"He's probably just a young punk. I heard Mr Chu killed Mochizuki Kawa's foster son and provoked him. But Mr Chu was so scared that he went into hiding for half a month. He didn't even take his wife with him and didn't turn up all this time. No one heard a word from him."

"What? Are you serious? Why is he such a loser? How can Mr Chu run off after pissing off someone like him without even taking his wife? How can a man like this be the King of Jiangdong? That's insane! He is just a coward and a complete disgrace to our martial arts circles! I really pity the girl he married. She really met the wrong man!"

Everywhere in the country, people gossiped nonstop.

The news almost spread like a rampage throughout the martial arts circle.

Some of them shook their heads and sighed on hearing it, while others cursed him.

Some of them felt ashamed of him, while others didn't care.

People just reacted differently to the same



news.

However, other than scolding Ye Fan, some of them even helped speak up for him.

"Sigh! Don't say such things. Mr Chu must be an extraordinary man for being able to reign as King of Jiangdong in the martial arts circle. Maybe he didn't show up because he was held up and didn't make it back in time," someone speculated.

However, someone sitting next to him instantly scoffed.

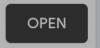
"Wang, I won't argue with you about whether Mr Chu is a hero or coward. We will all find out in ten days at Dongchang Lake. Mochizuki Kawa has already challenged him to a duel at the lake. If he doesn't turn up in ten days, his wife will die under Mochizuki Kawa's sword!"

The people around them instantly fell silent.

"Mochizuki Kawa is trying to corner Mr Chu!" sighed everyone.

In the martial arts circle, such duels were a matter of life and death.





So Mochizuki Kawa was threatening Mr Chu to a battle by holding his wife hostage!

Mochizuki Kawa was the Sword God of Japan. Even if he wasn't the number one fighter in Japan, he was still one of the top five within the country.

Back in the day, he fought the God of War at the Yellow River.

He was so powerful that even grandmasters might not be able to surpass him.

So everyone felt that even if Mr Chu turned up in ten days, he was bound to perish!

But if he didn't come, his reputation would be destroyed, his wife would be killed, and he would have to suffer a bad name for the rest of his life.

Should he choose to live or die?

That was the question!

As the news kept spreading, Lu Tian-He and Fang Shao-Hong drove without stopping to Mount Yanjing's peak when news broke out about Mochizuki Kawa challenging Ye Fan to









a duel.

A grand building stood atop its peak like an animal lying prone on the mountain which reached the clouds!

It was the center of the Chinese martial arts circle, War God Castle.

Fang Shao-Hong and Lu Tian-He hurried in after they got off the car and told the guards who they were.

Inside the hall, an imposing man sat upright.

The moment they saw the man, Fang Shao-Hong and Lu Tian-He and bowed and greeted him, "We apologize for visiting the King of Fighters at such a late hour!"

"Just get to business already. Why did you come to War God Castle?" asked the man sternly.

Lu Tian-He nodded and said, "Sir, we came to talk to you about Mochizuki Kawa, Sword God of Japan. 30 years ago, Mochizuki Kawa caused chaos in China. It was thanks to the God of War that he left and swore never to return. However, Mochizuki Kawa



refused to change his ways and came back to slaughter the people of Jiangdong. Also, he took a woman hostage to force her husband to fight. We can't let him have his way. We came here in the hope that War God Castle can get involved and help drive him out of the country and save Jiangdong."

Lu Tian-He and Fang Shao-Hong looked at him imploringly with respect.

After hearing their request, the man picked up his tea and took a sip before he smiled and replied, "I've heard about it too. But fights like this are common in the martial arts circles. Since they are ready to resolve their vendetta using martial arts, then we should leave them to it. It is inappropriate for War God Castle to interfere with such minor matters. Also, you ought to know that we represent the entire country. The moment we interfere, their personal feuds will become an international problem. Then it will become very hard to resolve."

The man spoke with no intention of getting in between their feud.

After all, War God Castle existed to stabilize things and represent the country when it



came to international martial arts matters.

Unless it was a massacre for no reason, the War God Castle wouldn't get involved.

