

THE PRIMORDIAL VOICE SINGING TO OUTER GODS IN SUPER- GALAXIES

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A five-gender world nourished by wuxia chivalric and Taoist mythological elements is something only sci-fi prodigy author Lucifer Hung could pull off with such aplomb.

Supreme super gods residing in a hidden realm of our universe exist in five genders, namely alpha, beta, delta, gamma, and omega, and in fluid facets for which human terms such as “she, he, it” and “father, sister, brother” fail utterly to capture or convey. Each gender has its own unique pheromone profile that exerts its own unique effects. In interactions with other genders, these pheromones elicit the full spectrum of emotions ranging from love to hate and affect the martial prowess of those so enmeshed.

Main protagonist Chieh Shietou is the Sword Emperor and highest among all gods. Returning to his capital after a century-long journey, he is beset by a seemingly endless series of provocations and conspiracies. Some involve plots for his usurpation, some involve vassals plotting to control her, while some involve blade masters looking to best it in battle. The onslaught is so hot and heavy that even their personally programmed agent is embroiled in a plot to replace them! Overwhelmed by this emotional whirlwind, the day of reckoning is nearly at hand.

In this work, author Lucifer Hung interweaves long-running interests in queer theory, erotica, national identity, and inter-species politics with their love of sci-fi and wuxia fiction. Within Hung’s sumptuous



Category: Fantasy

Publisher: Gaea

Date: 10/2024

Pages: 336

Length: 147,012 characters

(approx. 95,500 words in English)

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narrative settings, seemingly incongruous elements meld seamlessly to create a breathtakingly expansive, magnificently grandiloquent

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Lucifer Hung holds a PhD in Cultural Studies from The Chinese University of Hong Kong and is currently a professor in the Graduate Institute for Gender Studies at Shih Hsin University. Hung's main research interests include science fiction literature, paraliterature and film, cultural studies, Palestinian issues, queer theory, erotica, national identity, and inter-species politics. With a career spanning academic writings, cultural criticism and works of literature, *The Primordial Voice Singing to Outer Gods in Super-Galaxies* is Hung's first novel in eight years. Also, the Japanese rights have recently been sold for two of Hung's previous works – *Dancer of the Chaos, Dance Your Never-ending Abandonment!* and *Fugues of the Black Sun: Collected Stories*. Hung is also a translator of multiple works, including *The Left Hand of Darkness*.

THE PRIMORDIAL VOICE SINGING TO OUTER GODS IN SUPER- GALAXIES

By Lucifer Hung

Translated by Joel Martinson

Prologue: The Dashing Sword Emperor in Ecstasy

A crimson afterglow flooded the vast misery and shone on the once-splendid fortifications, redolent with the burnt desolation peculiar to Class-y planets of the Desert System. Chieh Shietou set his empathy pulse to its lowest setting, but that only applied to carbon-based life. As Sword Emperor, his sensory resonance field could detect the form, will, and spirit of any sword.

Though he cherished the thousand peerless swords around him and planned to do his utmost to protect them, his receiver was reading in the environment around him an enormous yearning and despair, like the lament of infinite reversions.

Like a flaming snowstorm, the killing urge erupted in awful wonder from his silver-inlaid black robe, eager for a dance of eternal destruction. His eyes, elaborately and dreamily lined in ice, breathed murderous intent and exuded scarlet luster, while his floating lissome frame was a knife-point ready to slice through every universe.

Without warning, he crossed his slender arms and reached back to withdraw the twin celestial fire swords from their sheaths in his cervical vertebrae. The pine and spring dew of their supreme will filled the air. Chieh Shietou and the swords moved as one to sweep a perimeter encompassing the ruin's coordinates.

Tuned to him, the twin swords broke through their safety pre-sets and emanated an inner universe from the tip, an all-encompassing black rainbow of mad passion. The trigger for destruction would be a moment of slightly furrowed brows and total clarity of blood pupils.

However, far from a frontal attack, the line traced by his twin bladework did the reverse. Low Tower blazed like a neutron star and transformed into countless white-hot thermocurrents, while Spring Rain's coolly resonant song blended into the heartbreak petals below the clavicle and near the heart to lay bare the Eternal Destruction of All Things, to which even the highest gods were fated to succumb.

