Bai Family and Su Family both use the sword as their weapon and they both cultivate wind attribute profound strength. Bai Jie's and Su Zhizhan's profound strength is not too far apart, but in terms of their understanding of the laws and nature of wind profound energy, Su Zhizhan is vastly superior to Bai Jie, so her domain does not pose any threat to him at all." Yun Qinghong said in an admiring voice.

At this time, Su Zhizhan had already reached Bai Jie's side, and the body of his sword surged with a dull green wind spiral. This wind spiral may have been infinitesimally small compared to the huge domain of howling winds but nevertheless, it was strong enough to push aside all of the howling winds surrounding it.

Riip!!

Su Zhizhan's straight thrust violently tore apart the domain in front of him. Bai Jie also raised her jade sword and blocked Su Zhizhan's sword with a loud clank. Immediately, she felt her arm go numb and an acute pain lanced through the flesh joining her thumb and her forefinger. Her body swiftly flew backwards and her jade sword almost flew out of her hand.

Even if she was at full strength, she would not be Su Zhizhan's match, much less right now, when she had already exhausted a good portion of her profound strength.

Su Zhizhan did not give her any breathing room; his body flicked as he instantly pressed forward. His body was like a howling gale and his sword was like a thunderbolt; every slash was accompanied by a howling noise that practically tore the eardrums. The wind spiral on his sword was also expanding

rapidly, and after Bai Jie had crossed swords with him continuously, her arm was completely numbed. Her tightly gripped right hand was already stained with blood from the torn webbing between her finger and thumb, even her cheeks were scored with several long wounds that were inflicted by his sword wind.

“You dare to harm my face... I will definitely not let you off!!”

Bai Jie only noticed the pain on her face once she felt it and this caused her to react like a tiger who had its tail stepped on. She instantly went berserk and roared in fury. The huge figure of a white tiger once again appeared behind her as a whirlwind that was more than thirty meters tall surged up all around her. Su Zhizhan’s eyes flashed and he unexpectedly jumped into the midst of Bai Jie’s whirlwind. He did not wait for her to unleash her all-out attack, but instead slapped his sword across her waist.

This whip of his sword produced an incomparably loud and extremely clear ring. The whirlwind that was still forming around Bai Jie’s body vanished in an instant. Her entire body spun wildly about like a violently spinning top and she flew directly out of the arena.

“Ah, women, no matter how strong they are, they still can’t accomplish anything big.” Su Zhizhan stood where he originally was and sombrelly shook his head as he mumbled to he muttered to himself.

Bai Jie collapsed to the ground as she had been turned topsy-turvy. Her jade sword had also flown off to some unknown location.

“Su Zhizhan... I... I’m going to have it out with you!!”

In front of all the heroes of the realm, a slap of her opponent’s sword had sent her flying. As the strongest member of the Bai Family in her generation and one of the most prominent talented women in the entire Illusory Demon Realm, she had never suffered such humiliation before. She hefted her sword once more and with a yell, gathered herself as she prepared to rush Su Zhizhan.

“That is enough.”

Bai Jie’s charging figure suddenly stopped as an invisible energy barrier appeared before her, not letting her move an inch forward. The Bai Family’s Patriarch Bai Yi stood up and restrained Bai Jie, saying, “You have already lost... In front of all who are present, what kind of behavior is this?!”

It was only then that Bai Jie realized she had already fallen outside the arena limits. She grit her teeth and shot Su Zhizhan a fierce look, but she could only obediently return to her seat after that.