After all, fights happened all the time in the martial arts circle. If War God Castle were to interfere each time, it would be impossible to manage. It would be wiser to leave them be and help encourage them to become stronger.

"But the man involved is a young Chinese talent. If we don't stop the fight, we might end up losing the future God of War!" persuaded Lu Tian-He anxiously

The man laughed gently. Then he said with a hint of sarcasm, "The genius you are referring to is the so-called Mr Chu, right? I have seen his accomplishments, and the most impressive thing he has done is to kill the head disciple of Sword Shrine. If that makes him a genius, then all these other people I have encountered would be deemed geniuses too. In the end, how many of them can actually make it into the grandmaster ranking? Most of them end up failing. The next God of War? That's pure nonsense. If it was that easy to become the God of War,



then Ye Qing-Tian wouldn't have remained peerless all these years."

The man shook his head as he spoke before he waved his hand. "Enough. Go back. He's just a nobody and not important enough for War God Castle to get involved."

"But he might die..." persuaded Lu Tian-He since he felt bad about losing someone so talented.

The King of Fighters' expression instantly sank and sounded angrier.

"It's survival of the fittest! People have to walk through fire and the dead to become strong fighters to begin with. If you do not understand this simple philosophy, why are you learning martial arts? Upheavals will help him improve. If he is truly a genius, he should defeat Mochizuki Kawa just like the God of War and prove himself. Then War God Castle will spare no expense and groom him. Or else, he is just an ignorant man. What right does he have to ask for our help?"



The King of Fighters' resounding words echoed through the hall like gold falling onto the ground.

Even though Fang Shao-Hong and Lu Tian-He were leaders of the army, they didn't dare to retort.

In the end, they hung their heads and sighed before they left sadly.

"Oh dear! From the looks of it, Mr Chu can only rely on his fortunes."

Lu Tian-He felt sad while Fang Shao-Hong sighed deeply on the way back.

They had hoped that Ye Fan could take over them or even become Yanjing armed forces' next God of War.

They didn't expect such a calamity to befall him.

In their opinion, it was unlikely that Ye Fan would survive this duel.

Based on Ye Fan's ability, he will probably perish under Mochizuki Kawa's blade!



However, if Ye Fan didn't turn up, he would ruin his reputation, become a laughingstock, and there would be no place for him in the country either.

Lu Tian-He and Fang Shao-Hong were hoping that War God Castle could get involved. From the looks of it now, it was wishful thinking on their part.

All the members of the War God Castle were martial arts elites and held high power.

While Ye Fan was just a young punk and no different from an ant to them.

Of course they didn't care about whether Ye Fan survived this duel or not. So why would they offer any help?

Lu Tian-He and Fang Shao-Hong deeply sighed as they drove away and headed to Jiangdong and towards the location where the duel was to be held at Mochizuki Kawa.

But after they left, two people were sitting in the halls of War God Castle and were talking to one another.

One of them was dressed in gray and sitting



on a couch while drinking tea leisurely.

He was the man whom they called the King of Fighters.

A handsome man dressed in green sat before him. He was meticulously cleaning his sword with his head lowered while he said, "Was someone looking for you earlier?"

The King of Fighters nodded. "Yup. Some officers from the Yanjing armed forces. They wanted me to help save a nobody. It was hilarious. Do they really think we are firemen who will save whoever they ask us to? What's more, they said this man could be the next God of War."

"Really?" The man in green shook his head and laughed. "Then what did you say?"

"What else could I say? I said the God of War defeated Mochizuki Kawa back in the day. If that boy is the next God of War, he can defeat him too. Then I told them to leave," replied the King of Fighters.

"Do you think this young man can defeat Mochizuki Kawa?" asked the man in green again.



"How is it possible?' scoffed the King of Fighters. "I looked up the young man. He is bound to die if he fights Mochizuki Kawa. After all, Mochizuki Kawa is a strong fighter from our generation and made a name for himself in Asia within 30 years. That boy is just a nobody. Can he go against the will of God or something?"

The King of Fighters shook his head as he instinctively spoke with disdain.

It was understandable since Ye Fan was very young.