Non-physical pain presented as a self-mocking smile. Chieh sent the twin swords outward, sweeping through a star formation that seemed to transform into vast, snow-white flames in the starfield, activating the Accord of Heaven and Earth willed by the ultimate sword-mind.

Not exactly a force, this state was the Nandina Super-Galaxy's original mystery, the utmost will of the everlasting Sword Emperor to freeze everything, including the profoundly bloodthirsty, nirvana-esque self.

Waiting in ambush in the sixty cyclic positions as swordlight dawned, the finest martial groups of the hidden five clans were drawn to the circular ruin of antimatter that spouted from the tip of Chieh Shietou's swords. Faster than thought and quicker than an instant, the soul cores of every supreme warrior were unbodied, melting away under the twin swords' combined snow and fire strike, Asura's Eternal Farewell.

This grand killing blow capable of severing Basic Continuity caused a thousand blade masters to perish forever before they could utter even half a cry for help. Relying on numbers, they imagined they could surround this sword master and issue counsel.

What counsel? Baseless provocation. They thought Father was a restrictive tyrant. To the contrary: he was the Purple Phoenix of All Existence, one of the three pandimensional Supreme Physicians. The tedium of low-level powers was beneath contempt. The need to retune for the Nandina Super-Galaxy made Purple Phoenix ill at ease absent an incarnation in the Super-Empire's ninety-eighth generation.

With keen-eyed indifference, Chieh Shietou spoke not a word and moved hardly a muscle. Malicious noises listening patiently had grown excessive, their conniving and high-minded demands the trigger word for extinction. This was the ultimate liquidation, the final rite of an heir apparent: the tomb of swords must be opened to offer this fifth-dimension super-galaxy a cleansing sword dance.

The Sword Emperor of Scarlet Fantasy's last duty before assuming the throne took but a few split seconds. Afterward, he sent cold fire burst of soul-stealing beauty and sang with joyful clarity, consoling the thousand sacred weapons that remained safe and unharmed.

Ready to begin his reign, Chieh Shietou purified the surroundings with a song of "Nowhere", drawing a final curtain on a 300-year daemonic war on a barren planet in the Nandina Super-Galaxy frontier.

Finished at last! With tender affection, Chieh Shietou and the beloved heavenly flame swords of snow and fire soared at leisure, until Father, ever the doting one, conveyed telepathic concerns, rendering impossible any further absence from the capital.

Receiving Spring Rain and Low Tower into their shoulder sheaths, she¹ was ready to blink back when there was a dramatic shift. A horse-knight practically designed to suit her preferences materialized with a speed that defied description.

Its mane wild and fiery, its right eye a limpid pool, and its left an Abyss Crystal no black hole could consume. Across the rider's back lay Yasgard the Castigator of Gods, the lance that symbolized demon-slaying chivalry. The tall, slender body was fused as one with the unrivaled divine steed, wings unfurled.

¹ Third-person pronouns are used randomly in this book; the universe's five-gender structure is represented by α , β , γ , δ , and Ω .

Chieh Shietou's knowledge of the gods of the Fifth Quadrant was superfluous for recognizing individuals whose aspects announced their identity. The one before him now was the pandimensional wild horseman super-god famed for breaking barriers and borders, the supreme deity of Canaan.

He gave an almost imperceptible nod of his spellbinding face and eyes. His expression revealed no emotion but suggested appreciation. For the first time since arriving on this planet, Chieh Shietou spoke to a non-weapon entity and uttered the newcomer's name.

"Baal."

Horse and rider saluted as one. Eyes laden with an ancient gale gleamed, radiating passionate love and respect.

"Honestly! With the pandimensional poems amassed into this sword, that crew must have found ecstasy in extermination! Blood Magic Emperor Chieh Shietou; eternal, primordial-born god-emperor; the gods' most coveted and feared lord of the three primeval realms: you are all of these, but these are not all of you. These facets do not equate to godhead without equal, the beauty of ethereal terror, and...your voice..."

"Aeon, the ode to the First Cause! That alone is your true original name, the native name of the Primordial."