People usually didn't place too much importance on a 20 something year old youth.

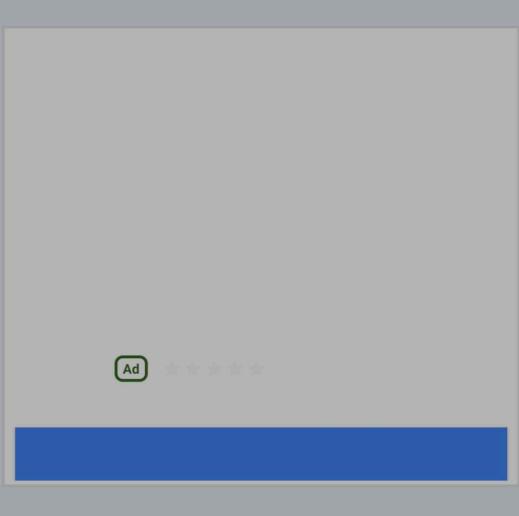
The man in green laughed and nodded before asking again, "Oh yes. What's this youth's name?"

"Ye Fan aka, Mr Chu!" replied the King of Fighters in a deep voice.

"Ye Fan?" repeated the man in green as he smiled gently.

After they finished chatting, they didn't bring







up the subject again.

Ye Fan was just a nobody to men in high power like them. If not for Mochizuki Kawa's reputation, the King of Fighters probably couldn't be bothered to check on Ye Fan.

Very quickly, the King of Fighters forgot about it and threw it to the back of his mind.

Despite his disinterest, the interest level in Jiangdong was a completely different matter.

All the leaders felt threatened.

The atmosphere in Jiangdong had become anxious and suppressed.

It felt as though this was the calm before a storm.

Li Er, Chen Ao, and Lei San searched for Mr Chu like crazy.

Qiu Mu-Cheng was filled with worry, guilt, and felt torn.

She felt guilty that Xu Lei got taken hostage instead of her.



She felt torn because she wasn't sure if Ye Fan should turn up or not.

After what happened that night, Qiu Mu-Cheng had undoubtedly witnessed firsthand how terrifying Mochizuki Kawa was.

Qiu Mu-Cheng felt that even Ye Fan wasn't his match and might even die.

Qiu Mu-Cheng naturally didn't want him to die since he was her husband.

However, if he didn't turn up, what would happen to Xu Lei? And Jiangdong?

On one hand, she had to consider his life and death. On the other hand, there was loyalty to worry about.

Qiu Mu-Cheng was torn and didn't know if she should ask Ye Fan to come back if he called.

Time slipped by amid her internal conflict.

During this time, all the martial artists throughout the country came after they heard about the duel.



All the highly skilled fighters gathered in Jingzhou like merging streams flowing towards the sea.

In a matter of days, the streets of Jingzhou were filled with luxury cars from other provinces.

The occupancy rate of hotels surrounding Dongchang Lake suddenly shot up, and rooms were hard to come by.

People were clearly clamoring to witness the battle at Dongchang Lake!

However, five days had gone by, and Ye Fan had yet to return.

It felt as though he had disappeared into thin air, and no one in Jiangdong had heard from him.

"Where do you think Mr Chu is? It's been five days. News about their duel spread throughout the city! Even if he went all the way to Hainan, he would have heard about what happened here. But why didn't he contact us?"

Li Er sat in the room worriedly.



These five days passed treacherously slowly for the rich and powerful of Jiangdong. They felt as though there was a knife in front of them, and they didn't know when it would land on their necks.

Chen Ao and Lei San stayed quiet while Li Er complained.

In the end, Li Er looked up and said softly, "Do you think Mr Chu really made a run for it? If he did, Jiangdong is in huge trouble."

Li Er panicked with a sad look on his face.

In this time and age, communication was highly advanced, so the world was very globalized.

Even if something awful happened to Ye Fan, couldn't he at least call?

But even until now, they didn't hear from him.

Why?

Although they didn't discuss it openly, everyone knew it.

Mr Chu must have cut off communication



because he didn't want to be found.

In other words, it was likely that he was hiding from Mochizuki Kawa and on the run.



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