Reining in intense shock, Chieh Shietou immediately engaged in complex, high-speed mental calculations. What had been overlooked? For such a young super-god to have learned that original name defied understanding. Even more unbelievably, Baal had not recognized her in her role of Primordial Sword Emperor; rather, it was the Voice of Aeon that prompted true recognition and memory.

To be identified by sound – as if they were never strangers at all!

He remained blandly vacant but for a hint of a smile playing at the edges of his mouth. A variable. Chieh Shietou always enjoyed the unexpected.

"Chieh. That too is our name. A nickname from the birth of the Primordial."

Refined but uninhibited, considerate yet stubbornly reckless, Canaan's mounted high god refrained from teasing. Baal gazed thoughtfully into those most comely of scarlet eyes, raised the little sixth finger of a thin left hand, and gave a chaste, gentle kiss.

Without fixating on names or seeking consent, Baal acted with empyrean swiftness to pull Chieh Shietou into the saddle and, in a twinkling, departed the stellar system.

Where had this individual heard my voice? Chieh appreciated a good mystery.

"Now that the tone has been engraved on the divine core, Chieh is the one for whom my principle of 'In Love's Service' applies. Whether or not you remember Canaan's primal divine storm, you ought to make my service complete."

As blood night fell on the nexus of waxing and waning quarters, Chieh Shietou lapsed into a marvelous memory.

"Since Canaan's Wind Horse Lord is willing to serve us, why not conduct a contest in the moonlight? The ten greats at the pinnacle of martial arts now count among their number only one divine dual master of the polearm and bow. All others wield but sword or saber."

Clearly, the only option was for personal companion Interesting Time Game (ITG) to message Father, Tien-yüan Shietou the Purple Phoenix, incumbent emperor of the super-empire. With no one left in the way, why not go wild for once?

Chieh had originally intended to return to the home world to put Father's mind at ease before paying a visit to Hsien Dugu, a Saber Lord who's reputation rivals even that of the Sword Emperor. But that would have to wait for another time because of the sudden, inexplicable acquisition of a supreme knight and marvelous, love-fated steed, as well as ...

Long, long afterward, every last duty had been finished. The floral ichor and sword blades that stuck from His body got on splendidly with His wind-riding counterpart. Chieh Shietou was pleased but melancholy. It was true that Baal had appeared because of the voice.

As the exclusive knight of the Primordial Sword Emperor, Baal tore through boundaries and trampled perpetual tribulations underfoot to aid Chieh accomplish a narrative of redemption and revision. Together, they mended chaos, wiped out tyrannical and scandalous godheads, repaired the substance of the Cosmic Horror Realm, recovered Chieh's first beloved, retrieved generationally traumatized divine beasts...and, by the end, completely rewrote the fabricated origins of the super-empire.

Clinging to the beloved steed as the rider in back suckled a plum-flower gland bursting with enough supreme α pheromones to whip the gods of the Fifth Quadrant into a frenzy, Chieh was touched and moved. But whether this was from relief or sadness was impossible to say.

Prior to that marvelous encounter, Chieh and his higher-dimensional calculation partner ITG were about to complete the quantum frame computation of variables too numerous to count. This was one option he had not anticipated during the exhilarating sword trial. The exuberant, roguish, knightly man-horse ultimately caused the Primordial Noumenon to abandon a tuning scheme that would have eliminated all impurities and reset to the origin.

Chapter I: Primordial Master of the Super-Gods

1: A Story Full of Swords and Romance

Year 67,319 of the fifth-dimension superstar calendar, capital star cluster of the Nandina Super-Galaxy: Pool of Southern Broken Jade.

On the capital world Falconpearl, circled by the night sun, the hibernating insight of Acting Emperor and princely emissary Ti-kuan Shietou jolted awake from her lucid dream of overturning the altar of the Fifth Quadrant Sorcerer's Guild.

Immediately upon returning to the fifth-dimensional here and now, she zipped into a new body. The bright and endearing form of a girl of eighteen she had maintained for the past hundred years changed instantly into a bubbly child of just seven years old in the superstar calendar's

reckoning. This was her most powerful dual-track sorcerer. A divine, true body at peak combat strength.

The lucid dream hit Ti-kuan Shietou hard and affected several companions in the acting emperor's royal lodgings as well. Naturally, the fiery youth who swept the sweet-faced petite figure into an embrace was the first witness.

Despite having experienced the spectacle of his lover stretching into a new form on many occasions, this transformation was still cause for concern. The Fire Witch King of the Eastern Sky let white flames blossom at the back of his eyes, thought issuing from the star cluster and conducting a mental survey at a speed that left in the dust the revolving stalactite resonance read by the Earth Elf King at his side.

"Patience, Emberdrink. Too much haste can disrupt the energy flow. You don't want to offend the Misty Flower Emperor with your lack of restraint, do you?"

That lightly mocking tone clearly came from the third participant in the night's activities, the Water Elf King Kuan Liu-ch'ih.

With an impatient sniff, the Fire Witch King relayed the message.

"I'll never be faster than the Nandina Fire Dragon, the advance-deployed royal guardian under your sole command..."

The Water Elf King giggled, delighting in the mockery but not denying the jealousy. That little dragon truly enjoys the protection of heaven and earth!

"The Infernal Dragon King, that larval super-god, is a fire wielder nonpareil, second only to His chief romantic rival Baal, the maverick hunter who grinds the towers of the world into dust. Ah, how can four elfin demigods match the rebellious, frenzied force of that Alpha-plus, His mind obsessed with that blood magic majesty toward which he squirms – apologies for the creepy-crawling imagery – toward which he jauntily treads on sanguine flames."

The Fire Witch King interrupted the congenial mischief-maker with a potent flame of annoyance.

"You talk too much. Keep a lid on it, wet one. Don't make waves and celebrate too early. Unknowns still remain, so wait for Ti...the acting emperor to perform calculations in Babel Tower, and for ITG's self-replicating hundred-dimensional quantum frames to resonate in sync. Judging from the present parity, they've already established contact!"

She coded using bracing blue-fire luster, and withdrew her companion firebird from within her willowy frame. Instructions were unnecessary – the bird's spirit flame read data and emotions and took wing at once for the princely palace in the northwest corner of the capital world.

The sensation of an ancient voice hailed from the primordial depths to obliterate the worlds with snow white and exterminate the gods with blood red. His eternal god-emperor returned to the Nandina Super-Galaxy, murmuring quietly in the Perpetual Voice of Snow that He so adored, singing a wordless tune capable of overwhelming all.

Jubilant as a newborn dragon, He leapt over the incompatible quadrant quarantine – the crafty Water Dragon King knew not to intercept this time!

Racing toward the true master of the dragon throne, He came. During the long wait, Beaconchess grew so ravenous that the only remedy was capering in pocket universes, exhausting all potential space in search of traces of that ancient voice. I pine for you, Chieh – hasten to use your peerless form and spirit from time immemorial to feed the little dragon that is yours alone!

Piloted freehand by ITG, the silver waterfall-like starship remained view-locked by the super-god dragon king, who saw through seven dimensions. His gleaming crystal Ignition stance emptied the surrounding stars, leaving no demigod paparazzi to blemish the field of the starship's arrival. They had no right to watch, much less hear the ecstatic voice of creation.

He faced the welding tip of the ship, itching to draw the yearned-for one betwixt His dragon horns and engage in Chieh's choice of intimacies. The polished interior of the golden courtyard, the emperor's absolute territory, was a riot of wisteria, and black-and-white pavement. Restless household members fortunate to be permitted to welcome him, the most audacious of all the feline deities and martial worthies, awaited in joy and excitement.

Escorted by seven hundred and seventy-seven Grand Celestial Swordsmen, the starship closed in on acting emperor Ti-kuan Shietou. She motioned for the onlooking deities to remain patient, while the ITG directing the Nandina superminds issued a solemn command permitting unobstructed contact within the courtyard between her and the emperor alone.

Gazing past the Dugu clan's Twin Life-giving Swords of Blood and Flame, the Wind and Cloud Twins Han-tan and Mo-yeh, and the forged blades of the jackal triplets, Beaconchess watched Ti-kuan sweep into the courtyard and had no eyes for anything else.

The vibrant young sorcerer supreme paused abruptly, as if overcome with anticipation and apprehension. Not half a step from her sole objective, it was impossible for her to pounce.

Towering on either side of the emperor were two supreme gods instilling fear and desire, whose sheer lordliness gave her no choice but to offer acknowledgement. Ti-kuan cast a grateful look toward the left-hand one, the dashing mustang super-god who maintained an elegant and deferential disposition. Then she conveyed her gratitude mentally to the awe-inspiring silver-frosted cosmic steed that she was unable to look in the eye.

Once the many solemn greetings and courtesies were complete, Ti-kuan Shietou disengaged all acting-emperor diplomatic language equipment and rushed headlong into the figure of elegance and grace before her...

It was the romantic dream of all creation, the erotic fantasy of gods and demons, the lord and majesty of all gods. A vision of indescribable beauty, unconstrained by ancient past or eternity, a stunning mirage that could evaporate at the slightest contact – her elder cousin.

It was genuinely him, not a projection or avatar. Ti-kuan was actually embracing a slender body that emitted white fire and the scent of orange blossoms. Her hands clasped a collarbone, the pure whiteness of which invited love-bites. She giggled as she caressed the pair of limpid blood magic eyes engraved with supernovae, and she gazed into the efflorescent smile of the pinnacle of swords.

"Chieh! You're awful! You're not permitted to go away anymore. But...if you do, you have to take me along. Otherwise, I'll never let you hear the end of it!"

Speaking not a word, the emperor of gods and swords hardly even shifted his expression of empty indifference. Only Ti-kuan noticed his transparent red lips twitch as his childhood companion prattled and carried on, immersed in their shared world of two.

Steeping in intoxicating visuals, Beaconchess was unaware of his confinement to the fifth dimension. If not for the acting emperor's incessant cooing, the two winged steeds at Chieh Shietou's side would have intervened out of fear of surrendering to oblivion.

The little fire dragon tuned out everything but the riveting form and spirit He endlessly pursued. He grabbed spectacular images of a sword formation, of caresses so pure that every point stimulated desire, of an ancient chant that soaked into His twin horns, of sounds issuing only from the voice of celestial dragons, until...

"Chieh is overwhelmed and uncomfortable. Gentler, sister."

Speaking for the first time, the cosmic silver-winged horse god used not sound but thought, He smiled, revealing a row of terribly gorgeous light-blade teeth before returning Ti-kuan to the Fire Witch King's embrace.

Baal bowed slightly, accepting the acknowledgement as if understanding why his counterpart was willing to stand by for so long without interfering, and only now offered an awkward salute to the ninety-ninth emperor. At this, Chieh turned toward the alarmed Fire King and brushed the issue aside with a light laugh.

"Got to make sure Ti-kuan is thoroughly satisfied, is that right?"

Without altering his expression, Canaan's supreme flaming steed deity enfolded the Ti-kuan-occupied sovereign into his arms. He was worried – even though any random bolt of swordlight might wipe out all dimensions, the body in his embrace was stressed to the limit.

Gritting his teeth at this provocative flare-up, with all possible tenderness, he caressed the pale beauty's pale and feverish body. The scent of fresh mint wafted from ruby-red eyes, easing the impact of endless weeping.

For the moment Chieh Shietou seemed at ease, but Baal knew the immense strain he was under, and how fatiguing he found the obsessed eyes that ached to invade his sanctum.

For Beaconchess, it was a marvelous feeling! The two horse-knights were experiencing levels of tension that were off the charts, as though they could barely tolerate each other. But it was much more than just that. In the exclusive sensory channel for the emperor's guardian dragon gods, He overheard an uncanny, exquisite tacit understanding and mulled over a consensus between possible partners.

The upper body of the cosmic god standing opposite the ruggedly handsome, flaming-haired young man was that of a lithe young woman. Their lower bodies were polar opposites: Canaan's wild mustang was a keen arrow that lay waste to city-states, while the marvelous cosmic steed was an eclipse blade that pierced the abyss without leaving a trace.